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### Images of ethnicity in later medieval Europe

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## 7

## French Control and German Rage

‘Both in martial exercises and in polish of manners the men of France are easily first among the nations of the West,’ William of Malmesbury claimed in the 1120s.<sup>3</sup> Fighting skills and finesse – the core business of the courtly nobility – were the demesne of the French in the twelfth century. The Normans too (and William’s father was a Norman) were ‘well-dressed to a fault, and particular about their food, but this side of any excess. The whole nation is familiar with war, and hardly knows how to live without fighting.’<sup>4</sup> Excellent martial skills and cultured manners: in William’s opinion the French and the Normans epitomized the two key qualities of noble conduct.<sup>5</sup>

In the early decades of the twelfth century, northern French cultural and social customs had become the benchmark for noble demeanour in North-West Europe. French fashion dictated taste, French ‘war games’ (the *conflictus Gallicanus*) or tournaments were staged on Flemish, English and German territory, and the French image of a heavily armed knight on horseback became the standard for seals.<sup>6</sup> In the 1170s in the romance *Cligés*, Chrétien de Troyes’ self-congratulatory boast proclaimed that chivalry, together with learning, had been translated from Athens via Rome to Paris.<sup>7</sup> In the 1210s, Wolfram von Eschenbach concurred, noting that French were ‘gerîten rîterliche’,

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3 William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum* II 106, ed. and transl. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, vol. 1, 152-153: ‘Est enim gens illa et exercitatione virium et comitate morum cunctarum occidentalium facile princeps.’ This high opinion of the French expressed by William of Malmesbury in the 1120s, refers in fact to Francia shortly before the year 800, where king Ecgberht lived in exile for a number of years. According to William, he used this period ‘as a whetstone with which to sharpen the edge of his mind by clearing away the rust of indolence, and to acquire a civility of manners very different from the barbarity of his native land’. It would seem a transposition of contemporary fame of the French to earlier times.

4 Idem, III 246, ed. and transl. vol. 1, 460-461: ‘vestibus ad invidiam culti, cibus citra ullum nimietatem delicati. Gens militiae assueta et sine bello pene vivere nescia’. See Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 5-6, 28-29; Thomas, *The English and the Normans*, 254, 316, 56.

5 For this chapter I refer in general to Meyvaert, ‘Voicing National Antipathy’, 743-763; Koht, ‘Dawn of Nationalism’, 265-280; chapter 2 of Kim’s *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 36-61; Schmutge, ‘Über “nationale” Vorurteile’, 439-459; chapter 5 in Schneidmüller’s, *Nomen patriae*, 104-139; chapter 4 in Brühl’s *Die Geburt zweier Völker*, 243-302; James Westfall Thompson, *Feudal Germany* (Chicago 1928), chapter 11, and further references below.

6 For Germany see Joachim Bumke, *Courtly Culture: Literature and Society in the High Middle Ages*, transl. Thomas Dunlap (Woodstock, New York and London), 79-82. Originally published as Joachim Bumke, *Höfische Kultur: Literatur und Gesellschaft im hohen Mittelalter* (Munich 1986). For admiration for the French in England, see Thomas, *The English and the Normans*, 316-317; Southern, *Medieval Humanism*, 158-159.

7 Gassman, *Translatio studii*; Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii*, esp. chapter 5.

true knights.<sup>8</sup> In short, northern France was a fount of culture and chivalry, its inhabitants refined and well-mannered.

As many scholars have argued, from the twelfth century, after a steep decline of royal power in the tenth century, the French Capetian dynasty, especially under Philip August, took pains to gain more than a nominal, titular power over its vassals, extending its governmental and fiscal grip over its domains.<sup>9</sup> This period saw a steady strengthening of royal power, both nominally and territorially. The taking of Normandy in 1204, and the Languedoc after the Albigensian Crusade in 1227, brought large tracts of territory within the royal sphere. The chancellery of Philip August adopted the term *regnum Franciae*, although it was only in 1254 that the chancellery used the title *rex Franciae* instead of *rex Francorum*, reflecting a growing notion of territorialization of the French monarchy. Although Francia continued to denominate the core area of royal power north of the Loire, it could now at times (although sometimes as ‘Francia tota’) be employed as a synonym for Gallia.<sup>10</sup>

Besides territorial expansion, the self-image of the Franks in relation to their territory and ruling dynasty were advanced in symbols of power such as the fleur-de-lis.<sup>11</sup> The royal dynasty increasingly became the subject of prayers of affection, in the thirteenth century attaining miraculous healing powers and strongly identifying with the patron saint of St Denis.<sup>12</sup> In both twelfth-century Latin and vernacular sources repeated praise sounds of the French territory as a sweet land, ‘the most splendid in the world’, and its inhabitants as a *beata gens*, blessed nation beloved to God.<sup>13</sup> Francia was the ‘rampart of Christianity’; in a bull issued by Pope Gregory IX in 1239, it is called a new tribe of Judah, crowned by the hand of God himself.<sup>14</sup> Claims were also made to the Franks’ Carolingian ancestry, as at the close of the twelfth century poets were pointing to the Carolingian lineage of Philip Augustus and his son Louis VIII (via Isabella of Hainault).<sup>15</sup> In the course of the thirteenth century, as the royal government clasped the feudal territories in a tightening grip, the idea was also

8 Wolfram von Eschenbach, *Willehalm* 44 vs. 3-4, ed. Heinzle, 40.

9 Philippe Contamine, ‘The Growth of the Nation State’, 21-31; Rudolf Schieffer, ‘Frankreich im Mittelalter’, 43-59.

10 Indeed, Francia tota continued to be used to represent the whole of France in the twelfth century, where Francia could refer to the northern Seine basin, although it could also be used more or less synonymously with Gallia.

11 Ehlers, ‘Elemente mittelalterlicher Nationsbildung’, 565-587. One famous moment, attested by Suger, when the French monarchy adopted symbols to represent power is when Louis the Fat, in 1124 under threat from the German imperial and English forces, carried with him into battle the standard of Vexin, the abbey’s fief.

12 For the attachment of the Capetian dynasty to Reims and the narrative of Clovis’ conversion to Catholicism, see Jacques le Goff, ‘Reims, City of Coronation’, in Pierre Nora (ed.), *Realms of Memory. The Construction of the French Past*, English transl. Arthur Goldhammer, and ed. by Lawrence D. Kritzman (New York), 193-251.

13 De Planhol, *Historical Geography of France*, 100-108.

14 Idem, 96-100. In the fourteenth century, the image of the French as an elect nation and its king as rex Christianissimus (which became popular from the reign of Philip IV the Fair) spurned the notion of royal miraculous blood. Gradually, with the expansion of the royal house’s control over larger stretches came the Christianization of a wider ‘French’ territory.

15 B. Guenée, ‘Les genealogies entre l’histoire et la politique: la fierté d’être Capétien, en France, au Moyen Age’, in *Annales Économies Sociétés Civilisations* 33/3 (1978), 450-477, here at 464.

increasingly put forward that the French monarch was *rex Christianissimus*, the most Christian king, crowned in Reims.<sup>16</sup> Most importantly here, however, was the claim that as the new ‘home of learning and chivalry’, the Franks appropriated for themselves the role of protectors of the Church, assuming leadership in the Crusades, which was reflected in the romantic literature of chivalrous deeds and plights and notably in the rhetoric of the crusading mission.<sup>17</sup>

This chapter focuses on how the reputation of exercising constraint, bravery, and refined polish among the French north of the Loire was especially negotiated against images of the Germans’ might, furious minds, barbaric behaviour and bad table manners. This negotiation entailed competition – competing with the Germans over claims to strength, valour and power – by putting the Germans down – setting off the Germans as coarse, unrefined, raging warriors. Competition was fuelled as a result of the French’ and Germans’ common ancestry, geopolitically in the Carolingian Empire and historically through a shared past. That the French, despite their common ancestry, yet had the ammunition to malign the Germans, was partly prompted by the Germans’ double-edged ethnic reputation inherited from antiquity. On the one – positive – hand, they were physically strong, tall warriors who scorned death.<sup>18</sup> The flip side to their boldness, however, was their furious, unrestrained nature, as articulated in antiquity by among others Seneca, Strabo and Josephus.<sup>19</sup> In ancient times, their furious nature had been grounded ‘scientifically’ on climate theory – the harsh cold of the north producing hot-tempered temperaments – and had been encapsulated in the tidy classical epithet of the *furor Teutonicus*.<sup>20</sup> In the contemporary medieval world, this epithet – which reappears at the end of the eleventh century – was now attached to those knights performing in military campaigns. As Len Scales put it, ‘by as early as the eleventh century, the Germans had already won a reputation both for physical courage and, in the view of their Italian neighbours and victims, for ruthless violence’.<sup>21</sup> And although the image resurfaced first on the Italian peninsula, by the First Crusade it was also being used by the crusade chroniclers, and in the second half of the twelfth century, by French poets writing in the vernacular, singing of the deeds of noble and ill-famed knights.

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16 Le Goff, ‘Reims’, 194.

17 For Frankish identity in the crusader states, see Alan V. Murray, ‘Ethnic Identity in the Crusader States: The Frankish Race and the Settlement of Outremer’, Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murray, *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds 1995), 59-73; Cf. Alan V. Murray, ‘National Identity, Language and Conflict’, in Conor Kostick (ed.), *The Crusades and the Near East* (London 2011), 107-130.

18 The identification between Germans and weaponry remained strong in the twelfth century; cf. Kästner, ‘Der großmächtige Riese und Recke Theuton’, 92; Graus, *Lebendige Vergangenheit*, 74.

19 For the image of the Germans in antiquity, see esp. ‘Germans’ in Isaac, *The Invention of Racism*, 427-439.

20 For the reintroduction of the concept of the *furor Teutonicus*, see Dummler, ‘Über den Furor Teutonicus’, 112-126; W.R. Jones, ‘The Image of the Barbarian in Medieval Europe’, 376-407, esp. 398; for the Late Middle Ages, see Len Scales, ‘German Militiae’, 41-74, esp. 66-74; Koht, ‘Dawn of Nationalism’, 269 for Suger’s use.

21 Scales, ‘German Militiae’, 44; Thompson, *Feudal Germany*, 369-372. Scales bases this assumption on the sources mentioned in Thompson.

This chapter examines how the barbaric-urbane dichotomy gained new importance and emphasis in the twelfth century, and how the Germans were specifically targeted as furious madmen. Although the German language, in contrast to Romance speech, was qualified as ‘barbarically’ harsh throughout the early parts of the Middle Ages, at the end of the eleventh century, ancient socio-cultural notions of barbarity re-entered North-West Europe, while the ideals of the *preudhomme* were being shaped in courtly milieus. This concurred with the reintroduction of the specific epithet of the *furor Teutonicus*, with its implication that the Germans had raging minds. As I will discuss, increasingly in the twelfth century, the use of this epithet and its connotation of lack of civility went hand in hand with serious accusations and ridicule of German manners in vernacular epic and Latin chronicles. The third part of this chapter discusses how the Crusades accelerated the dichotomy between the reputations of the French and German knights, effectually jousting the Germans from God’s *militia Dei* following their uncontrolled violence towards their fellow Christians, instead of directed at the religious other. I show how in reports on the First Crusade, monks such as Guibert of Nogent and William of Malmesbury strongly emphasized French chivalrous characteristics in God’s service, vis-à-vis the Germans, after Pope Urban had turned to the French nobility on his tour to preach the crusade in 1095. Culturally belittling their north-easterly neighbour as barbaric, who lived, according to William of Malmesbury, in a harsh climate, France now claimed to be the heart of learning and chivalry, showing restraint and martial prowess, in contrast to the German’s violent nature. This claim was grounded in climate theory, according to which northern France’s temperate environment naturally endowed its inhabitants with intelligence and virtuous dispositions, in contrast to German coarseness.<sup>22</sup> Finally, I discuss the weak reactions from German perspective to the French claims to chivalry.

### **Stereotypes as capital**

According to Robert Bartlett, the French use of the term ‘barbarian’ for the Germans was simply an epithet of abuse.<sup>23</sup> Expanding the argument, I believe that the use of this epithet betrays a complicated interplay of references to reputations and social values, which the northern French aristocracy used to affirm their position as true Christian paragons of chivalry, with both cultural and political implications. Contrary to Carlrichard Brühl’s opinion that medieval ethnic stereotypes only provide the sources for a history of national hatred towards other peoples, I would like to stress that images of the other, whether derogatory or commendatory, might reflect upon, reaffirm, sharpen and boost ethnic self-images.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, in view of the moral norms imposed upon centres of power by the clergy, and the importance of personal relations of kinship and social networks in this period, ethnic reputations could be a valuable asset or liability in negotiations in a social or political sphere, dependent on the contemporary predominating values. In short, as a member of an ethnic group,

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22 See chapters 1-3.

23 Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, 144.

24 Brühl, *Die Geburt zwei Völker*, 275; Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 27.

stereotypes can add to or detract from an individual's socio-cultural capital. Moreover, for such capital to gain value meant that it should be measurable; in order to quantify and qualify their capital, the French needed an other as a benchmark.

Crucial in the process of forging, expressing, and reaffirming French identity were the rapidly evolving cultural and social norms of noble conduct and character arising at this time, captioned as chivalry and courtliness.<sup>25</sup> Central to these new norms was a strong emphasis on self-control. Again, as Norbert Elias argued, the process of adopting and internalizing new cultural norms of self-regulatory behaviour, of curbing impulses, often involves the grafting and coercion of negative attributes onto others.<sup>26</sup> In the process of appropriating and identifying with these norms, the French turned to an exemplary antithesis: the German bellicose warrior.<sup>27</sup> At first glance, this may seem contradictory. Both the French and Germanic groups were once united in the Carolingian empire; the Franks were themselves originally a West Germanic ethnic group. Indeed, until the end of the eleventh century, the character of the Franks was often described in the same violent terms. Even their name was reputedly derived from their ferocity, as Isidore of Seville explains: 'Others reckon that they were named for the brutality of their behaviour, for their behaviour is wild, with a natural ferocity of spirit.'<sup>28</sup> The Normans, too, although now viewed as elegant and civilized, originally descended from piratical Northmen whose mythological founder Antenor was ill-reputed for his treachery.<sup>29</sup> Conversely, in order for the northern French to emphasize their civility and courtliness, it was necessary to juxtapose their identity especially with their close neighbour, with whom they had a shared past, but was also a political rival, speaking a different language. By contrasting themselves with their German neighbours, the northern French could thus plume themselves in the face of the ugly barbarian. Emphasizing classical Germanic stereotypes such as Lucan's epithet *furor Teutonicus*, the aristocratic French might thus draw a sharper boundary against which their own identity might be contrasted. In this light, the use of classic stereotypes of German fury seems to

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25 For an overview of scholarship on the concept of chivalry, see David Crouch's introduction in *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France: 900-1300* (Harlow 2005). See in general Keen, *Chivalry*; Richard Barber, *The Knight and Chivalry* (Woodbridge 2000); Constance Brittain Bouchard, *'Strong of Body, Brave and Noble': Chivalry and Society in Medieval France* (Ithaca New York 1998). For the concept of courtliness in England, see chapter 8.

26 Elias, *Civilizing Process*, 63-64.

27 Len Scales has argued convincingly how in the later middle ages, the negative stereotype of the German nobility led to a reappraisal of its self-image. See Len Scales, 'German Militiae: War and German Identity in the Later Middle Ages', in: *Past and Present: A Journal of Historical Studies* 180 (2003), 41-82.

28 Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiae* IX 101, transl. 198: 'Alii eos a feritate morum nuncupatos existimant. Sunt enim in illis mores inconditi, naturalis ferocitas animorum.'

29 Orderic Vitalis, for example, still called the Normans 'furious' in the early parts of the twelfth century, although he also viewed them as paragons of polish and finesse. Potts, 'Atque unum', 144-145 argues that the reputation for violent behaviour of the Normans was possibly a reaction to accusations of become effeminized and soft as they acculturated with the Franks. Webber, *Evolution of Norman Identity*, 30-31, argues that by the eleventh century the Normans in Normandy had to a degree adopted aspects of Christianity and were more or less 'established', although outsiders might continue to emphasize their treachery in the twelfth century. See further chapter 8.

betray more than merely a projection of feelings of anxiety (or desire) on others as a result of the imposition of models of self-control.<sup>30</sup> The civilizing trend led to a new sense of northern French self-confidence in the wake of the Investiture struggle and the First Crusade; calling the Germans furious was, for the French, a reaffirmation and self-allotted reward for imposing self-control and achieving finesse. It avowed the ‘necessity’ for refinement, and at the same time was a self-congratulatory boast which created possibilities to amass power.

### **Barbarity**

Although the tendency to contrast the civilized with the barbarian – whether ‘Cimmerian, Scythian, Celt, German, Tartar or Turk’ – is one of longevity, the concept and attribution of barbarity had fluctuated over the centuries up till the 1100s.<sup>31</sup> In antiquity, barbarity was contrasted with the Greek politico-cultural ideal of the polis and associated linguistically with non-Greek speaking peoples such as the Scythes.<sup>32</sup> The concept remained unchanged under imperial Roman rule, where *Romanitas* embodied civilization, manners, subjectivity to law and moral probity, whereas barbarity represented lawlessness, savagery and cruelty. These images were subsequently grafted onto the invading and migrating bands of Germanic peoples, who were generally viewed as tough and courageous, yet impulsive, with little regard for death and wild beast-like tempers, as Flavius Josephus (died c. 100 AD) put it, or, in the words of Seneca, a wild and free people ‘in the manner of lions and wolves who can neither serve nor command, for they do not have the power of a human intellect but a wild and unmanageable one’.<sup>33</sup> The Gauls however, although once fierce warriors, had been subjected and ‘softened’ as a result of their vicinity to Roman civilization and exposure to consumer goods imported by merchants.<sup>34</sup> As such, Gaul’s reputation was viewed as less barbaric than the German regions east of the Rhine.<sup>35</sup>

With the Christianization of Western Europe, barbarity slowly took on a religious connotation, as Christianity, itself viewed as a facet of civilization, coalesced with the ideals of *Romanitas*. Early influential intellectuals such as Ambrose and Augustine remained disdainful and wary of a successful conversion of undisciplined Germanic peoples to Christianity, and the antithesis between

30 See Sander Gilman, *Difference and Pathology*, 19 for stereotypes as the projection of anxiety.

31 Jones, ‘The Image of the Barbarian’, 378.

32 The classic study of the Greek view of barbarity is J. Jüthner, *Hellenen und Barbaren aus der Geschichte des Nationalbewusstseins* (Leipzig 1923); see also Thomas Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians* (2002); François Hartog, *The Mirror of Herodotus: The Representation of the Other in the Writing of History* (London 1998); Edith Hall, *Inventing the Barbarian: Greek Self-Definition Through Tragedy* (Oxford 1989).

33 Josephus, *De Bello Judaico* II 16 4; Seneca, *De ira* II 15: ‘leonum luporumque ritu ut seruire non possunt, ita nec imperare; non enim humani uim ingenii, sed feri et intractabilis habent’. Both citations are derived from Isaac, *The Invention of Racism*, 430-431. See his chapter 12 of *The Invention of Racism* for images of the German in antiquity.

34 Isaac, *The Invention of Racism*, 414-415 and 439.

35 A.S. Alföldi, ‘The Moral Barrier on Rhine and Danube’, in E. Birley (ed.), *Congress of Roman Frontier Studies* (Durham 1952), 1-16.

subjection to Roman law and customs and barbaric cruelty and disorderliness remained intact well into the sixth century. Still, the distinction between *Romanitas* and Germanic barbarism slowly faded. This was, according to William Jones, mostly due to the sustained success of these ‘barbarian’ invaders, who were now pulling the political strings in Western Europe in emerging Germanic kingdoms, and whose subjects – Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Franks – were less inclined to describe themselves as barbaric. Instead, the new barbarian was now heathen or heretic; the Silesians, Pomeranians and Prussians were ‘the most ferocious of barbarous heathens’.<sup>36</sup> And as heathen practices slowly perished or were accommodated to an expanding Christendom, so barbarity was dispelled more and more to the fringes of Europe. As a result, in this period the classical connotation of barbarity generally survived only in linguistic terms; *Latinitas* was juxtaposed to the vernacular or insufficient mastery of Latin grammar.<sup>37</sup>

Concurrently, difference and animosity predating the twelfth century between the western Franks and Germanic groups such as the Bavarians, Swabians, Franconians, and Saxons is clothed mostly in a linguistic dichotomy between Romance and Germanic languages.<sup>38</sup> On the meeting between West-Frankish Charles III and East-Frankish Henry I on the Rhine bank near Worms in 920, tenth-century Richer of Rheims thus reports: ‘The young Germans and the young French, whose differences in language as usual generated animosity towards each other, began first to hurl insults and then to draw their swords and inflict mortal wounds.’<sup>39</sup> Especially along the Walloon-Germanic linguistic border, language rivalry continued into the twelfth century, as for example in the *Ysengrimus* written in Ghent in the early 1150s, in which the ass is described as ‘a wretched German, and as crude as a willow-wood pipe, squeezing out guttural words from his Bavarian throat’.<sup>40</sup> An (often cited) anecdote in the *Life of St. Goar* by the Frank Wandalbert of Prüm (circa 840) relates how a German

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36 In *Chronicon Polonorum*, ed. Szlachtowski and Köpke, 425: ‘Barbarorum gentilium ferocissimas nationes’. For this quotation and further examples see Jones, ‘Image of the Barbarian’, 381-388.

37 Jones, ‘Image of the Barbarian’, 389.

38 Meyvaert, ‘Voicing National Antipathy’, 753-758; Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 37-43; Mendels, ‘Nationalismus in der mittelhochdeutschen und mittelniederländischen Literatur’, 299-300; Cerwinka, ‘Völkercharakteristiken’, 60; František Graus, *Die Nationenbildung der Westslawen im Mittelalter*, Jan Thorbecke Verlag (Sigmaringen 1980), 40; František Graus, ‘Entstehung der mittelalterlichen Staaten’, in *Historica* 10 (1965), 5-65, here at 60; Maschke, *Erwachen des Nationalbewusstseins*, 4; Mohr, ‘Frage des Nationalismus’, 110. For examples of animosity in Middle High German, see Byrn, ‘National Stereotypes Reflected in German Literature’, in Simon Forde, Lesley Johnson and Alan V. Murray (eds), *Concepts of National Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leeds 1995) 137-153, here at 145.

39 Richer of Reims, *Historiae* I 20, ed. Hoffmann, 57: ‘Germanorum Gallorumque iuvenes linguarum idiomate offensi, ut eorum mos est cum multa animositate maledictis sese lacessere coeperunt’.

40 *Ysengrimus* VI 381-382, transl. Mann 506-507: ‘Teutonicus miser et rudis est ut papa salignus, / Stridula Bauarico gutture uerba liquans’. However, the author himself was from the Low Countries. Both Voigt and Willems have therefore concluded that the author was – at this rather early date – sympathetic to the polish of French culture. Jill Mann, however, interprets this passage as ridiculing ‘a certain “snobism” about the use of French in Ghent’s bilingual society. Jill Mann, ‘Introduction’, in *Ysengrimus: Text and Translation, Commentary and Introduction* (Leiden, 1987), 165-167.

monk on the Rhine hated the Romance-speaking people so much that he could not even bear to look at them. Wandalbert attributes this behaviour to ‘stupidity born from barbaric ferocity’.<sup>41</sup>

The ‘vernacular harshness’ of the German tongue also contrasted brutally with the melodious flows of the Latin language on the Italian peninsula. German pilgrims visiting the shrines ‘rendered the sweet Gregorian melodies as if they were howling like wolves’.<sup>42</sup> In the ninth century, John the Deacon in his *vita* of Gregory the Great, writes that ‘the savage barbarity of their (German) drunken throats, whenever it seeks with “reflexions” and “repercussions” to render the beautiful chants, instead through its natural noisiness produces only unmodulated sounds similar to those made by farms carts clumsily creaking up a rutted hill’.<sup>43</sup> The battle cry of the Germans was likened to the sound of thunder, and Landulf of Milan said that at the crowning of Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1155, the Germans fought ‘as the nature of that people demanded, making terrible and strange sounds’.<sup>44</sup> Abhorrence and derision of the German language would continue in the twelfth century: the Germans were said to be deeply insulted by the mentioning of the saying ‘Tpwrut Aleman’, according to Walter Map. It was ‘a reproach which constantly causes many quarrels between them and foreigners’.<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately, the meaning is obscure but it was surely demeaning in view of the value attached to eloquence in courtly circles.<sup>46</sup>

41 Wandalbert of Prüm, *Vita et miracula sancti Goaris VII*, ed. Stiene, 51: ‘innata ex feritate barbarica stoliditas’.

42 Pietro Fedele, ‘Accenti d’italianità in Montecassino nel medioevo’ in *Bulletino del Istituto storico italiano* 47 (1932), 15. This remark is to be found in an eleventh-century Beneventan manuscript from S. Maria di Albaneta on music and chant (Monte Cassino MS 318 f. 15a), transl. Meyvaert, ‘Voicing National Antipathy’, 754. See also Peter of Eboli’s remark (himself part of the German emperor’s entourage) that the people of his region were adverse to learning the German language. Koht, ‘Dawn of Nationalism’, 278; Peter of Eboli, *Raccolta di tutti scrittori dell’istoria del regno di Napoli XVI* (Napels 1770), 14, vs. 122-123: ‘Disce prius mores Augusti; disce furorem, / Teutonicam rabiem quis tolerare potest? / Parce tuis canis, pueri tibi more licebit / Discere barbaricos barbarizare senos.’ He also says that the French speak with ‘ore rotundo’, 64 vs. 669-670.

43 *Vita Gregorii Magni* II 7 in *Patrologia Latina* 75, Col. 90D-91A; this and the above translations are taken from Meyvaert, ‘Voicing National Antipathy’, 754.

44 Landulf of Milan, *Historia Mediolanensis* II 24, ed. Bethmann and Wattenbach, 61: ‘Prout natura gentis suae exigebant sonitu terribili inauditoque garritu proeliantes’. See also the *Vitae pontificalis* II 330 for Cardinal Boso’s likening of their battle cry to thunder.

45 Walther Map, *De nugis curialium* v 5, 459. The saying was apparently also used by Robert of Artois, in a reply to Adolf of Nassau, an ally of Edward I in the French-English hostilities in 1294. See Malcolm Vale, ‘Edward I and the French: Rivalry and Chivalry’, in P.R. Coss and S.D. Lloyd, *Thirteenth Century England II. Proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Conference 1987* (Woodbridge 1988), 175. See also the early thirteenth-century remark in the Alsace *Chronicon Ebersheimense*, MGH SS 23, ed. L. Weiland (Hannover 1874), 433: ‘Cumque eos ut ab infestatione ipsorum cessarent deprecarentur, illi, ut Gallorum moris est, Teutonicam linguam subsannantes, cum derisione eos de conspectu suo abegerunt.’

46 John of Salisbury explicitly says that Theodwin of Porto, a German bishop and papal legate on the Second Crusade, ‘differing from the Franks in customs and language, was considered a barbarian’, and as such was not held in high esteem. John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis* XXIV, ed. and transl. Chibnall, 55: ‘moribus et lingua dissonans Francis barbarus habebatur’. See also John of Salisbury’s letter to Gerard Pucelle, circa May 1168, in *The Letters of John of Salisbury. Volume 2: The Later Letters (1163-1180)*, ed. and transl. W.J. Millor and C.N.L. Brooke (Oxford 1979), vol. 2, no. 277. In contrast, the French were praised by Otto of Freising for their ‘subtlety and eloquence’. Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive Historia de duabus civitatibus* IV 8, ed. Buchner, 318: ‘Gallicanam subtilitatem et eloquentiam’; Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 72.

Such partially aesthetic sensory judgments of the Germanic tongue were labelled as ‘barbaric’ in the classical, linguistic sense. But by the eleventh century, with the spread of Christianity over most parts of North-West Europe, the concept of the barbarian once again took on its full classical socio-cultural meaning, possibly under influence of a resurge in classical learning, although now retaining connotations of a deficient Christianity.<sup>47</sup> Now the *barbaricus* was again savage, cruel, treacherous, not subject to law, lacking reason, and driven by lust. Now, however, he could be found under the umbrella of Christianity (although under the outer rim), dwelling in a broad stroke of land stretching from Ireland, Scotland and Scandinavia eastwards towards the home of the Tartars. Now, the unruly peoples living on the ‘Celtic fringe’ – the inhabitants of Ireland and Wales and Scotland –, in Scandinavia, the Slavic and Baltic regions might be portrayed as weighed down by a full package of uncivilized traits and cultural deficiencies, deterred by socio-economic backwardness, living in a pastoral milk-drinking, meat-eating society, living off cattle herds with little agricultural organization, trade commerce or urban settlement, as Gerald of Wales famously wrote.<sup>48</sup> Sexual lewdness, ferocity, and a lack of reason, acted out in a politically fragmented, lawless society, were further tokens of their barbarity, as was their semi-pagan, deficient Christian nature and cruelty.<sup>49</sup>

### **Rise of the *preudomme***

In the same period as the re-emergence of classical notions of barbarity, Western Europe also witnessed a civilizing trend in which new behavioural and socio-cultural ideals were set for the nobility. David Crouch has argued that more than a century before the code of chivalry was established around 1170, there was already a standard of noble conduct to live up to: that of the *preudomme*.<sup>50</sup> His origins lay in those of secular courtliness, and possibly went back to the tenth century, retaining currency well into the thirteenth. According to Crouch, this ideal of the *preudomme* emerged within a lay milieu, and was not forged specifically by a clerical class under the influence of Ciceronian humanism.<sup>51</sup> However, given that many of the vernacular songs were however written by clerical authors such as Chrétien de Troyes, it seems almost impossible to make a sharp distinction between the courtly clerical and lay milieus and the ideals and values circulating among their members. William Jones has connected these denunciations to the ‘anti-primitivism’ of

47 Jones, ‘The Image of the Barbarian’, 394. In addition to Bartlett, Jones and Gillingham’s socio-cultural concepts of barbarity in the twelfth century, I would stress that the religious aspect of barbarity retained its importance. See chapter 1.

48 Much has been written about Gerald of Wales’ ethnographic writings and the stereotyping of the ‘Celtic Fringe’. See Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales*, especially chapters 6 and 7, and chapter 8 note 53 below.

49 Both John Gillingham and David Crouch mention the Anglo-Norman ‘shock’ when confronted with the cruelty of the Welsh, Scots, and Danes. Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 64 and Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century*, 14-15.

50 Crouch, *The Birth of the Nobility*, esp. chapter 2, 29-86.

51 On the other hand, Stephen Jaeger, in *The Origins of Courtliness*, 113-126, does link the rise of these ideals to courtly clerical norms under the influence of Ciceronian concepts. It is however probably impossible to draw a strict distinction between the two milieus.

Cicero, which ‘pervaded the medieval concept of barbarism’ in the eleventh century.<sup>52</sup> The moralizing lessons which the clergy, influenced by classical literature, set before the laity, surely played a significant role in the shaping of these ideals for the noble elite. And these ideals came with benefits. Through displaying the virtues of the *preudomme*, a noble might hope to gain advancement and reward at court.<sup>53</sup> However, although both clerics and lay nobles could initially be a *preudomme*, with the rise of chivalry his virtues were eventually to merge with those of the ideal knight, especially in the vernacular French literature of the twelfth century. Eventually, thus, as the knight became equated with nobility, the virtues of the *preudomme* would fade into those of the *preu chevalier*.<sup>54</sup>

But who was the *preudomme*? He was a man ‘of mature sense and wisdom’.<sup>55</sup> Trustworthy, loyal, generous, and modest. But above all, he was intelligent and demonstrated restraint in warfare.<sup>56</sup> There is a distinct emphasis on the virtues of reticence and good judgment, in contrast to rash courage.<sup>57</sup> For example, in the *Song of Roland* (c. 1100), Oliver rebukes Roland for his rashness, which subsequently leads to his tragic death.<sup>58</sup> Bravery and valour are virtuous, but wise (*sage*) counsel, discretion, and reason are equally paramount. It is thus in this period that the virtue of *prudens*, which could mean basic worldly wisdom, suddenly appears as an epithet for the noble layman.<sup>59</sup> Of course, hardiness (physical toughness and bravery) remained important, but they were now to be checked by discretion. One particular virtue was forbearance towards other warriors, the willingness to accept ransoms instead of murdering captured knights, which possibly developed under the influence of tournament morale. Cruelty, greed, pillaging and rapine were its antitheses, as was loyalty praised and contrasted with bribery.<sup>60</sup>

At the same time that the ideals of the *preudomme* were being put forward, notably in Old French romances and *chansons de geste*, the Germans were increasingly represented as embodying the complete opposite: as mindless, raging warriors. It must be said that in comparison to the barbarizing ethnography of the Irish or Slavs written in this period, German society and culture was not depicted as a wasteland of civilization. A full-blown contemporary description of Germanic ethnic groups balancing on a lower rung of civilization does not exist. However, there are faint allusions to semi-paganism, a saying for example circulating in manuscripts of the period remarking that ‘the Teutons are barely catholic, and nobody’s friend’.<sup>61</sup> Of much greater weight, however, is the re-emergence in

52 Jones, ‘Image of the Barbarian’, 397.

53 Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 41.

54 Idem, 30.

55 Idem, 32.

56 Idem, 46.

57 Alexander Murray, *Reason and Society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford 1986), 126.

58 Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 32.

59 Murray, *Reason and Society*, 126-127 and 132-136.

60 Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 63, 67.

61 Walther, ‘Scherz’, no. 101, 278: ‘Theutonici vix catholici, nullius amici’, in thirteenth-century MS London BM Vespasian B. XIII. Similar mention is made of the Hungarians in Walther no. 67 in a fifteenth-century manuscript, Prague Metropolitan Bibl. 1641f. 171 v.

this period of Lucan's epithet *furor Teutonicus*, and with it a whole array of accompanying socio-cultural images.<sup>62</sup> This image of the raging German will be broken down below.

### Raging German minds

From the end of the eleventh century, especially although not exclusively in French and Italian sources, the Germans were increasingly portrayed as treacherous, irrational men given to gluttony and drunkenness. Landulf of Milan, a late eleventh-century historian, wrote that 'their minds were given to gluttony and drunkenness (...) the most cruel Teutons do not know left from right'.<sup>63</sup> The moral lists of epithets, compiled in monastic circles, generally categorize the Teutons as gluttonous, the Saxons as mighty but stupid and headstrong, and the Bavarians as blunt.<sup>64</sup>

From the latter decades of the eleventh century, the behaviour of the Germans in battle is particularly described as 'furious', the *furor Teutonici*, both on the Italian peninsula and on the crusading missions. 'The fierce fury of the Germans', the 'German rage' or *rabies*, are much-used epithets, such as in the early thirteenth-century *Philippide* written by William the Breton, court poet of King Philip II of France.<sup>65</sup> 'The furious stubbornness of the Germans', says the *Chronicle of Saint Martin of Tours*.<sup>66</sup> 'German fury laid to waste Gazzoldo and Marcaria' during Frederick II's campaign against Mantua in 1236.<sup>67</sup> Or, as the author of the *Life of Louis VII* puts it: 'The Germans are the most impatient of men, who are thoughtless in matters of war, but instead furious in their own raging minds.'<sup>68</sup> Finally, to quote the famous and much discussed passage from Suger's *Deeds of Louis the Fat* on the coronation of Henry V in Rome in 1111 and the treachery of German knights:

The mad Germans invented a pretext for a quarrel, gnashed their teeth in fury, and began to rage out of control. Their treachery caught everyone by surprise. With drawn swords they rushed about like men who were out of their minds and attacked the Romans who, properly in such a place, were not armed. The Germans shouted threats that all the Roman clergy, bishops as well as

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62 See Ernst Dümmler, 'Über den furor Teutonicus', in *Sitzungsberichte der königlich Preussische Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* 9 (1897), 112-126.

63 Landulf of Milan, *Historiae Mediolanensis* II 22, ed. Bethmann and Wattenbach, 59: 'Gulositatem et animos vino deditos (...) saevissimi Theutonici qui nesciunt quid sit inter dexteram et sinistram'.

64 Walther, 'Scherz', no. 99, 277-278, in the Einsiedeln manuscript from the twelfth century and the fourteenth century MS Cambridge Corpus Christi 139; see Appendixes VI and VIII.

65 William the Breton, *Philippide* IX vs. 62, XI 292, vs. 401, ed. Delaborde, vol. 2, 250, 330, 335. Cf. Dümmler, 'Über den furor Theutonicus' offers many more references.

66 *Chronicon Sancti Martini Turonense*, ed. Holder-Egger, 468: 'Theutonum cervicosa furiositas'. For the Germans as stiff-necked see further chapter 4 note 25.

67 Rolandinus Patavinus, *Chronica* III 9, ed. Jaffé, 60: 'Currēnsque per partes ulteriores Theotonicus furor vastavit Gazum et Marchariam aliasque villas exinde Mantuani districtus.'

68 *Vita Ludovici VII* XX, *Historiae Francorum Scriptores*, ed. Duchesne, vol. 4, 406: 'Teutonici utpote homines impatientissimi et qui non sunt in armorum negotiis circumspēcti, sed propria capitis dementia furibundi.' Quotation in Dümmler, 'Über den furor Teutonicus', 122

cardinals, would be seized or slaughtered, and going even beyond the limits of insanity, they did not fear to lay their wicked hands on the pope himself.<sup>69</sup>

Out of their minds, gnashing their teeth, treacherous – ‘pro-French’ abbot Suger of Saint-Denis describes the Germans in terms that are in stark contrast with the ideals of chivalrous restraint. In addition, the Latin sources relate German fury to a general lack of control in eating and drinking: gluttony and excess. In the twelfth century, although excessive drinking was associated especially with the Anglo-Saxons and Normans, other peoples from the northern or easterly regions of Europe such as the Bohemians, Slavs, or Germans were also said to have reviling drinking and eating habits, reflecting the commands and taboos of society.<sup>70</sup> ‘For the Germans drinking is living’, is a saying recorded by Margalits.<sup>71</sup> In addition, drunkenness meant loss of control, opening the gates to aggressive emotions. On the Italian peninsula – where German knights often fought in campaigns under the authority of the Holy Roman Empire – monk Donizo of Canossa wrote circa 1115 about the Germans in Mantua:

Now you celebrate Easter with liars from Germany,  
 Who persist in loving Bacchus, vehemently wallow in excess.  
 Friendly brawls are unknown in their language.  
 When they are drunk, they unsheathe their swords  
 After harsh words and slash their companions stomachs.  
 They all ravish their food like murderous wolves,  
 They know to destroy the holy temples.<sup>72</sup>

The corruption of Germanic words such as *trincare* (to drink) and *brindisi* (cheers, from ‘bring dirs’) in Italian are later testimonies to this proverbial drinking.<sup>73</sup>

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69 Suger, *The Deeds of Louis the Fat*, transl. Richard Cusimano and John Moorhead, x, 52-53. Other passages, speaking of the Germans as stiff-necked envoys, grinding their teeth with German temerity, in x, 56, 60. Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 46; Dümmler, ‘Über den furor Teutonicus’, 120-121; Florin Curta, ‘Ethnic Stereotypes in Suger’s *Deeds of Louis the Fat*’, in *The Haskins Society Journal: Studies in Medieval History* 16 (2005), 62-76.

70 Elias, *Civilizing Process*, 54.

71 Walther, ‘Scherz’ no. 74: ‘Germanis bibere est vivere’. Eduard Margalits, *Florilegium proverbiorum universae latinitatis: proverbia, proverbiales sententiae gnomaeque classicae mediae et infimae latinitatis* (Budapest 1895), Supplement, 31. In the *Carminum proverbialium*, an anthology of rhyming proverbs (1576), the Bavarian ‘defiles’; the Saxon drinks. Excessive drinking was already commented on in antiquity; cf. also Salvian of Marseille, *De gubernatione Dei* IV 67-68: ‘ebrietas Alamanni’. Jacques de Vitry famously noted that students in Paris called the Germans ‘furious and with disgusting manners’. Jacques de Vitry, *The Historia Occidentalis of Jacques de Vitry: A Critical Edition*, ed. Hinnebusch: ‘Tueticos furibundos et in conviviis suis obscenos dicebant’.

72 Donizone, *Vita Mathildis* II 5 v. 530, ed. Bethmann, 390: ‘Nunc celebras Pascha cum falsis ex Alemanna / qui peramant Bachum, flagrant ad luxuriandum: illorum linguas nescis faciles quoque rixas. / Cum sunt potati, pro verbus fertur amaris / ense denudant, sociorum viscera truncant; mordent more lupi cum sumunt pabula cuncti; atria sanctorum violenter frangere norunt.’

Brutality, bluntness, and a general disorderliness, lack of civility, and *discipline* among the Germans were thus bewailed by the clerical authors of the period. But an emphasis on restraint and good value judgment was certainly not restricted simply to a Latin milieu. It was a significant element of the vernacular songs written for the lay nobility. As said, it is difficult to ascertain to which extent the lay nobility were imbued with these values externally by clerics, or themselves articulated values of restraint and control. It is therefore useful to determine the scope of the imagery in vernacular sources, and to view how the French appropriated a reputation in keeping with that of the *preudomme*.

### **Mirroring images**

By the second half of the twelfth century, the secular ideal of the *preudomme* would be exemplified in many *chansons de geste* for the noble lay elite to mirror themselves in. The authors of the *chansons de geste* and medieval romances were forging tales to educate the lay nobility in ideal behaviour, to teach what the *preudomme* was.<sup>74</sup> Virtuous heroes were to be mirrored by wicked knights. In the vernacular literature, especially, the German furious fighter might thus serve as a convenient opposite for French civility and chivalry. As the authors often came from the regions bordering the French-German language border, it was perhaps inviting to cast the German nobleman in the role of the *anti-preudomme*, as their reputation as bold fighters was sometimes pushed to the background. Instead they were a *pute gent*.<sup>75</sup> A few examples will illustrate this point.

In vernacular sources, the author did not simply bewail German fury. The most efficient attack in Old French texts was seemingly to ridicule the Germans' so-called strength and tall bodies. Furthermore, the pugnacious Germans often tasted defeat at the hands of the French, whereupon they were said to ignominiously flee the battle ground.<sup>76</sup> The so-called dapper Germans repeatedly turn tail in *Aymeri of Narbonne*, which is ascribed to poet Bertrand de Bar-sur-Aube of the Champagne.<sup>77</sup> Again, in *Galeran de Bretagne*, a tournament between the Germans and the Bretons ends in flight, although the haughty Germans are convinced of their victory.<sup>78</sup> Loyalty, another virtue of the noble man, is also lacking. In *La mort de Garin le Loherain*, German knights betray their lord for money. In the early vernacular French translation of Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, *Faits des Romains* (1213-

73 Helmut Glück, *Deutsch als Fremdsprache in Europa vom Mittelalter bis zur Barockzeit* (Berlin/New York 2002), 254.

74 Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, 46-51.

75 Karl Ludwig Zimmermann, 'Die Beurteilung der Deutschen in der französischen Literatur des Mittelalters mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der *chansons de geste*', in *Romanische Forschungen* 29 (1911), 222-316, here at 257, 306 ff.; Wace, *Roman de Rou* 3 215, ed. Holden, vol. 1, 120; Jean Renart, *Galeran de Bretagne* vs. 5088-5089, ed. Foulet, 155; Jean Bodel, *La Chanson des Saisnes*, 3993 (L), ed. Brasseur, vol. 1, 353 about the Saxons.

76 Zimmermann, 'Die Beurteilung der Deutschen', 271.

77 *Aymeri de Narbonne* vs. 2464-2465, ed. Louis Demaison (2 volumes, Paris 1887), vol. 2, 105.

78 Jean Renart, *Galeran de Bretagne* 5613 ff, ed. Foulet, 171 ff.

1214), the French (save the Normans) are famed for their courage, whereas the Germans are barbarous and savage, treacherous, robbers, ‘large people, coarse, disloyal, without sense’<sup>79</sup>

Besides virtues such as bravery and loyalty, which are specifically related to military skills, the Germans were again ridiculed for a general lack of cultural refinement. Similar to Donizo of Canossa’s remark is that in the *Partonopaeus*, according to which the Germans lack all sense of humour:

The Germans are much vexed  
When the French act with ruse,  
And Germans cannot bear  
To suffer a joke at their expense.<sup>80</sup>

Nothing, according to Gautier d’Arras (died 1185), was more ridiculous than an ‘Aleman who is courteous and wants to love’.<sup>81</sup> This joke, in the Breton romance *Ille et Galeron*, was initially composed for Beatrix of Bourgogne (1145-1184), the wife of Frederick I Barbarossa. Again, the Germans are beguiled for their ugly language, singing like the devil in *Le roman de la Rose ou de Guillaume de Dole*.<sup>82</sup> Also, from the thirteenth century more emphasis is laid on heavy drinking, which earlier was associated particularly with the English and Normans.<sup>83</sup> In sum, as the character Jouglet says in the same *Roman de la Rose*, when asked who his companions are: ‘A whole lot of Germans – I nearly died of boredom!’<sup>84</sup>

By mirroring themselves with the ugly Germans, the northern French aristocracy was thus offered an image of how not to behave. At the same time, the Germans were the butt end of French ridicule, which betrays a sense of French cultural superiority which would only increase; it also breathes self-gratulatory relief and reaffirmation that the French themselves had managed to appropriate chivalrous values and attain self-control.

The portrayal of Germans in Old French literature was not entirely negative. The Germans’ reputation for courage and strong physical endowment was so firmly established that the authors of the Old French *chansons de geste* could not ignore it. Germans fighting in the entourage of

79 Mireille Schmidt-Chazan, ‘Les traductions de la “Guerre des Gaules” et le sentiment national au Moyen Age’, in *Annales des Bretagne et dan pays de l’Ouest* 87 (1980), 387-407, here at 392-393: ‘granz genz, corsues, desvees, sans sens’.

80 *Partonopeu de Blois* vs.8783-8788, ed. Josph Gildea (Villanova 1967), 357: ‘Li Aleman sont molt gabé / Que François les ont reüsé, / Et Tiois ne sevent soffrir / Nul gap s’il n’est a lor plaisir.’

81 Gautier d’Arras, *Ille et Galeron*, vs. 3929, ed. Yves Lefèvre (Paris 1988), 145: ‘Cil est plus gabés c’Aleman / Qui cortois est et velt amer.’ Kern, ‘Der mittelalterliche Deutsche in französischer Ansicht’, in *Historische Zeitschrift* 108 (1912), 237-254, here at 241; Max Remppis, *Die Vorstellungen von Deutschland im altfranzösischen Heldenepos und Roman und Ihre Quellen* (Halle 1911), 115. I need to

82 Jean Renart, *Le roman de la rose ou de Guillaume de Dole* vs. 2215, ed. Lecoy, 68.

83 See especially chapter 9; cf. Zimmermann, ‘Die Beurteilung der Deutschen’, 283 for German drinking.

84 Jean Renart, *The Romance of the Rose*, transl. Patricia Terry and Nancy Vine Durling, 48.

Charlemagne, in the *chansons de geste*, were viewed as faithful comrades within a Christian army.<sup>85</sup> Traditionally, Germans were also known for their tall, strong body frames. In Norman William of Apulia's *Deeds of Robert Guiscard*, the Teutons (mostly Swabians) fighting the Normans on the Italian Peninsula in the Battle of Civitate (1053) are said to be famous for their long hair, good looks and height.<sup>86</sup> In the twelfth century, this reputation was explained etymologically in Thomas of Cantimpré's *Liber de natura rerum* by saying that the Teutons in ancient times descended from giants.<sup>87</sup> In many glosses on Lucan's *Pharsalia*, the Germanic god Teutates was identified with Mars or Mercurius, and in the eleventh century the deity Teutates had been appointed as name-giver of the Germans; in the middle of the thirteenth century, the discovery of a repository of bones near Vienna was identified as the grave of Teutonic giants.<sup>88</sup> In vernacular chansons too, Germanic tallness was remarked upon. In *Galeron de Bretagne*, composed by the trouvère Renart, the Austrian duke Guynant is described as 'fierce and large and tall, with strong arms like the Germans'; in the thirteenth-century epic *Anseis de Carthage*, the Germans are 'a large people, with adroit hearts'.<sup>89</sup>

Nevertheless, the overall image of the Germans can be summarized as negative. According to Fritz Kern, this transition from a positive reputation in *chansons de geste* to a negative image occurred after the Battle of Bouvines in 1214.<sup>90</sup> Karl Ludwig Zimmermann also stated that German dirtiness and greed especially crops up from the thirteenth century onwards in vernacular sources.<sup>91</sup> However, as demonstrated, such images were already circulating much earlier in the Latin sources. They might, therefore, be explained less as a reaction to the outcome of actual feats in battle, but instead as a reaction to civilizing notions, already prevalent in the twelfth century. The German's double-edged reputation of strength and rage thus presented the French, in their pursuit of chivalrous

85 Zimmermann, 'Die Beurteilung der Deutschen', 230-242.

86 William of Apulia, *La Geste de Robert Guiscard* II 93-95. Cf. Huguette Taviani-Carozzi, 'Une bataille franco-allemande en Italie', in Carozzi and Taviani-Carozzi (eds), *Peuples du Moyen Âge*, 181-211, here at 202-203, notes the homogenous physical characteristics attributed to the Germans, who are also termed arrogant. Ultimately, the Norman author was emphasizing defeat of the 'German' contingents, removing the blame from the German Pope Leo IX, instead turning to the argument of ethnicity. Note that William, at II 153-154, further discusses the contribution of the Swabians, who were deemed courageous yet unskilled in horsemanship. A similar observation is made by Byzantine John Kinnamos in the twelfth century writing about the Second Crusade, who remarks that the Germans were more skilled as infantry than on horseback, especially when confronted with the French, who taunted the Germans. The taunt has been translated in 'Budge Germans' in John Kinnamos, *Deeds of John and Manuel Comnenus*, transl. by Charles M. Brand (New York 1976), 70, although the meaning is not entirely clear.

87 Thomas of Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum* III 5, 40 ('De monstruosis hominibus orientes'), ed. Boese, 100: 'Secundum quod Lucanus et multi alii testantur, constat in Theutonia gigantes plurimos extitisse, ita quod a Theutano gigante maximo nomen Theutonia sortiretur.' (Secondly that Lucan and many others testify that it is agreed that there existed many giants in Germany, so that the name Teutonia is derived from a huge giant called Theutanus.)

88 Kästner, 'Der großmächtige Riese und Recke Teuton', 81-82. Cf. Lucan, *Pharsalia* I 144 ff, who writes about the Celtic god Teutates.

89 Jean Renart, *Galeron de Bretagne* vs. 6048-6049, ed. Foulet, 184: 'fel et gros et lons / s'a les braz fors com Alemans'; *Anseis von Karthago* vs. 10080, ed. Johann Alton (Tübingen 1892), 363: 'unes gens grans, ki ont les cors adrois'.

90 Kern, 'Der mittelalterliche Deutsche', 251.

91 Zimmermann, *Die Beurteilung der Deutschen*, 270-311.

ideals, with an imagery both with which to compete (strength, courage) and to ridicule (the German rage). By doing so, they created a stronger concept of the French chivalrous nature, which might be viewed as a reward for their attempts to restrain their urges.

### Noble French knights

In contrast, whereas the German could symbolize the opposite of the *preudomme*, from the northern French perspective the men of northern France were often depicted as brave fighters, proud, and prudent. To their detriment – but this seems a recurrent theme regarding knights in general – they were accused of arrogance and overconfidence.<sup>92</sup> Generally speaking, however, the Franks were handsome, tall, bearded and heavily armoured. More importantly, they were jolly and light-hearted, as in *La Chevalerie d'Ogier de Danemarque*: ‘The French live merrily and joyously, they return from the host with great joy’.<sup>93</sup> Numerous verses attest that they are the epitome of chivalry in battle: ‘Saxons are arrogant, French noble and brave’.<sup>94</sup> Kindly or honourable, they were also deeply religious men. In battle they were excellent fighters, good vassals, and in the face of the enemy fierce and proud. Although sources acknowledge that the arrogant men of the Île de France ridiculed others, otherwise, they were well-dressed, strong and handsome.

The Normans, too, were famed for their horsemanship. In the *Song of Roland*, they are ‘armed, handsome and fast horsemen’.<sup>95</sup> In Jean Bodel’s *Chanson des Saisnes*, the men of Herupé (the region just south of Paris) are also ‘preudome’, ‘hardi’, ‘bon chevalier et sage’ but arrogant (*orguillos*).<sup>96</sup> More to the south, the men of Berry are however known for plunder, and are often called ‘felons’.<sup>97</sup>

To an extent, the portrayal of the nobility in *chansons de geste* reflects the variety of images of regional groups inhabiting territories under French titular hegemony. France remained a geographical concept, divided in independent and semi-independent fiefdoms, some held by the

92 Künzel, *Beelden en zelfbeelden*, 55 has argued that *superbia*, pride, was typical of the aristocracy as it was necessary for them to emphasize social differences, especially when subordinates attempted to rise on the social ladder. Mireille Schmidt-Chazan, ‘Le point de vue des chroniqueurs de la France du Nord sur les Allemands dans la première moitié du XII<sup>e</sup> siècle’, in *Centres de recherches relations internationales de l’Université de Metz. Travaux et Recherches 1972/3* (Metz 1974), 13-36, here at 17; cf. Coulton, ‘Nationalism in the Middle Ages’, 33-34, quotes the Franciscan Salimbene, who denounces the arrogance of the French in thinking they rule the world in 1287. Compare also the accusation made by the English author of the *Itinerarium Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*, ed. Stubbs I 295, of the French being arrogant, fickle and lazy, in contrast to their Carolingian ancestors. Cf. Murray, ‘National Identity, Language’, 122.

93 Raimbert de Paris, *La Chevalerie d'Ogier de Danemarque* vs. 2034-2035, ed. Mario Eusebi (Milan 1963), 138: ‘François repairent baut e lié e joiant; / A l’ost revienent grant joie demenant’.

94 Jean Bodel, *La chanson des Saisnes* vs. 5257: ‘Saisne sont orguillex, François gentil et ber’. See Julius Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker im altfranzösischen nationalen Epos* (Heidelberg 1912), 26-30 for many references.

95 *La Chanson de Roland*, vs. 3047, ed. Segre, vol. 1, 246: ‘armes unt beles et bons cevals curanz’. The French are brave, valiant, and proud as lions. See also Koht, ‘Dawn of Nationalism’, 267 for the French ‘outstanding military qualities’.

96 Jean Bodel, *La chanson des Saisnes* 641-642, 661, 717 (Redaction A(R)), ed. Brasseur, vol. 1, 54, 60.

97 Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker*, 51.

Angevins. Culturally and linguistically France was split north-south into the ‘two Frances’, where, in Dante’s terminology, the Langue d’Oil (in the north) and Langue d’Oc (in the south) were spoken.<sup>98</sup> In addition, the distinctive cultures of Gascony, Brittany, Burgundy and Aquitaine – territories over which the royal dynasties at times had had extremely weak control – were reflected in the stereotypes of their inhabitants. In the epic sources, men from Gascony are generally ‘bon chevaliers’, good knights, although crusade sources speak of their reputation for cowardly behaviour.<sup>99</sup> The people from the Provence are often mentioned in the same breath as those of Gascony, reflecting the north-south divide of France. Although the men from Brittany are good knights when fighting foreign enemies, they are generally held in low esteem within northern France. In *Girart de Roussillon*, the English and the men from Brittany are ‘a wicked people, who go about pillaging, shouting and rejoicing in their noise’.<sup>100</sup> The Bretons were seen to lack civilized manners, greeting strangers in an unfriendly manner; eleventh-century Norman sources speak of their inferior societal organization, still living in a pastoral society – using the Bretons to emphasize their own increasing urbanity (after all, they did descend from pirates).<sup>101</sup> On the eastern rim of the Romance-speaking territory, men from the Lorraine were also viewed as courageous, yet accused of a lack of restraint in eating and drinking; of plunder and cruelty. The men of Burgundy, however, differ little from the French in courage, pride, alongside whom they fight as equals.<sup>102</sup>

In addition, possibly echoing climate theory, men from the north were viewed as tougher and less inclined to wiliness than in the south. On the western and eastern fringes, civilization balanced on a lower rung; in the south, decadence might hold sway. Thus, from the close of the twelfth century some troubadours contrasted the martial prowess of northern France with Occitan joy of love.<sup>103</sup>

In contrast to the German knights, however, the French generally regarded themselves as courteous, ‘bon chevaliers’. The Franci were excellent fighters, despite internal differences. The same principle is visible on a number of levels in crusader literature. Ultimately, as part of God’s militia, faced by the religious other (the Saracen), the whole army was termed Franci. However, internally, members of various contingents might compete as God’s soldiers, emphasizing differences. Unity and difference thus depended on perspective. This is discussed further below.

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98 For regional identities and the north-south divide, see Yves Lequin (ed.), *La Mosaïque France. Histoire des étrangers et de l’immigration* (Paris 1988), esp. 131-154.

99 Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker*, 46.

100 *Girart de Roussillon* vs. 6328-6329, ed. Hackett, vol. 2, 286: ‘une genz male, / Vant sobrant é robant, cornant lor gale’; cf. Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker*, 53.

101 Idem, 4. Like the Celts in Ireland and Wales, they are known for their harp music, songs, and performance as entertainers.

102 Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker*, 40-42.

103 Paterson, *The World of the Troubadours*, 5.

### **'French' crusaders**

The crusaders, although putting up a united front and using the denominator 'Franci' when confronted with Byzantines and Muslims, internally recognized distinctive identities.<sup>104</sup> Many chroniclers sum up the groups separately, in similar fashion to the authors of the vernacular *chansons de geste*. This was partly the upshot of the classical geographical concepts some of these chroniclers were working with; the Norman Ralph of Caen, for example, uses Agrippa's division of the three Gauls (Gallia Belgica, Aquitania and Lugdunensis).<sup>105</sup> Moreover, regional cultural and linguistic differences and political fragmentation continued to contravene unifying forces. In the crusading sources, the cultural ethnic divide featured especially between *Francigenae* (men from northern France), and the southern Provençals or, more broadly speaking, groups from the patchwork of territories held by nominal though largely independent vassals living in the region known as Occitania.<sup>106</sup> Only in the second half of the thirteenth century, after the Albigensian Crusade, did northern France begin to impose its language and culture on the south.

It might be said that by emphasizing the array of affiliations, the crusading chronicles were emphasizing the universal Christian character of the mission to the Holy Land. Just as the popular lists recording peoples or commodities presented the diverse sum of all things under the heavenly expanse, so the diversity of peoples might represent the whole of the Christian oecumene fighting the Saracens.

However, in some sources, the term *Franci* might have different meanings in different contexts, either referring to the whole crusading army – as adherents to the Christian faith (al-Ifranġ in Arabic) – or specifically to men from northern France; the same applies to the *Francigenae*. In the face of the enemy, the crusaders marched together under the denominator 'Franci', as said Raymond of Aguilers.<sup>107</sup> Although the term 'Franci' generally signified those from northern France, in some cases even the Norman crusaders from southern Italy were called Franks, as in the *Gesta*

104 Murray, 'National Identity, Language', 107-130.

105 Laetitia Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein im frühen 12.Jahrhundert', in *Historisches Jahrbuch* 74 (1955), 681-687, here at 684. Ralph of Caen, *The Gesta Tancredi of Ralph of Caen*, ed. Bernard S. Bachrach and David S. Bachrach, 106. See also Verena Epp, 'Die Entstehung eines "Nationalbewußtseins" in den Kreuzfahrerstaaten', in *Deutsches Archiv für Erforschung des Mittelalters* 45 (1989), 596-604.

106 According to Andrew Roach, 'Occitania Past and Present: Southern Consciousness in Medieval and Modern French Politics', *History Workshop Journal Issue* 43 (1997), 1-22, here at 4, there was little internal collective identification in Occitania in this period. See also Paterson, *The World of the Troubadours*, 5, who states that the Occitan troubadours' identity was specifically contrasted with Saracens and Jews, and not within the Christian world. However, as Elisabeth Schulze-Busacker clearly states, twelfth century troubadours viewed France as a foreign country. See 'French conceptions of Foreigners and Foreign Languages in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', in *Romance Philology* 41 (1987), 21-47, here at 30.

107 For example, Raymond of Aguilers calls both the northern and southern French 'Francigenae', *Historia Francorum* 6, in *Le "Liber" de Raymond d'Aguilers*, eds Hugh and Hill, 52; cf. Schneidmüller, *Nomen patriae*, 106-108; Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein', 684. For an earlier example of the muddled ethnic terminology, I refer to Taviani-Carozzi, 'Une bataille franco-allemande en Italie', 204-205, who notes that late eleventh-century Norman William of Apulia called the Normans living in Normandy both Normans, Gauls, and Francigenae. Here, Francigenae means 'French' in a broad sense.

*Francorum*, which constantly emphasizes the unanimity of the crusaders.<sup>108</sup> Guibert of Nogent's concept of Francia in the *Deeds of God through the Franks* is also somewhat expansive, stretching from Flanders and Normandy in the north, southwards to the region of Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne, where the First Crusade was preached by pope Urban II.<sup>109</sup> His remark that Bohemund, a Norman, was a Frank because Normandy was part of Francia, has been quoted to emphasize a new, expanding French identity, although this might be interpreted in terms of royal hegemony rather than ethnic awareness.<sup>110</sup>

Certainly, within internal ranks, the character and behaviour of the French contingents were not viewed as homogenous, the Normans in northern France, the southerners and men from the heartland surrounding Île de France representing distinct groups. The Norman reputation was slightly problematic, as it might be unclear to whom the Normans referred – those in the France or southern Italy.<sup>111</sup> From the perspective of the knights on the battlefield, it is likely that the Normans who had settled in southern Italy, crusading under Bohemund, and those from the Duchy of Normandy in France were viewed as separate contingents.<sup>112</sup> From a southern viewpoint, eleventh-century Apulian and Sicily-based Geoffrey Malaterra (possibly of Norman descent) described the Normans as cunning, quick to avenge injury, eager for profit, and flatterers, who enjoyed an outward display of martial life.<sup>113</sup> Lust for booty and land was seen as typically Norman. Nevertheless, stereotypical Norman qualities were also that they were full of energy, vigorous, and courageous. According to Amatus of Montecassino, the Normans thus produced strong knights.<sup>114</sup> Robert Bartlett has stressed their focus on 'a new cruelty, brutality and bloodthirstiness, for savagery was an important part of the image of vigour and valour'.<sup>115</sup> However, as Natasha Hodgson has noted, the reputation for aggressive behaviour cut both ways, for although it was likely that the Normans were considered brave, bellicose and adventurous, their greed and plunder, 'the dark side of Normanness', 'clashed violently with ideas about the proper distribution of booty, unity, and right intent in the context of crusading'.<sup>116</sup> Bartlett believes this image was deliberately fashioned, 'a controlled use of the uncontrollable', to make clear that the 'Normans do not shrink from bloodcurdling violence'. Thus,

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108 Hodgson, 'Normans as Crusaders', 120-121; Schneidmüller, *Nomen patriae*, 106; Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein', 683.

109 In the face of the enemy, the Franci denoted the whole Romance speaking crusader army. Internally, it referred to those of northern France.

110 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, I 5, ed. Huygens, 105; Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein', 686.

111 Webb, *The Evolution of Norman Identity*, 176, argues that during the Crusades the Normans of Italy and Normandy were temporarily considered as presenting a homogenous ethnic group.

112 John France, 'The Normans and Crusading', in Richard P. Ebels and Bernard S. Bachrach (eds), *The Normans and their Adversaries at War. Essays in Memory of C. Warren Hollister* (Woodbridge 2001), 87-101, here at 88-89.

113 Natasha Hodgson, 'Reinventing Normans as Crusaders? Ralph of Caen's *Gesta Tancredi*', in *Anglo-Norman Studies. Proceedings of the Battle Conference* 30 (2007), 117-132, here at 120-121.

114 For example, Amatus of Montecassino, *L'Ystoire de li Normant (History of the Normans)* II 23, transl. Loud and Dunbar, 23.

115 Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 86-87.

116 Hodgson, 'Reinventing Normans as Crusaders?', 127.

following his interpretation, their reputation was not one of raging madness and barbarity per se, but of cruelty in order to strike terror (and control others). As such, this is a presentation of a different form of violent behaviour than the mad plundering induced by German fury.

Both northern and southern chroniclers also draw a distinct cultural and ethnic boundary between northern (Francigenae) and southern France (Provençals), together making up the Franci.<sup>117</sup> Ralph of Caen's rather muddled and contradictory views of the south in the *Deeds of Tancred* were hardly favourable. According to Laetitia Boehm, the Norman berated the Provençals for their disdain for physical labour.<sup>118</sup> They differed from the Franks in their customs, will and manner of life, more given to hard work and less warlike, rejecting any ornamentation of the body. Yet it is not their slothfulness but rather their frugality and lack of economic enterprise which leaves Ralph vexed. During the siege of Antioch over the winter of 1097-1098, driven by hunger, foraging parties were organized especially along linguistic-ethnic lines, fear and dire circumstances feeding the urge to stick to one's own.<sup>119</sup> Because of their frugality, however, the Provençals were able to endure hunger better than those bent on fighting: 'They did not spurn husks and they took up long iron tools with which they found grain in the bowels of the earth. Thus, boys still sing that "Franks go to war and Provençals go to food."' <sup>120</sup> Ralph relates how they tricked other crusaders by selling them dog's meat as hare and mules as goat's meat. Guibert of Nogent additionally accuses the Provençals fighting under Raymond Count of St. Gilles of garrulity, although their army is, according to Guibert, not inferior to others.<sup>121</sup>

Just as in the face of the Saracens, vis-à-vis the Germanic other there was often however unity among the French-speaking Franks. This unity was two-tiered. Although, as said, the term Franks could in some cases refer to the whole crusading army, including knights from Lorraine, England or Scotland, internally the boundary between the Romance- and Germanic-language speaking knights was at times strong. This dichotomy between handsome courteous French and the *laide gent* or ugly Germans was presented not only, in the course of the twelfth century, to a lay courtly audience listening to *chansons* in northern France or England but was enacted on the battle fields in the Levant, in terms of barbaric versus chivalrous knighthood. Elaborate codes of chivalry had not yet been formulated when the counts, noblemen and middling sorts took the vow and cross and left behind their homesteads to journey to the Holy Land. Nonetheless, the early sources indicate that

117 Murray, 'National Identity, Language', 117-118.

118 Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein', 684-685. Ralph is particularly full of admiration and rhetorical flourish in his words about Flanders and count Robert: 'Flanders the nurturer of horsemen, Flanders the fertile home of horses, Flanders of Ceres, Flanders home of cultivators, Flanders which excelled in her maidenly beauty and merited the royal lineages of Gaul, England and Denmark.' Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi* XV, eds Bachrach and Bachrach, 38. Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 29. Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein', 684-685.

119 Murray, 'National Identity, Language', 118.

120 Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi* LXI, *Patrologia Latina* col. 0535A, transl. Bachrach and Bachrach, 86-87: 'siliquas non aspernantes, eorum dextrae longi gerulae ferri cum quo intra viscera terrae annonam fascinabantur: inde est quod adhuc puerorum decantat naenia: Franci ad bella, provinciales ad victualia'.

121 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos* II 18, ed. Huygens, 134.

from the beginning, on the first expeditions to the Levant, contact between crusaders from French territories and German speaking regions sparked off a sense of behavioural and religious pre-eminence among the 'Franks' as fighters of God's war. In addition, the circumstance that Pope Urban II's tour to preach the First Crusade took him through French territory – although carefully avoiding Île de France and the Orléannais (King Philip of France was actually excommunicated by the pope at Clermont) as well as feuding Anglo-Norman domains, where the pontiff feared unsubstantial loyalty to the papist cause – might have amplified growing French claims and assumptions that their nobility was the paragon of knighthood. Ultimately, the traditional concept of Frankish chosenness and their mission, divinely appointed and foretold in the Scripture, to liberate Jerusalem (mythically preceded by Charlemagne's pilgrimage to the Holy Land) is highlighted by a number of authors, in particular Guibert of Nogent and Robert the Monk, who draws comparisons between crusaders and biblical personae on their way to the Promised Land.<sup>122</sup> How this might have been supported by employing ethnic stereotypes will be discussed further below. As we shall see, the Germans were potentially stripped of their position as defenders of the Church.

Efforts to align warrior values with the Church's interests had been undertaken in the decades leading up to the First Crusade. In the early eleventh century (with a revival in the 1080s in the Rhineland), the Church had initiated the Peace and Truce of God movements, notably in central and southern France, presenting the fighting nobility as protectors of Christian peace and the Church. Although earlier, warrior ideals had permeated the language of a holy and just war, from this period the Church increasingly and specifically called upon the nobility to fight in God's service, earning them penance and remission of sins, against the non-Christian enemy, whether he or she be heretic, heathen, Muslim or Jew. As such, the First Crusade was itself pivotal in the shaping of the knighthood as God's designated defenders of Christendom. Theirs was a divine mission. Instead of internecine fighting in Western Europe, the members of the knighthood were now presented as Christ's soldiers, *milites Dei*, as well as *milites sancti Petri*. In Guibert of Nogent's introduction to the First Crusade, this stationary monk thus discusses how 'God ordained holy wars in our time, so that the knightly order and erring mob, who, like their pagan ancient models, were engaged in mutual slaughter, might find a new way of earning salvation'.<sup>123</sup> As a result, crusading fervour spread across Western Europe, drawing together an amalgamation of peoples, from England to the southern parts of France and upper Austria. At the turn of the eleventh century, under the aegis of

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122 Carol Sweetenham, 'Introduction', in *Robert the Monk's history of the First Crusade: Historia Iherosolimitana*, transl. by Carol Sweetenham (Aldershot 2005), 51-55; Jonathan Riley-Smith, *The first Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London 1986), 142. Notably Robert the Monk's history achieved great popularity in the German territories, although it erroneously stated that the text focused on the 'German' achievements of Godfrey of Bouillon. Cf. Murray 'National Identity, Language', 124.

123 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos* I, ed. Huygens, 87, transl. Levine, 25: 'sancta deus, ut ordo equestris et vulgus oberrans, qui vetustae paganitatis exemplo in mutuas versabantur cedes, novum reperirent salutis promerendae genus'.

God, the crusaders thus embarked upon a holy mission, taking Jerusalem in 1099, slaughtering many Muslims in the process.<sup>124</sup>

From the first, however, ethnic diversity was accentuated both by the clerics and monastic writers, shaping the imagery and rhetoric of the movement from their cells and desks in the Frankish West, as well as on the battle field. In Mireille Schmidt-Chazan's view, the clerical authors emphasized ethnic difference in order to explain the failures among some crusading groups despite their divine mission. For that reason, both the French and the Germans are at times accused of arrogance.<sup>125</sup> But animosity was already felt during the First Crusade, a mission which was considered 'successful'. These early tensions ran along a cultural, linguistic divide. We might, then, interpret these tensions as resulting from competition to become the vanguard of God's army. Within this struggle, ethnic stereotypes might be employed as means to staking a claim to being Christ's soldiers.

### Tensions in the First Crusade

In the earliest histories relating the events of the First Crusade, there is talk of a general friction among the main crusading armies coming from northern France, Normandy, Flanders, the Lorraine and Southern Italy. From the very beginning, ethnic stereotypes, dislikes and taunts were reciprocal: the Germans were called furious, the Franks accused of pride.<sup>126</sup> Convening at Nicomedia in 1097, the anonymous Norman knight who wrote the *Gesta Francorum* relates how the Italians and Germans broke away from the Franks because the latter were 'intolerably proud'.<sup>127</sup> In his *The Deeds of God through the Franks*, Guibert of Nogent (c. 1055-1124) further explains: 'For the Franks, as their name indicates, were famous for their great energy, but, in large groups, unless they are restrained by a firm hand, they are fiercer than they should be.'<sup>128</sup> Here the traditional etymology of *Franci* as meaning ferocious is still applied; the Franks are not yet the paragons of chivalry.

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124 For ethnic identity and the Crusades, see Boehm, 'Gedanken zum Frankreich-Bewußtsein, 681-687. For the notion of the holy war, see Christopher Tyerman, *God's War. A New History of the Crusades* (London 2007), 27-57.

125 Schmidt-Chazan, 'Point de vue', 34.

126 On the pride of the Franks, see Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 48; Malsch, *Die Charakteristik der Völker*, 22-23 and 31; Murray, *Reason and Society*, 252. The 'superbia Gallica' is invoked in the late thirteenth-century by among others Alexander of Roes, *Noticia Seculi* 160 9-10 and 161, 7-8.

127 *The Deeds of the Franks and the other Pilgrims to Jerusalem*, ed. and transl. Rosalind Hill (Oxford 1972), 3: 'Franci tumebant superbia'. For the background of the anonymous author, XI-XIII. The author, probably of Norman descent, came from southern Italy, most likely Apulia, and served in Bohemund's army as his vassal. The Franks' pride is repeated by, among others, Peter Tudebode, *Historia de Hierosolymitano* (circa 1111), ed. and transl. John Hugh Hill and Laurita L. Hill (Philadelphia 1974), 18. Cf. Coulton, 'Nationalism in the Middle Ages', 18.

128 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, ed. Huygens, 124, transl. Levine, 49: 'Franci namque, juxta naturam nominis, magnae quidem sunt titulo vivacitatis insignis, sed, nisi rigido frenentur dominio inter aliarum gentium turbas sunt justius equo feroces.' Cf. Isidore, *Etymologiae* IX 2, 101: 'Franci a quodam proprio duce vocari putantur. Alii eos a feritate morum nuncupatos existimant. Sunt enim in illis mores incondite, naturalis ferocitas animorum.'

Baudri of Dol, from Anjou, indeed calls them ‘ferocious and intractable’ and ‘more inclined to all kinds of evil’.<sup>129</sup>

Alex Murray has pointed out that the divisions between Germans and Franks were often organized along linguistic lines. According to Ekkehard of Aura, a German participant of the First Crusade, it was the bilingual (French and German speaking) Godfrey of Bouillon who undertook attempts to smooth over relations, as envy, to an extent, ‘naturally existed between them’ regarding their military skills.<sup>130</sup> Later, Otto of Freising repeated that they ‘enjoyed taunting each other with bitter and hateful jokes’,<sup>131</sup> and the clerk Freidank, presumably of Swabian origin, chaffed that the *Wahl* (Romance speaking) crusaders would rather the Holy Land remained in Muslim hands than be conquered by valiant Germans.<sup>132</sup> This enmity continued during the Second Crusade; John of Salisbury – himself Francophone – related how the Germans refused to have anything to do with the Franks in shipping their baggage across the Hellespont, and refused to wait for King Louis VII; they were punished for their pride when many died of thirst in the desert.<sup>133</sup>

### Unbearable Germans

Norman Ralph of Caen, relating the events following the siege of Antioch in 1097/1098, says that the Latins taunted the Germans after they had been attacked by Turks, shouting through the streets: ‘the Germans are shit’.<sup>134</sup> Besides general linguistic divisions, from the early stages of the twelfth century emphasis was increasingly laid, notably by clerics and monks in the West, on the German fury, or lack of control, which was juxtaposed to excellent French fighting skills. German madness was spoken of explicitly with regards to the motley crew of followers of Peter the Hermit on the First Crusade. Mindless, full of rage, these men were sometimes presented as adversaries to the cause and crusading ideal, the liberation of the Holy Land.<sup>135</sup> Social divisions – peasant

129 Baudri of Dol, *Historia Hierosolimitana* 1 9, *Patrologia Latina* 166, Col. 1071D: ‘Franci siquidem ferociores et intractabiliores (...) et ob id, ad omne malum procliviores’. This is repeated by Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica* IX 32-3.

130 Ekkehard of Aura, *Frutolfs und Ekkehards Chroniken und die anonyme Kaiserchronik*, ed. and German transl. Franz-Josef Schmale and Irene Schmale-Ott, 158-159: ‘Invidiam, quae inter utrosque naturaliter quodammodo versatur’. Cf. Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 47-48; Schmutge, ‘Über “nationale Vorurteile”, 446; Cerwinka, ‘Völkercharakteristiken’, 61; Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 82-85; Szücs, ‘Nationalität’, 253.

131 Otto of Freising, *Chronica sive historia de duabus civitatibus* VII 5, 508, ed. Lammers, 508: ‘Hic etiam inter Francos Romanos et Teutonicos, qui quibusdam amaris et invidiosis iocis frequenter rixari solent’. Quoted by Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 83.

132 Ulrich Müller, *Kreuzzugsdichtung* (Tübingen 1969), 108; cf. Byrn, ‘National Stereotypes Reflected in German Literature’, 143.

133 John of Salisbury, *Historia pontificalis* XXIV.

134 Ralph of Caen, *Gesta Tancredi* LXXVIII, *Patrologia Latina* Col. 0544A, transl. Bachrach and Bachrach, 100: ‘Caco-Alemanni’; cf. Schmutge, ‘Über “nationale Vorurteile”, 447; for the language difference during the Crusades, see further: Cerwinka, ‘Völkercharakteristiken’, 61; Kirn, *Frühzeit des Nationalgefühls*, 43.

135 In the *Historia Vie Hierosolimitane*, from the first two decades of the twelfth century, the anonymous Charleville Poet (sometimes known as Fulco), who like Albert of Aachen concentrates on the ‘heroic’ deeds of Godfrey of Bouillon and Lorraine, very explicitly concentrates on the unruly peasant German

backwardness – was thus aligned with German ethnicity, in contrast to Frankish nobility. Germans contingents were accordingly stripped of their validity as God’s crusaders.

One of the earliest chroniclers of the crusade who writes of German fury, between 1125 and 1150, is in fact himself a contemporary from or near Aachen in the Rhineland: Albert, canon of the church of Aachen.<sup>136</sup> It is unknown whether Albert was French or German speaking; however, his position on the linguistic frontier presumably heightened his awareness of the differences between Germans and French. Although Albert did not partake in the crusade, his account is based for a large part on eyewitness accounts and as such offers insight into the experiences of his contemporaries – many of whom were Godfrey of Bouillon’s followers.<sup>137</sup> Albert thus offers a lively representation of the vicissitudes, dangers and successes experienced by the crusading knights. Nonetheless, his outlook is in check with the stereotypical imagery circulating among men of the letters in the West. So, despite the fact that his account, the *History of Jerusalem*, focuses on Godfrey of Bouillon’s crusading efforts and takes – contrary to most crusade chronicles – a German ‘imperial’ rather than a ‘French’ viewpoint, minimizing Pope Urban’s role as initiator of the expedition and overemphasizing the German contribution, still Albert was certainly willing to admit that ‘no region in the world excels Gaul by nourishing bolder men or more keen in battle’.<sup>138</sup>

This we can see from the language in which Albert describes the adventures of Peter the Hermit’s band of crusaders on their journey across central Europe. Travelling across Balkan territory, Peter the Hermit struggled to keep his band of followers in check. Despite promises to Duke Nichita of the Bulgars that his followers would proceed peacefully, a group of Swabians got caught up in an argument with a Bulgar trading his wares. The Swabians set fire to seven mills and some houses. When word of this reached Peter, he addressed ‘the more prudent and intelligent men from the army’, saying that ‘a serious and severe misfortune threatens us, arising from the rage of the senseless Germans’.<sup>139</sup> Peter subsequently decided to formulate an apology. However, ‘while Peter, therefore, along with the more prudent of his men, was fully occupied with this project and plan and was composing his apology with careful words, a thousand foolish men, stiff-necked youngsters of excessive irresponsibility, a wild and undisciplined set of people with neither cause nor reason,

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contingents accompanying Peter the Hermit. See for instance books II vs. 117-120; 215-220; 225-236; 250-262, ed. and transl. C.W. Grocock and J.E. Siberry (Oxford 1997), 30-31; 36-39. These men were swollen with native fierceness, demonstrating heedless courage without good counsel, plundering without discrimination. For the anonymous author, see .W. Grocock and J.E. Siberry, ‘Introduction’, in the same publication, xv-xvii.

136 Susan B. Edgington, ‘Introduction’, in Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana. History of the Journey to Jerusalem*, Susan B. Edgington (ed. and transl.), XXIII-XXVIII.

137 Edgington, ‘Introduction’, XXXI-XXXII.

138 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana* IV 28, ed. and transl. Edgington, 288-289: ‘nulla plaga mundi ante Galliam audaciores et in bello promptiores nutriat’. Cf. Murray, ‘National Identity, Language’, 123, who notes that Albert also stressed Godfrey of Bouillon’s ‘German’ identity as Duke of Lower Lotharingia, despite the fact that Godfrey was French speaking.

139 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana* I 10-11, ed. and transl. Edgington, 22-23: ‘Convocat sapientiores et magis sensatos de exercitu (...). “Grave et durum nobis infortunium ex furore insipientium Theutonicorum ortum imminet.”’

advanced in a great assault over the aforesaid bridge to the walls and gate of the city'.<sup>140</sup> This unruly behaviour was partly perhaps typical of youthful spirits, as the young apparently rushed across the bridge shouting with rage. It might also be a commonplace reflecting the ignoble reputation of Peter's followers. Nonetheless, the words picked by Albert of Aachen: wild, undisciplined, without reason, are typical markers of 'barbarity' tacked onto German crusaders in general. Similarly, a group of Bavarians and Swabians belonging to the entourage of a certain priest called Gottschalk, growing restless while being detained in Hungary, foolishly drank too much; they violated the proclaimed peace, stealing wine, barley, sheep and cattle, acting 'like a people foolish in their boorish habits, unruly and wild'.<sup>141</sup>

Germanic warrior ideals of unrelenting bravery and fierce fighting could be laudable characteristics. In a more positive context, men from Lorraine, Saxons, Swabians and Bavarians were termed extremely cruel with their swords; the German pilgrims had 'fearless hearts'.<sup>142</sup> However, strength and violence in the *militia Dei* had to be channelled towards the non-Christian enemy, not towards communities of fellow believers. By depicting the Germans as furious warriors who did not know when to curb their violent urges, chroniclers such as Albert of Aachen were thus expelling these knights from the echelons of men in search of Christian peace. Moreover, as stiff-necked men – like Jews – they were breaking God's covenant.

Relationships between the contingents did not improve during the Second Crusade. Odo of Deuil blamed the failure of this Second Crusade alternately on the Greeks and the Germans, who were 'unbearable to us as well', remarking upon the followers of Emperor Conrad III.<sup>143</sup> Odo, a monk and later abbot of the monastery of Saint Denis who accompanied Louis VII as royal chaplain on this disorderly crusade in 1147, complains that the Germans disturbed everything as they went along, greedily procuring provisions for themselves at a market near Constantinople and afterwards

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140 Idem: 'In hac itaque intentione et consilio Petrus cum prudentioribus dum satageret, et verbis cautis excusationem suam ordinaret, mille insensatorum hominum, iuventus nimie levitatis et dure cervicis, gens indomita et effrenis, sine causa, sine ratione trans predictum pontem lapideum ad menia et portam civitatis in gravi assultu vadunt.' Albert literally calls them stiff-necked (the translation says: headstrong), as was sometimes said of the Jews, and referring to the Israelites breaking the covenant in Exodus 32:9; see chapter 4 note 25. Contemporary Guibert of Nogent, writing in the 1100s, speaks of the 'insanity of men' in Peter the Hermit's entourage. Guibert is however also known for his dislike of the poor, whom he considered foolish and dangerous, and his remarks here may not be of a specifically ethnic nature. Levine, 'Introduction', 9 in Guibert of Nogent, *The Deeds of God*.

141 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana* I 23, ed. and transl. Edgington, 44-47: 'sicut gens rusticano more insulsa, indisciplinata et indomita'.

142 Albert of Aachen, *Historia Ierosolimitana* III 39, ed. and transl. Edgington, 200-201: 'gladio sevissimis'; and IV 52, ed. and transl. Edgington, 331-332: 'corda intrepida habentes'. See also IV 48, and V 46, ed. and transl. Edgington 322-323, 402-403 for their fierceness. See also Johannes A. Mol, 'Friese krijgers en de kruistochten', in *Jaarboek voor Middeleeuwse Geschiedenis* 4 (2001), 86-117 for the image of Frisian crusaders as brave, enthusiastic, although impatient infantrymen.

143 For the prejudiced view of Odo of Deuil, see Giles Constable, 'The Second Crusade as Seen by Contemporaries', in *Traditio: Studies in Ancient and Medieval History, Thought and Religion* 9 (1953), 213-179, here at 217-219. Odo of Deuil, *De profectioe Ludovici VII in orientem* III, ed. and transl. Berry, 42-43: 'Nostris etiam erant importabiles Alemanni.' Berry translates: 'The Germans were unbearable even to us.'

furiously entering into a brawl with the Franks, whom they again scorned for their pride.<sup>144</sup> On their journey across Greek territory, ‘proceeding boldly but not wisely enough’, German foot soldiers wandered along drunk; after they subsequently met their death, their (decomposing) bodies, scattered along the roadside, brought great harm to the Franks travelling in their wake. Earlier, in a tavern outside the walls of Philippolis, the Germans had ripped apart a juggler who had attempted to entertain them by performing a trick with a charmed snake upon a goblet. Even the German emperor himself displayed a marked lack of restraint upon entering the salubrious park outside the walls of Constantinople called the Philopation, where he wreaked havoc and ‘under the very eyes of the Greeks seized their delights for his own uses’. However, Odo does not spare the French either, whom he accuses of ‘stupid arrogance’.<sup>145</sup>

Conversely, the French nobility was increasingly portrayed as the epitome of chivalry; it was, as Guibert of Nogent wrote in his description of the siege of Nicomedia, during the First Crusade that ‘one could see gathered the flower of the armed force, or the wisdom, the nobility, of the fame of all of France, dressed in the breastplates and helmets of knights’. These Franks had been chosen by God for his inheritance; the Frankish crusaders are thus represented as new Israelites on their way to the Promised Land.<sup>146</sup>

With such anecdotes, the clerics writing about the early Crusades thus painted a picture of the Germans as an unruly, rapacious lot. But it is markedly within the context of the call for crusade by Urban II that German inferiority is contrasted directly with French polish and martial excellence. Crucial in these events was the fact that pope Urban II, in his call for crusade in 1095, in the wake of the Investiture controversy, had made an appeal not to the German emperor but to the Frankish nobility and Church provinces, though not necessarily the French monarchy.<sup>147</sup> Ekkehard of Aura, one of the early authors to reintroduce the image of the *furor Teutonicus*, explicitly related this fact to the estrangement between the pope and emperor as a result of the Investiture controversy. The consequence was the Germans’ initial reluctance (caused by ignorance) to join the First Crusade.<sup>148</sup>

This is very pronounced in Guibert of Nogent’s *The Deeds of God through the Franks*. Guibert is keen to emphasize that Pope Urban II made his appeal to the French and not to the Germans as a result of their barbaric nature. On the other hand, the French were the chosen allies of the papacy: ‘More respectful and humble than other nations toward blessed Peter and pontifical decrees, the French, unlike other peoples, have been unwilling to behave insolently against God. For many years

144 Coulton, ‘Nationalism in the Middle Ages’, 18-19.

145 Odo of Deuil, *De profectione Ludovici VII in orientem* II, ed. 27: ‘Hic primam nostri populi stultam superbiam sensimus’; V, ed. 57: ‘Heu, quam miseranda fortuna Saxones Bathavosque truces et alios Alemannos, quos in antiquis hystoriis legimus quondam Romanam fortitudinem timuisse, nunc dolis Grecorum inertium tam miserabiliter interisse.’

146 Sweetenham, ‘Introduction’, 52, also notes that in Robert the Monk’s *History*, Adhemar of Le Puy is compared to Moses, and the hymn of praise at Dorylaeum is taken from excerpts from the Book of Exodus.

147 Schneidmüller, *Nomen patriae*, 114.

148 Cf. Ekkehard of Aura, *Frutolfs und Ekkehards Chroniken und die anonyme Kaiserchronik*, eds and German transl. Schmale and Schmale-Ott, 140-141.

we have seen the Germans, particularly the entire kingdom of Lotharingia, struggling with barbaric obstinacy against the commands of Saint Peter and of his pontiffs.’<sup>149</sup> Guibert further relates how the archbishop of Mainz derided the French, calling them ‘Francones’.<sup>150</sup> Guibert retorts: ‘You think them so weak and languid that you can denigrate a name known and admired as far away as the Indian Ocean, then tell me upon whom did Pope Urban call for aid against the Turks? Wasn’t it the French? Had they not been present, attacking the barbarians everywhere, pouring their sturdy energy and fearless strength into the battle, there would have been no help for your Germans, whose reputation there amounted to nothing.’<sup>151</sup>

### **Knighthood and climate theory**

With the reintroduction of climate theory the clerics and monks writing in the early parts of the twelfth century also turned to classic notions of barbarity to describe the crusading armies. Thus Christian knighthood might be embodied through emphasis on a temperate environment, producing a brave yet intelligent nobility. As Guibert’s *Deeds of God through the Franks* put it, the French formed the vanguard, other ethnic groups followed:

Although the call from the apostolic see was directed only to the French nation, as though it were special, what nation under Christian law did not send forth throngs to that place? In the belief that they owed the same allegiance to God as did the French, they strove strenuously, to the full extent of their powers, to share the danger with the Franks. There you would have seen the military formations of the Scots, savage in their own country, but elsewhere unwarlike, their knees bare, with their shaggy cloaks, provisions hanging from their shoulders, having slipped out of their boggy borders, offering as aid and testimony to their faith and loyalty, their arms, numerously ridiculous in comparison with ours. As God is my witness I swear that I heard that some barbarian people from I don’t know what land were driven to our harbour, and their

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149 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos* II 1, ed. Huygens 108, transl. Levine, 40: ‘Ceteris enim gentibus erga beatum Petrum ergaque pontificalia decreta timoratus humilisque se habuit gens eadem nec temeritate, qua alii assolent, velamen malitiae arripere contra deum voluit libertatem. Videmus iam annis emensis pluribus Teutonicos, immo totius Lotharingiae regnum, beati Petri eiusque pontificum preceptis barbarica quadam obstinatione reniti.’

150 Robert Levine says that the archbishop is clearly making a reference to their animal-like behaviour, referring to Isidore’s etymological explanation that the word *Franci* comes from *feritas*. However, I fail to see the relationship between ferocity and the name *Francones*. See Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos* II, transl. Levine, 41 note 80. Perhaps *Francones* is meant to refer to inhabitants from Franconia, the northern part of modern Bavaria – thus the archbishop of Mainz would be intimating that the French originated from this region?

151 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos* II 1, ed. Huygens, 108, transl. Levine, 41: “‘Si ita eos inertes arbitraris et marcidos ut celeberrimum usque in Oceanum Indicum nomen fede garriendo detorqueas, dic michi ad quos papa Urbanus contra Turcos presidia contracturus divertit: nonne ad Francos? Hi nisi preissent et barbariem undecumque confluentium gentium vivaci industria et impavidis viribus constrinxissent, Teutonicorum vestrorum, quorum ne nomen quidem ibi sonuit, auxilia nulla fuissent.’”

language was so incomprehensible that, when it failed them, they made the sign of the cross with their fingers.<sup>152</sup>

The most remarkable remarks concerning the crusading movement and French nobility have been made by William of Malmesbury, in his rendition of pope Urban's speech at Clermont. William not only recognized that France was the home of chivalry, but related this notion to climate theory. Urban, in William's words, made it wholly clear that the northern regions did not produce good knights: 'There remains Europe, the third continent. How small is the part of it inhabited by us Christians! For none would term Christian those barbarous people who live in distant islands on the frozen ocean, for they live in the manner of brutes.'<sup>153</sup> Urban underpinned his call for arms with an analysis of military skill on the grounds of climate theory. The Turks, who shoot arrows at a distance, are cowardly, for 'It is in fact well known that every nation born in an Eastern clime is dried up by the great heat of the sun; they may have more good sense, but they have less blood in their veins, and that is why they flee from battle at close quarters.'<sup>154</sup> On the other hand, those 'whose origin is in the northern frosts and who are far removed from the sun's heat, are less rational but fight most readily, in proud reliance on a generous and exuberant supply of blood'<sup>155</sup> Who these peoples born among the frosts are, is not entirely clear, but it would seem to denote the northerly regions of Scandinavia. But Urban is addressing a crowd assembled in the Auvergne, France, about whose Frankish reputation he is unequivocal:

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152 Idem, I 1, ed. Huygens 88-89, transl. Levine, 29: 'Cum solam quasi specialiter Francorum gentem super hac re commonitorium apostolicae sedis attigerit, quae gens christiano sub iure agens non ilico turmas edidit et, dum pensant se deo eandem fidem debere quam Franci, Francorum quibus possunt viribus nituntur et ambiunt communicare discrimini? Videres Scotorum, apud se ferocium, alias imbellium, cuneos, crure intecto, hispida clamide, ex humeris dependente sitarcia, de finibus uliginosis allabi et quibus ridicula, quantum ad nos, forent arma, copiosa suae fidei ac devotionis nobis auxilia presentare. Testor deum me audisse nescio cuius barbarae gentis homines ad nostri portum maris appulos, quorum sermo adeo habebatur incognitus, ut lingua vacante digitorum super digitos nequibant vocibus, se fidei causa proficisci monstrarent.' Cf. Robert the Monk's remark put into Bohemund's mouth, invoking the 'French' descent of his followers. Robert the Monk's *Historia Iherosolimitana* IV, transl. Sweetenham, 92.

153 William of Malmesbury, *Gesta regum Anglorum* IV 347, ed. and transl. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, vol. 1, 600-601: 'Tertium mundi clima restat Europa, cuius quantulam partem inhabitamus Christiani! Nam omnem illam barbariem quae in remotis insulis glatiale frequentat oceanum, quia more belvino victitat, Christianum quis dixerit?' At Idem, IV 348, ed. and transl. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, vol. 1, 606-607, William of Malmesbury also writes: 'The central areas were not alone in feeling the force of this emotion: it affected all who in the remotest islands or among barbarian tribes had heard the call of Christ. The time had come for the Welshman to give up hunting in his forests, the Scotsman forsook his familiar fleas, the Dane broke off his long drawn-out potations, the Norwegian left his diet of raw fish.' ('Nam non solum mediterraneas prouintias hic amor mouit, sed et omnes qui uel in penitissimis insulis uel in nationibus saltuum, tunc Scottus familiaritatem pulicum, tunc Danus continuationem potuum, tunc Noricus cruditatem reliquit piscium.')'

154 Idem, IV 347, ed. and transl. Mynors, Thomson and Winterbottom, vol. 1, 602-603: 'Constat profecto quod omnis natio quae in Eoa plaga nascitur, nimio solis ardore siccata, amplius quidem sapit, sed minus habet sanguinis; ideoque vicinam pugnam fugiunt, quia parum sanguinis se habere norunt.'

155 Idem, at 602-603: 'Contra, populus qui oritur in Arcto is pruinis, et remotus est a solis ardoribus, inconsultior quidem sed largo et luxurianti superbus sanguine promptissime pugnat.'

You are a nation originating in the more temperate regions of the world, men whose readiness to shed your blood leads to contempt for death and wounds, though you are not without forethought; for you observe moderation in camp, and in the heat of battle you find room for reason.<sup>156</sup>

The northern French, the epitome of chivalry, were thus biologically determined to carry the responsibility of leading the crusading mission, as the vanguard of God's soldiers in the First Crusade.<sup>157</sup> As God's chosen people, they were his instrument to crush the enemy and restore the Holy Land to Christian hands. As Guibert of Nogent remarks, God had reserved this nation for so great a task.<sup>158</sup> As a 'most Christian' people, truly faithful, they thus had a distinctive mission on earth.<sup>159</sup> Self-pride in the nation grew as a result, to which the many accounts of the First Crusade testify. Under divine favour, the Franks were endowed with the attributes necessary to implement God's design: courage, strength and wisdom. They were born to do so because of their climate – the region where chivalry and knowledge had migrated to.

### **France, home of chivalry**

Culturally dominant, in the course of the twelfth century northern France eventually indeed gained the acclamation as the 'home of chivalry and learning'.<sup>160</sup> This concept of the translation of knowledge and chivalry – as a pair – from Greece to their final destination in the West is first clearly expressed by Chrétien de Troyes in his romance *Cligés*, although Otto of Freising had already stated that power and knowledge had travelled westwards.<sup>161</sup> By placing chivalry's origins in an eastern past, the knightly order became rooted in tradition.

Our books have taught us that chivalry and learning first flourished in Greece; then to Rome came chivalry and the sum of knowledge, which now has come to France. May God grant that they be maintained here and may He be pleased enough with this land that the glory now in

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156 Idem, at 602-603: 'Vos estis gens quae in temperatoribus mundi provintiis oriunda, qui sitis et prodigi sanguinis ad mortis vulnerumque contemptum et non careatis prudentia; namque et modestiam servatis in castris, et in dimicatione utimini consiliis.' The translation uses the word 'race'.

157 Schneidmüller, *Nomen patriae*, 105.

158 Guibert of Nogent, *Gesta Dei per Francos*, ed. Huygens, 109.

159 For the Franks as a divinely chosen and missionary people, see Anthony D. Smith, *Chosen Peoples*, esp. chapter 5; Garrison, 'The Franks as the New Israel?', 114-161.

160 As for example also in the early thirteenth-century *Image du monde*, attributed to Guetier of Metz. The early thirteenth-century Middle High German *Moriz von Craûn* also speaks of chivalry's translation to France, where chivalry is now blossoming, but without relating it to the clergy. Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii*, 120, 128-131.

161 Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii*, 114.

France may never leave. God merely lent it to the others: no one speaks any more of the Greeks or the Romans; their fame has grown silent and their glowing ember has gone out.<sup>162</sup>

The fact that chivalry accompanies learning may refer to the cultured education at the courts, but it may also reflect the new emphasis on the value of the mind, not only in bookish learning but also in military performance.<sup>163</sup> Gerald of Wales, in his *Instruction of Princes*, thus makes the connection between a ruler's education and his military success. At the same time, the merging of the two endowed chivalry with a religious benediction, deepening the nobility's relationship with God as the order ordained to fight for Christianity.<sup>164</sup>

Thus (climatically theorized) ethnic, linguistic, cultural and, in the course of the twelfth century, dynastic distinctions fragmented the notion of a universalizing *Christianitas*.<sup>165</sup> At times, God's army, the *militia Dei*, although fighting the common cause of a holy war, fell apart along ethnic lines; instead of a unifier, it might be a harbinger of ethnic difference and disunity. Ludwig Schmutge has pointed out that increased cultural contact with foreigners on the international stage of the Crusades most likely would have heightened an awareness of group identity.<sup>166</sup> Although the Crusades were officially under the banner of Christian universalistic ideals, they thus simultaneously sharpened awareness of ethnic differences. Although the mission was in the name of Christendom, yet the tensions between the various parties partaking could at times reach critical levels. Name-calling and high tempers were the result. In the texts of learned monks in the West, it was transformed into concepts of chosenness and environmental influences.

The appeal of ethnic stereotypes to the nobility in crusading missions continued in the thirteenth century. Thus, in John Pecham's poem calling for participants in Louis IX's second crusade in 1270, 'An Exhortation for Christians against Muhammad's People', the whole *gens Christiana*, a spectrum of European peoples, is summoned to arms, including Spaniards, 'swift and fearless', Italians, 'exalted regal nation', Transylvanians, and Slavs, drawing their bows. Following the twelfth-century tradition, the vanguard is still typically formed by the French, 'gifted in arms', whereas the Germans (and English), third in line, are exhorted:

162 Chrétien de Troyes, *Cligés*, vs. 30-43, ed. Harf-Lancner, 63, transl. Kibler, 123: 'Ce nos ont nostre livre apris / qu'an Grece ot de chevalerie / le premier los et de clergie. / Puis vint chevalerie a Rome / et de la clergie la some, / qui or est an France venue. / Dex doit qu'ele i soit maintenue / et que li leus li abelisse / tant que ja mes de France n'isse / l'enors qui s'i est arrestee. / Dex l'avoit as altres prestee, / car des Grezois ne des Romains / ne dit an mes ne plus ne mains: / D'ax est la parole remese / et estainte la vive brese'.

163 Even before Chrétien de Troyes, in *Athis and Porphyrias* vs. 170 and 161-162, Athens is said to be the seat of the clergy and Rome of chivalry. Afterwards Athens is conquered by Rome and the clergy unites with chivalry in Rome; Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii*, 119.

164 Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii*, 126-127.

165 William M. Daly, 'Christian Fraternity, the Crusaders, and the Security of Constantinople, 1097-1204: The Precarious Survival of an Ideal', in *Medieval Studies* 22 (1960), 43-91, states that very few thought in terms of a universal temporal empire; quoting F.L. Ganshof, he states that the *res publica christiana* never had any real existence. See page 44 and note 4.

166 Schmutge, 'Über "nationale" Vorurteile', 444-448.

You, German people, robust,  
 Warlike, rise up  
 With a sword of well-wrought-steel!  
 Make haste to the conflict!  
 Disembowel, lacerate,  
 Scourge and wound,  
 Mangling their innards!<sup>167</sup>

Warrior images of German steely violence and strength clearly lived on, here from an English perspective. The image of the coarse German, in contrast with French subtlety, would remain current in the second half of the thirteenth century. The German poet Freidank, in a crusade song on the Fall of Acre in 1291, thus sighed: ‘Swere schuldic sî, daz rihte got, daz wir dâ sîn der Wahle spot: und môhten tiusche liute daz lant gewinnen hiute, die wahle sint in sô gehaz, si gunnens den heiden michels baz.’<sup>168</sup> William of Nangis, French chronicler, in his *Deeds of Louis IX*, relates of the Battle at Benevento between Manfred of Sicily and Charles of Anjou, which took place in 1266. Both armies were made up of a mixed lot: Charles’ contained contingents from Flanders, the Languedoc and the Provence; the Sicilian army included Saracens, Germans and Sicilians. The ‘German fury battled against French valour’, but in the end the ability of the mind overcame strength, so that ‘thus the vanquished obstinacy of the Germans lay prostrate for the aptness of the French’.<sup>169</sup> Although Pecham calls upon the Germans to funnel their strength against the Muslim enemy, and thus put it to good use, from the twelfth century in the West, with the rise of chivalry, the reputation for the use of disproportionate violence increasingly turned into a reprehensible trait. The French nobility’s success in appropriating an image of cultured refinement as ideal knights did evoke some, weak, reactions among German writers. However, this only further attests to the triumph of the French in claiming chivalry for themselves, and the inability of the Germans to formulate a solid answer.

### German reactions

It is difficult to water down the success of the French appropriation of the reputation of chivalry. The culture of French chivalry was received enthusiastically in the German territories, especially those

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167 An edition, analysis of the poem and translation are provided by William Chester Jordan, ‘John Pecham on the Crusade’, in *Crusades* 9 (2010) 159-171, here at 168-169: ‘Tu consurge, gens Germana / Robusta, belligera / In spata colomana / Ad certamen propera / Viscera, lacera, / Verbera, vulnera, / Discerpando viscera. Audi tu, gens Anglicana, / Freta carutis et plana, / Ad Bethel accelera.’

168 Freidank, *Bescheidenheit*, 163 7 ff; Mendels, ‘Nationalismus’, 300.

169 William of Nangis, *Ex primatis chronicis et Guillelmi gestis Ludovici IX*, XII (MGH SS 26), 652: ‘furor Theutonicus contra Francorum audaciam dimicaret (...). Sic igitur Theutonicorum cervicositas Gallicana calliditate perdomita occubuit.’ At 656 and 660 William of Nangis again speaks of the German fury, which the French overcome.

bordering the French, where Hartmann of Aue praised chivalry in Hainault and Brabant.<sup>170</sup> Tournaments were organized by Frederick Barbarossa. At the end of the twelfth century, German Minnesingers were adopting and translating the Arthurian romances and troubadour verses. It was, as Maurice Kirn writes, ‘the story of the profound penetration of German aristocratic society by ideas and values which it first found expressed in French literature’.<sup>171</sup> As a result, the ideology of chivalry was acknowledged internationally, with similar ideals cropping up such as *Manheit*, *Milte*, *Zuht* and *Trowve*. It were again the educated clerics who first translated these texts into German; in contrast to France, the German princes were generally illiterate.<sup>172</sup>

Some German writers expressed a high opinion of French culture. Wolfram of Eschenbach’s perception that it was the true land of chivalry has already been mentioned. A higher degree of intelligence is also attributed to them by the twelfth-century Saxon historian Helmold of Bosau, in a passage about how French king Louis VII managed to evade a possible attempt by Frederick Barbarossa to overcome him: ‘For the French, superior in genius, accomplished by counsel what seemed impossible for armed strength’.<sup>173</sup>

At the same time, the Germans were aware of the fact that they were being ridiculed as less civilized bores, yet they offered little opposition.<sup>174</sup> Interestingly, they themselves instated a pecking order among the Germanic peoples: the Flemish and Brabanders were the more chivalrous of knights, as they were closer to the heart of chivalry.<sup>175</sup> There is some indication of a tendency in German chronicles to bagatelle courtliness; three of four German chronicles play down the chivalric character of the tournament organized by Frederick Barbarossa in 1184.<sup>176</sup> Wolfram of Eschenbach relates the truly chivalric character of France to its arrogance. However, the most powerful literary repartee was produced by Walther von der Vogelweide. At the end of the twelfth century, the Provençal poet Peire Vidal had written upon Henry VI’s expedition against Pisa: ‘I find the Germans without grace and like uneducated common folk. If one of them tries to be courtly and gracious, it is a deadly nuisance and annoyance. Their language sounds like the barking of dogs.’<sup>177</sup> Possibly in

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170 Thomas, ‘Nationale Elemente’, 357.

171 Keen, *Chivalry*, 37.

172 Bumke, *Courtly Culture*, 75.

173 Helmold of Bosau, *Chronica Slavorum* XCI, ed. Schmeidler, 318: ‘Francigenae enim ingenio altiores quod armis et viribus impossibile videbatur consilio evicerunt’; transl. Tschan, *Chronicle of the Slavs*, 239. Cf. Cerwinka, ‘Völkercharakteristiken’, 62.

174 See old example in Orban about reactions to sound of them as a cart in gloss Notker. More research needs to be done on the German adaptations of French vernacular literature and the employment of stereotypes in German culture.

175 Kern, ‘Der mittelalterliche Deutsche’, 242.

176 Thomas, ‘Nationale Elemente’, 351-354.

177 Peire Vidal, *La Poesie de Peire Vidal* 27, ed. Josph Anglade (Paris 1966): ‘Alamans trob deschautitz e vilans / E quand negus si feing esser cortes, / Ira mortals cozens et enois es; / E lors parlars sembla lairars de cans.’ Cf. Ulrich Müller, ‘“Deutschland, Deutschland, Über Alles”? Walther von der Vogelweide, Hoffman von Fallersleben and the “Song of the Germans”: Medievalism, Nationalism and/or Facism’, in *Medievalism in the Modern World: Essays in Honour of Leslie J. Workman* (Turnhout 1998), 117-129, here at 117, including the translation; Byrn, ‘National Stereotypes Reflected in German Literature’, 143-145.

reply to such provocations, Walther von der Vogelweide composed his famous song probably upon arrival at the Viennese ducal court in 1203, in which he states that ‘tiuschiu zuht gat vor in allen’. As did Peire Vidal, Walther makes use of the so-called ‘river formula’, pencilling in the scope of his praise from the boundaries of the rivers in east and west.<sup>178</sup> Passing through many lands, German manners surpass all, from the Elbe to the Rhine to Hungary, where the most beautiful women live and the men are all well-bred:

I have seen many lands, and observed the best of them, and I would deserve ill luck if ever I should let my heart be pleased by foreign customs. What good would it do me to assert such a falsehood? German manners surpass them all.<sup>179</sup>

Another response might be offered in climatic terms. In intellectual spheres, Albertus Magnus came up with a different response, sarcastically remarking that the French, living in a hot region (from the German perspective), were exceptionally rash and bold, and likely to quickly give up, ‘doing wonderful things in the beginning and nothing in the end, and in French people like this are called *hardi*, bold’.<sup>180</sup> These characteristics breathe the traits of the choleric temperament. Here we see again how climatic boundaries are tampered with.

These stereotypes were certainly more valuable than mere indicators of a ‘history of hatred’. In the course of the twelfth century, rivalry between the northern French and the Germans not only thrived in a cultural atmosphere – there were also political implications. Although in the tenth century, the Gallo-Frankish and German polities had clearly gone their separate ways, with the empire firmly in Saxon, Salian and Staufan hands, in their relationship tension still lingered over the Carolingian inheritance.<sup>181</sup> The German emperor and his knights had traditionally served as protectors of Rome. With this new emphasis on France as the home of chivalry, and in the wake of

178 Müller, ‘Deutschland, Deutschland’, 118-121; Koht, ‘Dawn of Nationalism’, 277.

179 *Walther von der Vogelweide. Leich, Lieder, Sangsprüche*, ed. Karl Lachmann (Berlin and New York 1996): ‘Ich han lande vil gesehen / unde nam der besten gerne war. / übel müeze mir geschehen, / künde ich ie min herze bringen dar, / Daz ime vol gevallen / wollte fremede site. / waz hulfe mich, obe ich unrehte strite? / tiuschiu zuht gat vor in allen. / Von der Elbe unz an den Rin / her wider unz an der Unger lant / da mügen wol die besten sin, / die ich in der welte han erkant. / Kann ich rehte schowen / guot gelaz und lip. / sem mir got, so swüer ich wol, daz hie diu wip / bezzer sint danne ander frowen. / Tiusche man sint wol gezogen, / reht als engel sint diu wip getan. / swer sie schultet, derst gat betrogen: / ich enkan sin anders niht verstan. / Tugent und reine minne, / swer die suoehen wil, / der sol komen in unser lant, da ist wunne vil, / lange müeze ich leben dar inne!’ Transl. George F. Jones, *Walther von der Vogelweide* (New York 1968), 77-78.

180 Albertus Magnus, *Quaestiones* VII 28: ‘Unde si sint audaces, hoc est inordinate et cum impetus et cito desistunt, ut Gallici, qui volunt facere mirabilia in principio et in fine nulla, et tales vocantur “hardi” in Gallico.’ Translation from Biller, ‘Proto-racial thought’, 179. Cf. the saying about the Picardians: ‘Isti Picardi non sunt ad prelia tardi: / Primo sunt hardi, sed sunt in fine coardi’; cf. Walther, ‘Scherz’, no. 100; Anne-Marie Bautier, ‘Peuples, provinces et villes dans la littérature proverbiale Latine du Moyen Age’, in François Suard and Claude Buridant (eds), *Richesse du proverbe. Le proverbe au Moyen Age* (Lille 1984), vol. 1, 1-22, here at 12.

181 Jean Dunbabin, *France in the Making, 843-1180* (Oxford and New York 1985), 376-377.

the Investiture Contest, there arose tension and rivalry as to who were the true inheritors of Charlemagne's power and designated defenders of Christianity. This notion also had political implications, for the idea that the pope had translated the *imperium* to Charlemagne – viewed as the proto-typical crusader in the twelfth century – was founded on his role as faithful protector of the church. However, with the growth of the French monarchy's power, from Louis the Fat onwards, instances occur wherein a relationship is laid between the crusading mission, allusions to Carolingian descent and ethnic character, emanating from the heart of royal power: the monastery of Saint Denis. In a prophecy circulating at this time, it was said that the L for Louis VII may be transformed into a C – possibly a new Charlemagne, although Otto of Freising, who attributes such bold ideas to French levity, seems to envisage Louis as a new Persian king Cyrus.<sup>182</sup> Conversely, in the prophesizing *Play of the Antichrist*, probably written in the vicinity of Regensburg circa 1160, the German emperor wielded his fury in order to combat Antichrist, before laying down his crown in anticipation of the last things.<sup>183</sup>

In the course of the thirteenth century, notions strengthened that the French monarch, a 'most Christian' king, ruled over a region devout in faith, where the fountain of the clergy, chivalry and learning co-operated for the good.<sup>184</sup> Beyond this period – and beyond the scope of this chapter – is the development in French royal circles of ideas that the French monarchy might even make a claim to the empire, as propounded amongst others by Pierre Dubois and William of Nangis, at the end of the thirteenth century. William of Nangis, biographer of Saint Louis, indeed summarizes that France is superior to the rest of the world in both faith, wisdom and chivalry. In William's version, this translation was brought about by Saint Denis, patron of the French royal abbey, who as carrier of religion to France, took along with him *estudes* and *chevalrie*. This trinity is symbolized by the fleur-de-lis, the three petals representing faith, learning and military prowess.<sup>185</sup> In a reversal of the imagery of French arrogance, Dubois additionally accused the Romans of natural guile in contrast to French humility.<sup>186</sup> Pierre Dubois believed in one ruler of a united Christendom (who must be the French king, and descendant of Charlemagne).<sup>187</sup> The early medieval etymological explanation of the name *Franci* as meaning free men, was now interpreted as 'not subject to the German empire'.

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182 Otto of Freising, *Gesta Friderici*, Prologue, ed. Schmale, 114-116, transl. Mierow, 25-26. See Elizabeth A.R. Brown and Michael W. Cothren, 'The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window of the Abbey of Saint-Denis: Praeteritorum Enim Recordatio Futurorum est Exhibitio', in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986), 1-40, here at 28 and note 100.

183 Cf. *Der Ludus de Antichristo*, ed. Friedrich Wilhelm (Munich 1912); *The Play of the Antichrist*, transl. John Wright (Toronto 1967).

184 Joseph R. Strayer, 'France: the Holy Land, the Chosen People, and the Most Christian King', in Theodore K. Rabb and Jerrold E. Seigel (eds), *Action and Conviction in Early Modern Europe: Essays in Memory of E.H. Harbison* (Princeton 1969), 3-16, here at 6.

185 Idem, 140-142; Strayer, 'France and the Most Christian King', 6.

186 Coulton, 'Nationalism in the Middle Ages', 35.

187 Kohn, 'Idea of Nationalism', 103.

Guillaume de Sauqueville wrote that whereas empire came from 'en pire', evil, to be free (the Franci) of evil was to be free of sin.<sup>188</sup>

Eventually, such pretensions were rebutted by Alexander of Roes, canon at Cologne, in his *Memoriale* (1281) and *Notitia seculi* (1288).<sup>189</sup> Defending a universalistic empire as a divine office with a distinct role in the divine plan of salvation, Alexander set out to prove that the Germans (Franci Germani), descending from the Trojan Franks, were the original Franks and true Christian noblemen with outstanding martial virtues.<sup>190</sup> The French, in contrast, were not pure Franks but of mixed Frankish-Gallic descent.<sup>191</sup> His *Memoriale*, probably written for the papal curia, although praising the French for their typically clerical courtly manners (boldness, jocosity, generosity, amiability), in a digression of the qualities of the French cock (*gallus*), berates them for their inconstancy and arrogance, as well as of softness, frivolity and lightheadedness (for example organizing tournaments).<sup>192</sup> He clearly states that the Germans by temperament are explicitly equipped for holy warfare.<sup>193</sup> The Italians had inherited the *sacerdotium*, the Germans the *imperium* and the French the *studium*.

However, as Leonard Scales has argued, the very fact that Alexander of Roes felt obliged to buttress the Germans' reputation as martial defenders of Christendom reveals the strength of French claims to chivalrous valour.<sup>194</sup> Although the Albigensian Crusade somewhat tarred the image of the French, at least among southern poets employing non-chivalrous images of cruelty, viciousness, drunkenness and avarice, in the thirteenth century French courtly finesse and martial excellence thus remained the benchmark of chivalry, giving them rhetorical confidence to claim independence from German universalistic hegemony. In order to do so, they needed the Germans as their counter-image, with whom they competed as paragons of the Christian knighthood.<sup>195</sup>

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188 Quoted by Strayer, 'France and the Most Christian King', 14.

189 See Leonard E. Scales, 'France and the Empire: The Viewpoint of Alexander of Roes', in *French History* 9/4 (1995), 394-416.

190 Idem, 402-407; Mohr, 'Frage des Nationalismus', 113 ff.

191 Hoppenbrouwers, 'Medieval Peoples Imagined', 11.

192 Alexander of Roes, *Memoriale* XV and XVIII, ed. Grundmann and Heimpel, *Schriften*, 105-108 and 113-115; and *Notitia seculi* XIII and XIV, ed. 160-161. Cf. Scales, 'France and the Empire', 408. In note 70, Leonard Scales writes that the positive traits attributed to the French by Alexander seem to suggest less the ideal scholar than the ideal knight. However, these are ideals upheld by clerical scholars serving at court. See further chapter 8. Notably, Alexander relates the French *superbia* and *luxuria* (*Notitia seculi*, ed. pages 160-161) to the clerical order, which reigns in France.

193 Alexander of Roes, *Memoriale* XXXIII, ed. Grundmann and Heimpel, *Schriften*, 142; Scales, 'France and the Empire', 400.

194 Idem, 408-410.

195 Paterson, *The World of the Troubadours*, 5-6.