

HISTORICAL GENRE AND WARRIOR VIOLENCE IN THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses historical Christian narratives from the 4th and 6th centuries as textual environments that produced models for the historical understanding of warrior violence and were influential throughout the Middle Ages. We will therefore analyze the understanding of the litigious rapports and their status in Christian historiographical tradition.

KEYWORDS

Christian historiographical tradition, violence, early Middle Ages.

Over the last two decades, a great number of historians have called into question the notion of the Middle Ages as a time immersed in generalized warrior violence and anarchy. From this still controversial terrain, criticisms towards the theses that see warrior violence as way of explaining the period's history have arisen. Studies that regarded medieval society as being on the verge of dissolution due to generalized violence from the absence of public institutions were associated to the discourse established especially in the 19th century which valued a strong and centralized state¹. Sources were progressively interpreted from a less literal approach and with the support of new theories.

Thus, the growing number of complaints from the Church against warrior violence around the year One Thousand² was reinterpreted in new and original ways. These complaints would have been, in fact, not the result of an increase in violence, but of the intensification of inter-aristocratic disputes for traditional rights³. In order to

¹ M. Cândido da Silva, *A realeza cristã durante a Idade Média*, São Paulo, 2008; J.-M. Moeglin, "Le 'droit de vengeance' chez les historiens du droit au Moyen Age (XIX^e-XX^e siècles)", in D. Barthélémy – F. Bougard – R. Le Jan (edd.), *La vengeance, 400-1200*, Paris, 2006, 101-148.

² G. Duby, "Recherches sur l'évolution des institutions judiciaires pendant le X^e et XI^e siècle dans le sud de la Bourgogne", *Le Moyen Age* 52, 1946, 149-194; 53, 1947, 15-38; G. Bois, *La mutation de l'an mil*, Paris, 1990; P. Bonnassie, *La Catalogne du milieu du X^e à la fin du XI^e siècle. Croissance et mutation d'une société*, 2 v., Toulouse, 1975-1976; É. Bournazel – Jean-Pierre Poly, *La mutation féodale*, Paris, 1991.

³ D. Barthélemy, *La mutation de l'an mil a-t-elle eu lieu?*, Paris, 1997; idem, *L'an mil et la paix de Dieu. La France chrétienne et féodale, 980-1060*, Paris, 1999; T. Gergen, *Pratique juridique de la Paix et Trêve de Dieu à partir du concile de Charroux (989-1250)*, Francfort-sur-Main, 2004; S. Gouguenheim, *Les fausses terreurs de l'an mil*, Paris, 1999, T. Head – B. Rosenwein – S. Farmer, "Monks and Their Enemies: A Comparative Approach", *Speculum* 66, 1991, 764-796; L. K. Little, "La morphologie des malédictions monastiques", *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 1, 1979, 43-60; R. McKitterick,

protect the assets on which it depended, the Church would have started to denounce the violation of rights – until then held only partially – as a discursive tool. In the cases in which violence seemed unquestionable, historians were not as interested in portraying it as a form of disorder or of testimony to the absence of power or norms. Inspired by juridical anthropology, they attempted to investigate these events as indices of negotiations and normalized pacts⁴.

Much of what we know regarding warrior violence in the Middle Ages was obtained through history texts written in the period. This fact poses some problems for historians. One of the most striking examples comes from the approach taken towards the *Decem libri historiarum*. The scarceness of documents has transformed the bloody portrayal offered by Gregory, bishop of Tours (c. 539-594), into the historical truth for the whole Merovingian period⁵. Analyses of the records concerning warrior violence presented in medieval histories rarely take into consideration the fact that these documents belonged to a specific narrative circuit. One of the consequences of being a part of this particular narrative universe is that history was always written having the previous examples (both Christian and non-Christian) of historical writing as models.

It is our intention to demonstrate that medieval history texts developed a dialogue with the tradition to which they were connected, but contributed at the same time to the

“Perceptions of Justice in western Europe in the ninth and tenth centuries”, in *La Giustizia nell’Alto Medioevo (Secoli IX-XI)*, Spoleto, 1997, 1075-1102; B. Rosenwein, “Feudal War and Monastic Peace: Cluniac Liturgy as Ritual Agression”, *Viator* 2, 1971, 129-157; idem, *To be Neighbor of Saint Peter. The Social Meaning of Cluny’s Property (909-1049)*, Ithaca, 1989; idem, *Negotiating Space. Power, Restraint and Privileges of Immunity in Early Medieval Europe*, Ithaca, 1999.

⁴ R. L. Abel, “A Comparative Theory of Dispute Institutional in Society”, *Law and Society Review* 8, 1973, 217-347; idem, *The Politics of Informal Justice*, New York, 1982; J. Balck-Michaud, *Cohesive Force: Feud in the Mediterranean and the Middle East*, London, 1975; P. H. Gulliver, *Neighbours and Networks*, Berkeley, 1971; idem, *Disputes and Negotiations: A Cross-Cultural Perspective*, New York, 1979; S. Roberts, “The Study of Dispute: Antropological Perspectives”, in J. Bossy (ed.), *Disputes and Settlements. Law and Human Relations in the West*, Cambridge, 2003, 1-24; M. H. Ross, *The Management of Conflict: Interpretations and Interests in Comparative Perspective*, New Haven, 1993; P. Geary, “Vivre en conflit dans une France sans État: typologie des mecanismes de règlement des conflits (1050-1200)”, *Annales. Économies, Sociétés, Civilisations* 5, 1986, 1107-1133; S. D. White, “Pactum...Legem Vincit et Amor Judicium. The Settlement of Disputes by Compromise in Eleventh-Century Western France”, *American Journal of Legal History* 22, 1978, 281-308; idem, “Feuding and Peace-Making in the Touraine Around the Year 1100”, *Traditio* 42, 1986, 195-263; idem, “Proposing the Ordeal and Avoiding It: Strategy and Power in Western French Litigation, 1050-110”, in T. Bisson (ed.), *Cultures of Power. Lordship, Status and Process in Twelfth-Century Europe*, Philadelphia, 1995, 879-1023; D. Barthélemy, “La vengeance, le jugement et le compromis”, in *Le règlement des conflits au Moyen Age*, Paris, 2001, 11-20.

⁵ P. Depreux, “Une faide exemplaire? À propos des aventures de Sichaire. Vengeance et pacification aux temps mérovingiens”, in D. Barthélemy – F. Bougard – R. Le Jan (edd.), *La vengeance, 400-1200*, Paris, 2006, 65-85; P. Fouracre, “Placita and the settlement of disputes in later Merovingian Gaul”, in W. Davies – P. Fouracre (edd.), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge, 1986, 23-44; O. Guillot, “La justice dans le royaume franc à l’époque mérovingienne”, in *La giustizia nell’Alto Medioevo (secoli V-VIII)*, Spoleto, 1995, 653-731; idem, “Observations sur la souveraineté du roi mérovingien en matière de justice”, in O. Guillot, *Arcana imperii (IV^e-XI^e siècle)*, Limoges, 2003, 269-300; P. Sawyer, “The Bloodfeud in Fact and Fiction”, in Kirsten Hastrup – Preben Meulengracht Sorensen (edd.), *Tradition og Historie-Skrivning*, Århus, 1987, 27-38; J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, “The Bloodfeud of the Franks”, in J. M. Wallace-Hadrill, *The Long-Haired Kings and Other Studies in Frankish History*, London, 1962, 121-147; idem, “War and Peace in the Earlier Middle Ages”, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 25, 1975, 157-174; I. Wood, “Disputes in late fifth and sixth-century Gaul: some problems”, in W. Davies – P. Fouracre (edd.), *The Settlement of Disputes in Early Medieval Europe*, Cambridge, 1986, 7-22; idem, “The Bloodfeud of the Franks: a historiographical legend”, *Early Medieval Europe* 14.4, 2006, 489-504.

update if this tradition. The first significant piece of data in this dialogue is the fact that warrior violence was elected as the major theme in the writings. Since Herodotus and Thucydides, the moral and recreational goals of the histories are reached through the use of narratives of war. The frequency with which the war registers appear in medieval histories may be due more to a choice dictated by the importance of the theme to the genre than to particular warrior exuberance in the society in question. In light of the thematic prominence of war, other data from the observed or known reality would have been left out of the historical narrative or inserted into it with a secondary role. In other words, the marked presence of wars in history texts could be attributed to the basic historiographical procedure in which the historian chose the most appropriate subject matter to historical writing.

Evidently, however, the perception of the Middle Ages a violent time is not based solely on the historical narratives from the period. Nevertheless, we must not cast aside all efforts to perfect and improve our approach to these testimonies. The history of the idea of “Middle Ages” allows us to understand better why the records of warrior violence in these writings were read in such an objective way, frequently oblivious to considerations of form and narrative function in the texts. In this conception of Middle Ages, the causal link between absence of public power, violence, and stagnation is the perfect antithesis to the modern order and is, therefore, particularly useful in the affirmation of this same order.

We intend to draw attention to the fact that one of the elements that give a sense to the information presented in the histories is often neglected by modern analyses. These analyses, intentionally or not, deny medieval texts of history a place in the history of historiography (they could not be considered as having the same level as ancient tradition or as having any contribution to modern historiography) reproducing the traditional approaches. In so doing, they eliminate one of the essential elements in their composition: the fact that they are part of a rhetorical system that has specific forms and functions. If we consider the medieval histories in their dialogue with other similar narratives, we can better assess the approach that should be taken to the data present in them. Therefore we do not wish to call into question the reality of the violence described by medieval histories, but to discuss the criteria for their historical consideration.

In the course of the apologetics quarrels⁶ in the context of expansion and institutionalization of Christianity, the historical argument gained force as one of the preferred ways to defend the new faith. Christianity intended to impose itself using the argument of ancientness in relation to the other beliefs. History was incorporated into “holy history” and began to reflect the sacred Christian texts and their exegesis. The belief that there is a strong antagonism between the time of eternity and the time of history has made it more difficult to incorporate medieval history to the tradition of historical writing.

Overall we can verify that Christian memory proposes a permanent interaction between the plan of eternity and the historical plan. Christian historical memory⁷ was a result of the intellectual operations of educated clerics. In their thinking liturgical, astronomical, and historical time are one. This conception is made common by pastoral

⁶ M. Edwards et alii (edd.), *Apologetics in the Roman Empire: pagans, Jews, and Christians*, Oxford, 1999.

⁷ I refer here to historical memory as a result of the transposition of a “historical culture” – group of the production of historical knowledge – to society (B. Guenée, *Histoire et culture historique dans l’Occident médiéval*, Paris, 1991).

practice⁸. Thus, the senses of theology are transferred to history in the same way as the historical forms are used to guarantee intelligibility of divine will. This historical memory is a result of testimony, is chronological, linear, explanatory, and proposes interrelations. Historical narrative is intertwined with the plans of Providence and of human actions in order to provide a simultaneous understanding of man, society, and God. Therefore it is necessary to change the terms of the question and verify to what extent Christian tradition modified historical tradition, particularly in regards to one of its theme of choice: warrior violence.

According to Arnaldo Momigliano⁹, the “sub-genre” “Ecclesiastical history” inaugurated by Eusebius of Caesarea (c. 265-339) in the 4th century is Christianity’s main contribution to the historiography of its time. In fact, Eusebius’s work was deeply influential in all of the latter Christian historiography. From the very first pages of his *Ecclesiastical History* we can see the apologetics dispute. The history of the *ecclesia* is essentially the history of the conflicts between heretics, pagans, and Jews against a community of the faithful led by bishops and martyrs.

The succession of the Saint Apostles, as well as the interval of time between our Savior and ourselves; the enumeration of so many and such important events in the course of ecclesiastical history; how many were mentioned in this history and presided over or governed the most illustrious dioceses; in each generation, how many were deputed to minister divine word orally or in writing; how many were those when, dragged to extreme errors by the attraction of novelties, announced a false science (I Tim. 6.20) and, similar to rapacious wolves (Acts 20.29), cruelly decimated Christ’s flock.

Furthermore, the tribulations that all the Jewish nation suffered soon after the insidious actions against our Savior: how many, which, and at when were delivered the pagan attacks against divine word; the great men that in other times endured torment and fought till blood was spilled; and most of all, among us, the testimony and the merciful benevolence of our savior towards us – all of this I have judged convenient to transmit in writing. I do not wish for any other exordium except the accomplishment of the “economy” of our Savior and Lord Jesus, Christ in God.¹⁰

Eusebius’s text outlines a historical conception of Christian community marked by a double conflict: one is internal, represented by the disputes caused by heresies – the “false science” of the “rapacious wolves” – the other is external, indicated by the fights against the unfaithful and the pagans. Although this conflict surpasses the limits of history, it finds a legitimate answer in the secular world: military conflict.

The text of the *Ecclesiastical History*, which was rewritten numerous times by Eusebius, begins with a history of the Church – in the sense of a history of the community of faithful under the direction of its most eminent bishops. However, the work finishes very far from its original starting point as it opens itself to the horizons of the empire. Thus, Eusebius goes from the spiritual accomplishments of bishops and martyrs to Constantine’s victory over Licinius, which is made into a Christian victory against barbarism and paganism. The *ecclesia*’s history is concluded by the embracing

⁸ In the *De correctione rusticorum*, the sermon-letter (c. 572) from the bishop Martin of Braga (c. 520-580) addressed to the bishop Polemius of Astorga, we can see how the didactic use of biblical narrative takes on forms that are necessarily historical (chronological order, inter-relations, causal relations, etc.) to the preachers of the high Middle Ages (Martinho de Braga, *Instrução pastoral sobre superstições populares*, Aires Augusto do Nascimento [ed., trad.], Lisboa, 1997).

⁹ A. Momigliano, “As origens da historiografia eclesiástica”, in A. Momigliano, *As raízes clássicas da historiografia moderna*, Baur, 2004, 187-212.

¹⁰ Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* 1.1-2.

the empire and public authority under the logics of the conflicts initially outlined. In the history written by Eusebius, the essential conflicts are resolved both through instruments of faith and of politics – politics understood here as the emperor’s moral authority and the authority of the material weapons under his command. The appearance of not only the empire but also of the emperor made into a champion of divine causes – therefore of Christian causes in the context of the liberation of cult – raises these moral and spiritual conflicts to the level of military fighting. We believe that this idea of a double conflict (internal and external) has an indisputable posterity in the Christian conception of history.

With all its particularities, the prologue of *Decem libri historiarum*, written many centuries later, maintains something of the original Eusebian proposal.

Before describing the fights of kings against adverse nations, those fights of the martyrs against the pagans, those of churches against the heretics, I wish to profess my faith so that those who read me will not doubt that I am a catholic. I have also wished to clearly indicate the number of years that have passed since the beginning of the world to those who despair at the coming of the end of the world. I have done so by gathering a summary of the past facts in chronicles and histories. But first of all, I ask the readers to forgive me if in my letters and syllables it just so happens that I may transgress the rules of the art of grammar, which I do not completely possess. My only care is to retain without any alteration or hesitation of the heart that which we are told to believe in the Church, because I know that those who have become guilty of sins may obtain God’s forgiveness through their faith.¹¹

Gregory’s history aims at conflicts similar to those present in Eusebius’s work: external fights against adverse nations and internal fights of the churches against heretics¹². It is also known that the kings in Gregory’s work occupy a decisive position, just like in Eusebius. The conjunction of these facts may suggest that the reading of warrior violence in Eusebius’s work requires a less direct approach. This approach should take into consideration the fact that the valuing of military conflicts in the *Decem libri historiarum* may be a result of the use of an explanatory system of history provided by a tradition whose first example is found in Eusebius.

Some decades after Eusebius had finished his ecclesiastical history, Augustine (354-430) assumed the almost definitive defense of the need for coercion not only against pagans, but also against baptized Christians when discussing the regenerating power of baptism for the fallen man. To those who argued that baptism not only removed the stains from past sins, but also made it impossible to sin again and therefore rendered coercion unnecessary, Augustine replied, with the example of libido’s uncontrollable movements, that man, even when Christian, was constrained by his decayed condition to the need of coercion¹³. Violence gained then an even greater importance in the Christian conception of a historical society. Thus, the notion of necessary coercion was added to, strengthened, and also complemented with that of a Christian society involved in permanent conflicts of external and internal nature.

In one of his letters addressed to Boniface, Augustine mentions king David in order to argue that war and sanctity may go together: “Do not think that no one can please God if they adventure in war”. Christian actions in war must obey certain conditions: bow before the laws of just war fighting only for the one’s own stipend; be loyal to friends and enemies; be pacific; fight out of necessity and not will making war

¹¹ R. Latouche, ed., Gregory of Tours, *Histoire des Francs*, vol. 1, Paris, 1963, 1.

¹² Idem.

¹³ August. *De civ. D.* 19.

useful not only to human peace, but also to divine peace; be violent against those who are rebellious and merciful towards those who are defeated¹⁴. Therefore, the definition of just war, in Augustine, begins with man's internal scrutiny. The ancient just war, based on moral and mercy, found its purpose in the earthly city. Just war from Augustine's perspective was equally based on moral and on a form of mercy and interposed between man and his final goal another form of idealization of political and social life defined by the pact with God.

For Augustine, peace came from order that began with man in the submission of the soul to God and continued in the submission of the flesh to the soul and of the soul and the flesh to God: "the peace of all things is tranquility found in order" and "order is the disposition of equal and unequal beings indicating to each of them what is their due". Peace maintains together the parts that tend to rebel during the course of the human condition of sin. This "tranquility found in order" leads in the direction of the heavenly city "perfectly ordered and perfectly harmonious in the mutual enjoyment of God"¹⁵. In Augustine, peace is achieved through the orderly interconnection of forms of peace that go from the person to the heavenly city and include the house and the earthly city. Earthly freedom is achieved by choosing obedience. The mission of earthly governments is to conduct people to obedience, be it through persuasion or war.

In chapter 20 of book IV in the *Decem libri historiarum*, which begins with reports of war violence from the part of kings, the bishop of Tours compares the conflict between king Clotarius and his rebel son Chramne to the biblical dispute between king David and his son Absalom. The comparison allows Gregory to show in a single episode the real extent of the disorders that war conceals. We can say that these disorders happen in a causal way. The Augustinian influence seems obvious. However, while Augustine sees the progress of order towards peace through an interior order, Gregory, a historian, values the progress of order from the person to society or from coercion to order so as to highlight the importance of the instruments available to government. The bishop of Tours shows Chramne's interior disorder, evident in his inclination towards rebellion, evolving to the disorder in his father's house and finally to the social disorder of war. The wars in the *Histories* indicate an awareness of the impossibility of establishing a lasting peace. It is only through obedience that man can be guided in the direction of perfect peace which will be achieved in God. According to the logics taken from the Augustinian text, Chramne's rebellion demonstrates that there are no "private" sins. All disarrangement of the soul threatens to become a public disarrangement. From this perspective, the world is revealed as grounds for permanent conflict. What we find in the examples of violence narrated in the *Histories* is not so much the register of social degeneration, but rather the description of the instruments of government (war and justice).

The Frankish narratives are not the only ones to indicate the perseverance of the late ancient Christian heritage. This can also be found in older texts, such as John of Biclar's (c. 540-621) on the conversion of the Visigoths from Aryanism to the Christian dogma¹⁶. In this case, the confirmation of a secondary dynasty through the enthronement of Recaredus is supported repeatedly by the association between the visigothic kingdom and the Empire through the emphasis in military and religious

¹⁴ August. *Ep.* 189.6.

¹⁵ August. *De civ. D.* 19.13.

¹⁶ P. Alvarez Rubiano (ed., trad.), John of Biclar, *La crònica de Juan Biclarense. Analecta sacra tarraconensia*, 16, Barcelona, 1943, 7-44.

conflicts, more specifically against heresies. The conversion of the Visigoths promoted by Recaredus is described by the chronicler as the accomplishment of the “Church’s peace” and this peace participates in the construction of the Christian prince’s image. This prince would be responsible for the defense of ecclesiastical matters: the conquest and maintenance of the people’s unity of faith and the pacification of doctrinal quarrels that affected the Christian community. The decision to summon a council allowed this king the possibility of having his actions compared to those of emperors Constantine and Martian, promoters of the councils of Nicaea (325) and Caledonia (381). However, the chronicle gives evidence that this was more than a mere desire to emulate the emperor, but was, in fact, the adoption of an ideal of Christian rule which was the basis of political legitimacy. The ruler is the one who builds unity through peace conquered on two fronts: the combat of illegitimate power and the fight against heresies. Is this not the reproduction of the Eusebian model of Christian monarch, whose public functions are associated to the defense – military if necessary – of political and religious peace?

Recaredus ascension to the throne is preceded by the struggle between his father Leovigild and Leovigild’s son, Hermenegild, who is associated to the throne. The latter spins a war against his father and king, a war whose unjust nature is established by the use of terms such as “tyranny”, “rebellion”, “rebelliousness”, “uprising”, among others. Hermenegild’s “domestic” rebellion and its outcomes into a war that can be seen as a civil one are considered by the chronicler as something much worse than the external aggression. It is also remarkable that, by calling Hermenegild’s uprising a “domestic quarrel”, Biclár seems to want to evoke the Augustinian system of different levels of orders that evolve from the person to the city, passing through the domestic aspect, a system on which social peace would be dependent.

Christian peace puts the emperor in the service of an order that emphasizes heresies as a factor of social disorder. This model will determine a particular form of power which is very present and mature in the years to follow. The maintenance of peace and justice is applied to all forms of government because it institutes the field of coercion as being essential to earthly peace which, although imperfect, is essential to the maintenance of social life and salvation.

Written at a much later date – around the middle of the 11th century – Raoul Glaber’s (980/985-1047) famous *Histories* are traditionally included in the dossiers used as witness to feudalism as characterized by the loss of control of important potentates over warriors of lower levels. The latter usurped public benefits for their own uses and sowed disorder through the use of weapons and outside the control of the great lords. Although it is a witness to the dying of the powers of great lords, we can easily observe that the Burgundian monk’s work considers the royalty and the great lords in its horizons. In this text, filled with wars and military setbacks, there is nothing to indicate that the king of France’s authority or that of the emperor is under question or that their attributions of the government have been disputed. The *Histories*’ prologue is clear in attributing to these two figures a central role in the narrative, something that can be confirmed throughout the five books.

[...] I will firstly make visible (because we can state without a doubt, even if the counting of the years since the creating of the world proposed by the histories of the Hebrews is different from that of the translation of the Seventy) that the second year that followed the millennium of the incarnated Word was also the first year of the kingdom of Henry, king of the Saxons, and the one thousandth year of our Lord was also the thirteenth year of the kingdom of Robert, king of the Franks. On this side of the sea, both kings were considered

as the most Christian and greatest of kings; the first, Henry, came after the Roman Empire. We also include its memory in the origin of our chronology. [...]¹⁷

Glaber does not limit himself to indicating the reigns of Robert II, the Merciful (king from 987-1031) and Henry II (emperor from 1002-1024) as chronological markers. These two royalties are the axis of the narrative. It is the following of both of them that guarantees the general meaning of the narrated facts that would be otherwise disperse and compromised in their historical logics. Through the use of the two royalties, the text shows the existence of a general historical logic marked by the alternating of moments of balance and imbalance. Warrior violence is part of this logic. However, it is clear that the imbalances do not affect the general balance which is always found in the closing of the narratives in a decisive way. The information that shows the rebellions, wars, and betrayals suffered by these kings is always finalized with the reestablishment of order, which was in reality only affected on its surface. It is important to make the firm and constant character of royalty clear. This is illustrated by the fact that the description of the splendor and later disappearance of the Carolingian dynasty does not bring with it any lamentation or represent any form of catastrophe. From Glaber's perspective, royalty is maintained and the expected performance of its functions is not altered. The one thousandth year of the incarnation of the Word does not announce decadence, but qualifies the excellence of the moment in which the reigns of Robert and Henry are taking place. From this point of view, there is nothing here to suggest a work guided by the insecurity of endemic violence and by eschatological expectations.

If just war in Augustine intends to establish itself through the justice of the cause and through legitimate authority, the divine delegation of a pacifying mission that is accomplished on a historical level, according to the Eusebian conception, identifies Christian Peace with the emperor's peace and the king's peace. Thus, if in Raoul Glaber violence is presented, it is done ensuring that the king's and emperor's authority is of first importance and is a guarantee of return of peace. The violence described is an occasion to present the essential functions of government and promote the signs of its power's legitimacy.

In this model of historical society, public power does not have the administrative pretensions of modern forms of government, but has the discourse of and the actions for peace at the top of its functions. Warrior violence is an instrument of government and justice. Wars are the necessary coercion that the ruler should enact and not a sign of his weakness or decadence. Wars protect and correct (the external "attackers", the internal rebels, the unfaithful, the pagans, and the heretics). Christian historical narrative of wars shows its permanent organizing function and makes the merits of those who are effective in its just conducting evident.

One of the conflicts highlighted by Raoul Glaber in his *Histoires* is the one against the Normans. Despite all unfortunate events that occur due to their incursions, Raoul Glaber is the first chronicler to indicate clearly that peace with them was definitive. He does so not only moved by a privileged sensibility of the facts, but guided by the predictability of a history that confers an organizing and constructive role in the realm of public life to war violence.

¹⁷ M. Arnoux (ed., trad.), Raoul Glaber, *Histoires*, vol. 1, 1996, 1.

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