

A True History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea? William of Tyre and the Principality of Antioch¹

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Introduction

The *Chronicon* of Archbishop William of Tyre, otherwise known as ‘a history of deeds done beyond the sea’, is a source of paramount importance to the study of the four polities created in the Near East as a result of the First Crusade: the kingdom of Jerusalem, the principality of Antioch, and the counties of Edessa and Tripoli.² Composed within Jerusalem in the 1170s and 1180s, it charts the development of these Latin states until the author’s death in c.1184.³ Moreover, as the only surviving internal Latin narrative to deal with contemporary events in the crusader states for the years 1127–1184, it has significantly shaped historical understanding of that period.

Despite this, William was not actually an eyewitness for the entire time he chronicled. Born in Jerusalem c.1130, he departed for Western Europe around 1146 to pursue an education in the schools of Paris, Orleans, and Bologna, only returning to the East in 1165. Upon his arrival, he built a career in the Jerusalemite Church, rising to the position of archbishop of Tyre in 1175. He was even entrusted with important governmental responsibilities, acting as the chancellor of the kingdom of Jerusalem between 1174 and 1184, royal diplomat to the West and Byzantium, and tutor to King Amalric’s son and heir, Baldwin IV. This placed him at the heart of the kingdom’s administration at a key time, for Baldwin’s leprosy led to dangerous factionalism over who would act as regent for the king, with

¹ Versions of this paper were given in London and Leeds. I would like to express my gratitude to those audiences, to Prof Peter Edbury, Dr Thomas Asbridge, and Dr Stephen Spencer for their ever-invaluable advice in refining and developing my ideas, and to Boydell & Brewer for allowing me to re-work some ideas found in Buck, *Principality of Antioch*.

² William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens. For an overview of these states, see Barber, *Crusader States*.

³ Though still debated, the most likely date of William’s death is 29 September 1184. See Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, p. 22.

William himself suffering personal disappointment in a bid to become patriarch as a result of these difficulties.⁴ William appears to have begun gathering materials on the history of *Outremer* soon after his return, although the composition of his chronicle perhaps began at Amalric's behest in around 1170, and was edited and expanded upon at various stages.⁵ William's life and career was thus almost entirely linked to Jerusalem, with Thomas Asbridge noting that, as a consequence, the *Chronicon* is 'concerned, first and foremost, with the history of Frankish Palestine'.⁶ In addition, historians studying the text have identified the influence of several of William's motives for writing, such as his desire to promote western crusading, Jerusalem's political supremacy, good relations with Byzantium, and adherence to legal practices he considered proper.⁷ The *Chronicon*'s use for the study of the other crusader states, therefore, and the extent to which William's personality – or, more specifically, his personal views and motives for writing – impacted upon his presentation of events outside of, and in relation to, Jerusalem, remains open to conjecture.

This essay aims to examine how William's personality might be traced through his presentation of one state in particular, the principality of Antioch, and how it shaped his coverage. It first establishes William's potential source material for Antioch and the lengths to which he may have gone to procure information, before assessing the level of trust which can be placed in his accounts of the principality's political and diplomatic relations, as well as its internal power structures. In doing so, it will be argued that although historians have scant information on William as a man, something of the authorial *persona* he hoped to project can still be traced through his text. Moreover, that although caution must indeed be exercised when dealing with certain of William's overarching authorial aims, the underlying details he offers for the Latin East's social structures remain an invaluable resource and reveal a man whose personality was driven by a deep interest in the mechanics of power.

⁴ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 13–22; Mayer, 'Guillaume de Tyr', pp. 257–65.

⁵ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 23–31; Kedar, 'Some New Light', pp. 3–12.

⁶ Asbridge, 'William of Tyre', p. 36, n. 8.

⁷ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 61–166; Hamilton, 'William of Tyre', pp. 219–33; Kostick, 'William of Tyre', pp. 353–68; Rubin, 'The Debate on Twelfth-Century Frankish Feudalism', pp. 53–62; Tessera, 'Prudentes homines', pp. 63–71.

William and his Sources

Given that William was both a Jerusalemite and absent from the East for almost two decades, the extent of his access to reliable information on the principality, at least before his return in 1165, is unclear. It is accepted that he drew on Latin works written in the crusader states before 1127, such as the Jerusalem chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres, Walter the Chancellor's Antiochene narrative, and the first six books of the German chronicle of Albert of Aachen. It cannot be ruled out that he also knew of Ralph of Caen's biography of Antioch's second prince, Tancred of Hauteville.⁸ Peter Edbury and John Rowe have posited that William even made use of a now-lost Antiochene narrative – a suggestion which, although possible, remains unprovable.⁹

Perhaps a more secure assumption is that William, like many other contemporary chroniclers, utilised oral testimony.¹⁰ Such witnesses largely go unrecorded by medieval authors, but in William of Tyre's case there are some useful clues which point towards two potential sources of information. Indeed, when describing his efforts – sometime in the 1170s – to discover the exact details of the consanguinity which had earlier caused King Amalric to divorce Agnes of Courtney, William actually named one of his oral sources, noting that:

invenimus per dominam Stephaniam, abbatissam ecclesie Sancte Marie Maioris [...] que domini Joscelini senioris comitis Edessani filia fuit ex sorore domini Rogerii, filii Ricardi, Antiochenorum principis, religiosam et nobilem carne et moribus feminam, iam natu grandevam sed memoriter hec retinentem, quod eorum generatio sic erat.¹¹

Importantly, this remark not only demonstrates William's trust in Stephany's testimony, it also reveals her direct familial connections to the ruling houses of both Antioch and Edessa, and thus her potential

⁸ Fulcher of Chartres, ed. by Hagenmeyer; Walter the Chancellor, ed. by Hagenmeyer; Albert of Aachen, ed. and trans. by Edgington; Ralph of Caen, ed. by D'Angelo. See also Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 44–60; Asbridge, 'William of Tyre', pp. 36–7.

⁹ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, p. 46.

¹⁰ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, p. 46. See more generally van Houts, 'Genre Aspects of the Use of Oral Information', pp. 297–311; John, 'Historical Truth', pp. 263–301.

¹¹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 868–70 (p. 869): 'We discovered [the truth] from the lady Stephany, abbess of the Church of St Mary the Major [...] who was the daughter of Lord Joscelin the Elder, count of Edessa, by the sister of Lord Roger, son of Richard, prince of the Antiochenes. A religious and noble woman, by birth and behaviour, she was by this point greatly advanced in years but retained a strong memory of these matters'. See also Hamilton, 'Titular Nobility', pp. 197–203.

position as an eyewitness to earlier events in the northern crusader states. In order to truly establish this, though, there is a need to examine the most likely path of Stephany's life before coming to Jerusalem.

Firstly, while the exact date of Joscelin's marriage to Prince Roger's sister, Maria, is unknown, that Syriac sources mention her in relation to events in the county of Edessa of 1122 demonstrates it happened before that year.¹² That the anonymous Syriac chronicle noted that Joscelin's motivation was to receive Maria's dowry of 'Azaz, a town situated on the border between Antioch and Edessa and captured by Roger in 1118, makes it certain to post-date this.¹³ The marriage was most likely after Roger's death, as by this point Antioch was governed by Joscelin's overlord, King Baldwin II of Jerusalem, who seems to have relied on the count to provide for the principality's security during the early 1120s and would undoubtedly have been more open to annexing a hard-won site like 'Azaz than the prince.¹⁴ Consequently, an earliest possible birth year of c.1120 emerges for Stephany, and given that William of Tyre considered her *natu grandevam* in the 1170s, it is unlikely to have occurred much later than this. Unfortunately, nothing is definitively known of Stephany's life before her elevation to abbess of St Mary the Major in Jerusalem c.1174, although some suggestions can be offered.¹⁵ For one, while Edessa itself was captured by Zengi, *atabeg* of Mosul and Aleppo, in 1144, her migration to the kingdom of Jerusalem probably did not happen before 1150, the year in which Count Joscelin II of Edessa was captured by Nur al-Din, the sultan of Aleppo, and the final remnants of the county were sold to the Byzantine emperor, Manuel Komnenos.¹⁶ It is possible that she then spent time at Antioch at this point; either accompanying her niece, Agnes of Courtney, to Jerusalem c.1157 – the year in which she married Amalric, who was at this point count of Jaffa – or remaining in the principality with her nephew, Joscelin III, until he was also ambushed and captured by Nur al-Din on the borders of Antiochene territory in 1159/1160.¹⁷ Stephany thus emerges as a potentially high-status witness to

¹² Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 210; *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, II, 64–5. See also Cahen, *Syrie du nord*, pp. 539–40, 546; Amouroux-Mourad, *Comté d'Edesse*, pp. 73–4; Beech, 'A Norman-Italian adventurer', p. 39.

¹³ *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, ed. and trans. by Chabot, Abouna and Fiey, II, 64–5. See also Asbridge, *Creation of the Principality*, pp. 50, 74.

¹⁴ Asbridge, *Creation of the Principality*, pp. 126–7, 143–6. For an earlier posited date of the marriage, see MacEvitt, *The Crusades and the Christian World of the East*, pp. 77, 202.

¹⁵ *Die Urkunden der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, ed. by Mayer and Richard, II, 629–32.

¹⁶ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, pp. 774–5, 780–5. See also Cahen, *Syrie du nord*, pp. 368–71, 385–9.

¹⁷ Hamilton, 'Titular Nobility', pp. 197–203; Cahen, *Syrie du nord*, p. 405.

events in northern Syria for much of the period c.1120–1160. This certainly does not mean that any information William gleaned from her was used uncritically, but the fact that he was at pains to profess her reliability suggests he did indeed trust her and wanted his audience to do so as well.

In addition to this, there is another potential source of information: Michael the Great, Jacobite Patriarch of Antioch, 1166–1199. Born c.1126, Michael is most famous for his world chronicle, compiled from the 1140s until his death in 1199 and considered an excellent example of medieval historical writing.¹⁸ Michael was known to have had a personal friendship with the Latin patriarch of Antioch, Aimery of Limoges, and to have travelled throughout the East, including to the city of Acre in 1178/1179, where he met King Baldwin IV, who appears to have been accompanied by his chancellor: William of Tyre.¹⁹ William was also present in Rome at the Third Lateran Council in 1179, at which was read a treatise produced by Michael on the Cathar heresy, while it appears both were within Antioch when the archbishop of Tyre visited there upon his return from Europe in 1180.²⁰ Consequently, it is implausible to suggest that the pair were unaware of each other. Moreover, given that both showed a keen interest in history, and that their narratives at times uniquely converge, the likelihood that they shared information – either orally, through written correspondence, or even via a shared narrative source – cannot be ruled out.²¹ Differences between their texts do not discredit this, albeit such instances of discord do suggest that the pair diverged on matters of personal interest or in their explanations of events.

Therefore, though an analysis of William's sources helps to paint a (admittedly murky) picture of a fastidious historian keen to cast his historical net as far as possible, it does again bring the issue of motivation to the fore. Consequently, William's account of the principality's history must now be addressed.

¹⁸ Weltecke, *Die "Beschreibung der Zeiten" von Mor Michael Dem Grossen*, pp. 127–52.

¹⁹ Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, I, ix–x, III, 334–5; *Die Urkunden der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, ed. by Mayer and Richard, II, 704–10.

²⁰ Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 382; William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 1011.

²¹ See, for example, Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 245, 388–9; William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 670–81, 1012–16.

William and Antioch's Political History

In relation to the *Chronicon's* use as a political history, a large amount of work has already been produced. As a native of *Outremer*, and one so deeply involved at Jerusalem, particularly during Baldwin IV's troubled reign, it is unsurprising that William held strident views on political issues that had a direct impact on the reputation and future security of the kingdom.²²

The extent to which this affected his coverage of the principality of Antioch, though relatively less examined, is already the subject of historiographical debate. For example, although Claude Cahen praised William's impartiality, Asbridge has demonstrated that the archbishop actually presented a cleaner, more legally secure – as opposed to realistic – account of the succession of Antioch's early princes; two of whom, Tancred of Hauteville and Roger of Salerno, took power in the absence of the state's heir, Bohemond II, as he reached maturity in the West before 1126.²³ In fact, the issue of legitimate succession was a prominent one in the *Chronicon*, with Peter Edbury and John Rowe noting William's clear dislike of those who illegally laid claim to titles and positions, since he had a distinct idea of how '[legal] transactions were done, or were supposed to be done'.²⁴ However, like Asbridge, Jonathan Rubin has cautioned that this does 'not necessarily mean that [such legal practices were] perceived that way by the parties involved'.²⁵ This theme also came to the fore in William's coverage of two other Antiochene periods of succession. In the first of these, Princess Alice of Antioch, widow of Bohemond II and daughter of Baldwin II of Jerusalem, seemingly made a play for power in the wake of her husband's death in 1130. William portrayed this as a case study in female megalomania, with Alice accused of acting against popular sentiment to disinherit her infant daughter, and Antioch's heiress, Constance, in alliance with Zengi. It took the intervention of Baldwin II – who was initially refused access to Antioch (a major demotion from his earlier regency in 1119) – to bring her to heel.²⁶ Conversely, Michael the Syrian saw this as a united Antiochene effort to oppose the imposition of Joscelin I of Edessa as regent, while Arabic sources overlook the existence of an

²² Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 61–82. See also note 7 above.

²³ Cahen, *Syrie du nord*, pp. 17–18; Asbridge, 'William of Tyre', pp. 35–42.

²⁴ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 33, 38, 49, 65–9.

²⁵ Rubin, 'The Debate on Twelfth-Century Frankish Feudalism', p. 55.

²⁶ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, I, 623–5. See also Asbridge, *Creation of the Principality*, pp. 143–6.

alliance.²⁷ Asbridge has thus convincingly shown that Alice was far from isolated in 1130, with the patriarch of Antioch and key members of the nobility distinctly absent from the party who opposed her, and allegations of a Muslim *détente* seen as a deliberate attempt to discredit the princess.²⁸ William was similarly critical of Alice for her supposed lead role in two further moves to damage Jerusalem's credibility: an uprising against King Fulk alongside Count Pons of Tripoli and Count Joscelin II of Edessa in 1132, and an attempt in 1136 to block the union of Constance and the Western nobleman, Raymond of Poitiers (whom Fulk had helped to choose).²⁹ Yet although Alice had forged an independent power base in the coastal cities of Latakia and Jabala, she was almost certainly only a minor player, if even involved, in 1132; while any opposition to her daughter's marriage should also be seen in the context of Constance being only eight years old.³⁰ It is unlikely that William entirely fabricated Alice's hopes for power, but it is nevertheless certain that he placed her at the forefront of events so as to highlight his objection to anyone who illegally laid claim to a status to which they were not entitled – particularly when this came at the expense of Jerusalemite prestige.

This desire not to damage the kingdom's reputation almost certainly also lay behind William's decision not to detail the succession of Bohemond III in 1163, as, according to Syriac sources, the young princeling had to battle his mother, Constance, for control over the principality.³¹ Such a situation raised awkward parallels with a similar situation at Jerusalem in the 1140s, when a thirteen-year-old Baldwin III faced opposition from his mother, Queen Melisende, after Fulk's death in 1142. At that point William, who seemingly held both parties in high regard, had gone to great lengths not to heap opprobrium on either side by portraying the period – which at times came near to open civil war – as one of largely peaceful co-operation, broken only when evil men within the kingdom led the young and pliable Baldwin astray or the queen's supporters acted haughtily.³² In the

²⁷ Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 320; Monot, 'La chronique abrégée d'al-Azimi', pp. 125–6; Ibn al-Adim, 'La Chronique d'Alep', pp. 660–1.

²⁸ Asbridge, 'Alice of Antioch', pp. 31–6.

²⁹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 635–7, 640–1, 657–9.

³⁰ Indeed, the Arabic author, Ibn al-Qalanisi, does not mention her amongst the faction leaders. See Ibn al-Qalanisi, trans. by Gibb, p. 215. See also Asbridge, 'Alice of Antioch', pp. 37–46; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 70–1.

³¹ Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 324; *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, ed. and trans. by Chabot, Abouna, and Fiey, II, 119.

³² William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 714–18, 721–34, 760–1, 775–80, 785–805, 838–42, 850–1, 858.

case of the events at Antioch in 1163, however, William faced greater difficulties in reconciling his narrative so as to avoid unfavourable comparisons with Jerusalem. For one, Constance was another Antiochene princess who had drawn the archbishop's scorn as she had actively opposed Baldwin III and Melisende's attempts to impose a new husband on her after Raymond's death at the battle of Inab in 1149.³³ Constance had then actively worked to embarrass Baldwin in 1161/1162 when she participated in an act of diplomatic subterfuge to marry her daughter, Maria, to Emperor Manuel I Komnenos, despite the king's opposition.³⁴ Equally, Bohemond III was criticised by William for an apparent attempted *coup* against Baldwin IV in Jerusalem in 1179, as well as for the illegal divorce from his wife, Theodora Komnena, in favour of a witch-prostitute, Sybil, in 1180 – which led to civil war in Antioch.³⁵ The events of 1179 were of particular concern to the archbishop, as they led Baldwin to marry his sister and heiress, Sybil, to Guy of Lusignan, whose elevation was a major factor behind the aforementioned factionalism in the kingdom. For William, therefore, both Constance and Bohemond were negative protagonists whose actions damaged Jerusalem, so instead of detailing their dispute over the latter's succession in 1163, and thus face the awkward situation of criticising their behaviour while actively sidestepping that of Baldwin and Melisende, he simply chose to ignore these events entirely. Further evidence of William's manipulation of events comes from the fact that, while Bohemond's actions in 1180 drew the chronicler's ire, he was also at pains to demonstrate the prince's strength in the aftermath. As I have argued elsewhere, this was a deliberate attempt to show that, regardless of moral failings, a legitimate ruler should be respected – a pertinent statement given Baldwin IV's leprosy (a disease considered a punishment from God for sin).³⁶

Another, albeit rather more examined topic is William's coverage of relations with the Byzantine Empire. Given Byzantium's longstanding claim to Antioch, the establishment of Latin rule here created conflict with Emperor Alexios I Komnenos and drew his two successors, John II Komnenos and Manuel I Komnenos, to make personal journeys to the principality. Each of these was

³³ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 785–7.

³⁴ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 854–7. See also Buck, 'Between Byzantium and Jerusalem?', pp. 114–17.

³⁵ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 1007–8, 1012–15.

³⁶ Buck, 'Noble Rebellion', pp. 85–108 (especially pp. 101–2).

characterised by violence and co-operation, as well as repeated attempts to assert imperial claims for possession.³⁷ Edbury and Rowe have noted that this caused problems for William, who visited Byzantium as a diplomat and openly favoured the potential benefits of courting so powerful an ally – although he opposed any suggestion that the Latins should relinquish their lands.³⁸ Because of this, a clear narrative disconnect is found in William’s account of John Komnenos’ visits in 1137/1138 and 1142/1143. During the first of these, John forged an agreement with Raymond of Poitiers to surrender Antioch in return for Muslim cities to be captured by a joint expedition. However, William reported, with some frustration, that the siege of one of these – Shaizar – was undermined by Latin duplicity, with the Antiochene prince and Joscelin II of Edessa playing dice in their tents instead of fighting.³⁹ In spite of William’s clear anger at this, when John then sought to claim possession of Antioch, an aim he repeated in 1142, the archbishop withheld criticism for those same rulers who now actively, even violently, opposed the emperor.⁴⁰ Similarly, when Manuel then came to Antioch in 1158, William was keen to stress the positive inter-play between the emperor and Baldwin III, even though the former forged an agreement to become the principality’s overlord without the king’s involvement, while there is a distinct lack of censure for Manuel for his part in the aforementioned subterfuge with Constance over the marriage with Maria.⁴¹ William was thus clearly walking a tight line between promoting Byzantium’s financial and military support and opposing its claim to possession of *Outremer*.

While it is beyond the remit of this piece to examine all instances in which William manipulated the narrative for political purposes, it is clear that his personal views, such as can be reconstructed through the text, had a profound impact upon his chronicle. In these cases, we see various *personae*: the Jerusalemite who protected the prestige and reputation of his birthplace above all else; the lawyer who sought to see correct legal practice followed; and the diplomat who hoped to

³⁷ Buck, ‘Between Byzantium and Jerusalem?’, pp. 107–14.

³⁸ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 130–50. See also Hamilton, ‘William of Tyre’, pp. 219–33.

³⁹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 670–1, 674–80. This view of Latin duplicity is unsupported by Greek and Arabic accounts. See Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 196–7.

⁴⁰ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 676–80, 700–5.

⁴¹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 844–9, 856–8, 915–17, 1009–11. See also Buck, ‘Between Byzantium and Jerusalem?’, pp. 109–17.

promote external aid for the Holy Land while also preserving Latin dominion. Although the ways in which this led to textual distortions does not singularly undermine the *Chronicon*'s historical value, William's coverage of political events, particularly those which had a direct impact on the prestige and reputation of Jerusalem, must be treated with great caution from an empirical perspective.

William and Antioch's Internal Frameworks

While the influence of William's views over his narrative of political affairs is well established, his value as a source for the principality's internal frameworks is yet to be determined. Indeed, as no Latin source from Antioch survives after Walter the Chancellor's text of the 1120s, historians are reliant not only on the surviving charters and the principality's law code, but also William of Tyre. This poses certain problems, not least because of the date and place of the *Chronicon*, as well as lingering issues surrounding the author's source material. Nevertheless, William was well educated, having been trained in law at Bologna, and an experienced member of Jerusalem's administration. As noted above, this led to a keen interest in law and legality, with Conor Kostick even going so far as to portray him as 'an extraordinarily attentive scholar', one who 'far surpasses his contemporaries in his awareness of social distinctions and advanced sociological concepts'.⁴²

It is therefore useful to examine William's lexicon for Antioch's social frameworks. Such an analysis yields a complex array of terms, even if limited to his narrative of Antiochene affairs after 1127; that is once he could no longer rely on another known text. For the major men, or nobles, there is: *maiores*, *magnates*, *potentiores*, *principes*, *nobili*, *proceres*, *primores*, *potens*, *optimes*, and *prudentes*; and for the lesser men: *populi maiores*, *comitatu*, *fidelium*, *honesto comitatu*, *magis familiares*, and *domesticorum*.⁴³ This is a comprehensive list, but notable for its absence is the neologism *baro*, for it is the most frequent assignation used for fief-holders in Antiochene charters and

⁴² Kostick, 'William of Tyre', p. 367.

⁴³ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, I, 613–14, 623–5, II, 635–7, 658–9, 666, 671, 677–80, 702, 754, 754–5, 771–2, 782, 784–6, 833, 836–7, 844–5, 848, 857, 875, 878–9, 948–50, 1014–16, 1047.

mirrors William's aversion to another non-classical term, *feodum*.⁴⁴ Nevertheless, in spite of this linguistic refinement, by comparing the *Chronicon* with those texts which detailed events before 1127, it may be possible to better establish whether William simply transposed this terminology from earlier narratives, or if he instead developed a lexicon which reflected his own understanding, or at least his perceptions, of Antioch's internal structures.

The most important comparator is Walter the Chancellor's *Bella Antiochena*. Produced c.1120 by the chancellor of Antioch, its author had unparalleled knowledge of the principality's social frameworks.⁴⁵ In Walter's text, a few key terms for high-ranking men can be identified: *maiores*, *primates*, *proceres*, *barones*, *senatores*, and *domini*; as well as those for retainers or members of the household: *minores*, *domestica familia*, *domesticis*, *curialibus*, *familiares*, and *generis nobilitate*.⁴⁶ There is some overlap with William here, such as *proceres*, *maiores*, and *familiares*, but whereas Walter was prepared to use *baro*, the archbishop's vocabulary was evidently far more extensive. The same is also true of Ralph of Caen's *Tancredus*, in which only one term was used: *proceres*.⁴⁷ In addition, external authors also displayed a more limited range of terminology or demonstrated little overlap with William. Fulcher of Chartres, for example, used *proceres*, *gentes*, and *optimes*, while Albert of Aachen – taking into account the elements of his work which William may not have had access to – utilised *manu*, *societas*, *maioribus domus*, *optimes*, *comitatus*, *sociis*, and *satellicio*; reserving *magnates* for figures like King Baldwin I of Jerusalem.⁴⁸

William's social lexicon for Antioch was thus not demonstrably lifted from other sources produced in *Outremer*, and probably reflected his own perceptions of the principality's frameworks. The most likely explanation for this is that William's legal education in the West, coupled with his experience as a cog in Jerusalem's administration, provided him with a detailed knowledge of social

⁴⁴ Edbury and Rowe, *William of Tyre*, pp. 32–43; Buck, *Principality of Antioch*, pp. 63–4, Asbridge, *Creation of the Principality*, p. 151; Barthélemy, 'Castles, Barons and Vavassors', pp. 58–61; van Luyn, 'Milites et Barones', 281–95.

⁴⁵ Asbridge and Edgington, *Walter the Chancellor*, pp. 5–8, 43–9.

⁴⁶ Walter the Chancellor, ed. by Huygens, pp. 65, 71, 76, 80, 82–7, 90, 98–9, 103.

⁴⁷ Ralph of Caen, ed. by D'Angelo, pp. 111–15, 127.

⁴⁸ Fulcher of Chartres, ed. by Hagenmeyer, p. 621, 633–5, 805–9, 819–22; Albert of Aachen, ed. and trans. by Edgington, pp. 482, 524, 552, 694–8, 738, 818–20, 822. See also Epp, *Fulcher von Chartres*, pp. 251–87.

terminology. It is true that this, as well as his own political leanings and personal motivations, could have led William to utilise terms designed to distort reality, with the absence of neologisms certainly suggesting a level of linguistic refinement. Likewise, he may have presented relationships more in line with Western or Jerusalemite models than Antioch's actual social structures. Nonetheless, an examination of William's description of military service in the principality, when placed in the context of other available sources, suggests that some trust can be placed in his information.

Regarding modern historiographical discussions on the military services owed by the principality's fief-holders, opinion has been unanimous: the princes of Antioch could, and did, demand full and unlimited provision.⁴⁹ It is surprising, therefore, that of the fourteen instances in which William of Tyre described the military campaign of an Antiochene prince after 1127, the presence of a word denoting noble or elite participation, or stock phrases such as 'the entire strength of the realm was called together', can be found on only four occasions. Thus, Bohemond II 'collectis unidique militaribus' in order to support King Baldwin II at Damascus in 1128, and when Raymond of Poitiers went to the aid of King Fulk and Count Raymond II of Tripoli against Zengi at the fortress of Montferrand in 1137, he 'convocat igitur proceres et populi maiores'.⁵⁰ When John II Komnenos led the joint assault on Muslim Syria with Raymond in 1138, moreover, the prince gathered his *primores* and 'convocatis ex universa regione [...] copiis'.⁵¹ Yet, similar phrasing did not re-appear until the campaign of Bohemond III against the Armenian warlord Mleh in c.1169, for which he called upon the support of 'de regione illius maiores'.⁵² The only other possible example relates to events in 1164, about which William described the presence of many *nobiles* amongst Antiochene-led forces defeated by Nur al-Din at the battle of Artah. However, it is not possible to specifically attribute this to Antiochene nobles, as the Christian army included soldiers of Tripoli, the Templars and Hospitallers, and also Armenians and Byzantines. This is made especially pertinent given that William also noted that, when King Amalric came to Antioch in the wake of this battle's disastrous conclusion, which

⁴⁹ Cahen, *Syrie du nord*, pp. 439–52, 527–8; Asbridge, *Creation of the Principality*, pp. 150–1; Martin, 'Les structures féodales', pp. 238–42.

⁵⁰ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, I, 620–2 (p. 620): 'gathered knights from all around'; II, 663–6 (p. 666): 'thus called together the nobles and major peoples'.

⁵¹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 674–8 (p. 674): 'called together forces from the entire region'.

⁵² William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 948–50 (p. 949): 'the nobles of that region'.

saw all the Latin leaders captured, it was the principality's *nobiles* who came to meet him – thus making it unlikely that they had been amongst the forces at Artah.⁵³

For all other examples, elite or widespread military service is not specified. Indeed, when Raymond was killed in battle against Nur al-Din at Inab in 1149, he was accompanied only by his *comitatu* (retinue).⁵⁴ His successor as prince, the Western nobleman Renaud of Châtillon, was similarly portrayed having such support during attacks on Cilicia in 1154/1155 and then on Cyprus in 1156. In each case, he 'convocata militia' or 'congregatis militaribus copiis', although in the latter he also had an 'exercitum et universas eorum'.⁵⁵ During military ventures in the kingdom of Jerusalem and northern Syria in 1157, Renaud was only accompanied by a 'honesto comitatu', which appears to have comprised his 'domesticis et familiaribus'.⁵⁶ Then, when Renaud was captured during a raiding expedition in 1161, he was accompanied by *militaribus*.⁵⁷ Finally, despite Bohemond III seemingly enjoying strong support in 1169, he could rely only on 'se illis' when he sought to recapture the frontier fortress of Harim in 1177.⁵⁸ In addition to this, during three military trips into the kingdom of Jerusalem – the first in 1179, and the other two in c. 1183 – those accompanying him are either left unmentioned, or it is simply noted that he brought *militia* or a 'modico comitatu'. In relation to 1183, according to William, this was due to the prince's apparent desire not to leave the principality without defenders.⁵⁹

Clearly, William of Tyre's evidence does not support the historiographical belief that the princes of Antioch were able to call upon full and unlimited military service. William alone, though, cannot be considered definitive evidence. Given that he detailed elite or widespread participation in at least twenty-six of the thirty military ventures launched by the kings of Jerusalem in this same period, it is possible that he deliberately sought to portray a weakened princely house at Antioch so as to better

⁵³ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 874–5, 877–9.

⁵⁴ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II 770–2.

⁵⁵ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 823–5 (p. 824): 'convoked forces', 'gathered many soldiers', 'army and all of his men'

⁵⁶ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 832–840 (pp. 833, 839): 'distinguished retinue', 'household and familiares'.

⁵⁷ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 851–2.

⁵⁸ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 984–7, 994–6 (p. 986): 'those with him'.

⁵⁹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 1007–8, 1046–8 (p. 1047), 1052–5: 'modest retinue'.

amplify royal power in the kingdom.⁶⁰ This would certainly explain why distinct differences can be noted for the two occasions on which he recorded a Jerusalemite king leading Antiochene forces, namely King Fulk in 1133/1134 and King Baldwin III in 1151.⁶¹ In spite of this, there is independent evidence which argues against such a deliberate manipulation of his text.

Firstly, with one exception, none of Antioch's surviving charters record the imposition of the sorts of knightly quotas which became characteristic in the West and later in the kingdom of Jerusalem, with even those stipulations for service listed in Antioch's law code, the *Assises d'Antioche*, referring to judicial, not military matters.⁶² Conversely, there is other chronicle and charter material for Antioch's martial affairs which validates William's evidence. For example, his description of elite and extensive participation during John Komnenos' visit in 1138 is supported by both Greek and Arabic accounts.⁶³ The same is true for his description of the size of Raymond's army at the battle of Inab in 1149, which is corroborated by the Western chronicler William of Newburgh, as well as a number of Eastern Orthodox Christian and Byzantine accounts.⁶⁴ Despite this, Asbridge and Alex Mallett have argued that William of Tyre's account of Inab was exaggerated, pointing to the near contemporary Muslim account of Ibn al-Qalanisi, who listed the Latin force at some 4000 men, as well as a Templar letter sent to the West which described Raymond's death 'cum suis omnibus baronibus et hominibus'.⁶⁵ Yet this letter, seeking as it did to promote an armed response from Europe, as well as Muslim accounts which gloried in victories over the Franks, had obvious reasons to exaggerate the scale of the defeat. Furthermore, in contrast to these reports and modern analyses, the presence of most of the principality's premier nobles

⁶⁰ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, I, 608–10, II, 638–9, 663–6, 706–9, 718–20, 721–2, 760–2, 775–7, 789–90, 826–30, 841–2, 872–3, 882–3, 917–21, 927–9, 948–53, 956–7, 967–9, 975–6, 987–8, 990–1, 996–8, 998–1004, 1026–8, 1030–6, 1038–9, 1042–3, 1050–5, 1059–60. Interestingly, the counts of Edessa were similarly described enjoying high levels of military service, although the situation was more varied for Tripoli – albeit neither was attested to by William with any frequency. See William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 634–5, 661–2, 734–5, 1007–9.

⁶¹ William of Tyre, ed. by Huygens, II, 638–9 (p. 639), 782–5 (p. 784).

⁶² *Tabulae Ordinis Theutonici*, ed. by Strehlke, p. 10; *Assises d'Antioche*, ed. and trans. by Alishan, pp. 8–43. See also Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 350–68; Edbury, 'Fiefs and Vassals', pp. 49–62.

⁶³ Niketas Choniates, trans. by Magoulias, p. 17; Ibn al-Qalanisi, trans. by Gibb, p. 243

⁶⁴ William of Newburgh, ed. by Howlett, I, 68; Gregory the Priest, trans. by Dostourian, p. 257; John Kinnamos, trans. by Brand, p. 97; Michael the Syrian, ed. and trans. by Chabot, III, 289–90; *Anonymi auctoris Chronicon*, ed. and trans. by Chabot, Abouna, and Fiey, II, 115–16.

⁶⁵ Asbridge, *The Crusades*, pp. 239–45; Mallett, 'The Battle of Inab', pp. 57–9; Ibn al-Qalanisi, trans. by Gibb, pp. 291–2; 'Epistolae A. Dapiferi Militiae Templi', ed. by Delisle, XV, 540–1: 'along with all of his barons and men'.

in Renaud of Châtillon's first charter as prince in 1153 demonstrates that they were not at Inab, as all accounts agree on the totality of the defeat.⁶⁶ In addition, William's descriptions of Bohemond III's attempt to recover Harim in 1177 and his visits in support of King Baldwin in 1183 are also confirmed by charters issued at the time of these ventures, as they similarly only detail small accompanying retinues made up of non-noble elements.⁶⁷ Crucially, this same pattern emerges for events which William did not record. For instance, when Raymond gathered a force at the Iron Bridge near to Antioch to face a Muslim invasion in 1139, two documents he issued there indicate that the *optimates*, that is the great nobles, were not present.⁶⁸

Therefore, although the lack of suitable corroborative material for every Antiochene military venture William detailed means caution must be exercised, it cannot be ignored that, where additional evidence exists, it supports the *Chronicon* rather than contradicts it. This suggests that, although the archbishop's coverage of political events is often clouded by issues of *persona*, this did not necessarily draw away from his underlying care for, and interest in, social frameworks. This allows us to place some trust in his representation of the principality's internal structures and also provides a deeper potential insight into his personality.

Conclusion

Like any medieval author, William of Tyre's personal views and motives had a distinct influence over the ways in which he presented his information. Undeniably, this meant that he adopted *personae* that emphasised the power and prestige of Jerusalem and protected the reputation and worthiness of its rulers. When detailing the kingdom's political dealings with the other crusader states, therefore, or when the other polities' actions and relationships had an impact on, or raised awkward parallels with, Jerusalem, there was a clear attempt to manufacture a narrative which protected the latter. Yet, this

⁶⁶ *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, ed. by Tafel and Thomas, I, 133–5. See also Buck, 'The Castle and Lordship of Harīm', pp. 119–21.

⁶⁷ *Cartulaire général de l'ordre des hospitaliers*, ed. by Delaville Le Roulx, I, 356–7; *Urkunden zur älteren Handels- und Staatsgeschichte der Republik Venedig*, ed. by Tafel and Thomas, I, 175–7.

⁶⁸ *Cartulaire du chapitre du Saint-Sépulchre*, ed. by Bresc-Bautier, pp. 178–83. See also Monot, 'La chronique abrégée d'al-Azimi', p. 148; Ibn al-Adim, 'La Chronique d'Alep', p. 683.

should not lead us to entirely discount his material for the wider Latin East. As this paper has sought to demonstrate, a lexical analysis of his portrayal of Antioch's social structures, as well as the military services deployed by its princes, adds further strength to the views of those historians who have emphasised William's personal knowledge of, and interest in, law and legality. More importantly, in the case of military service, the *Chronicon* offers a depiction of princely authority which can be supported by independent evidence and, significantly, challenges established historiographical opinion. Consequently, although the problem of William of Tyre's motives means his text should be approached with caution and a critical eye, it nevertheless offers an invaluable insight into the world of the crusader states in the twelfth century and his personality as a bishop-historian.

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