

# New Europe College Yearbook 2009-2010



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# THE IMAGE OF THE PRINCE IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY: LADISLAS, WLADYSLAW AND VLAD IN THE SONGS OF MICHAEL BEHEIM

In the mid-fifteenth century, rulers in German-speaking central Europe became intensely interested in the political and religious consequences of Turkish military advances in the Balkan peninsula and south-east Europe. Royal courts and other centers of social power, such as church councils and universities, sought news from the region and tried to make sense of these recent events by explaining the news in terms of their own concepts of history. This article discusses the presentation of recent Balkan news in the works of one German courtly singer of the time, Michael Beheim, and in particular how Beheim's songs construct the image of the prince as a historical actor, telling stories of the lives and actions of princes involved in the Balkan wars as a way of explaining these events to his listeners at the German-speaking courts of the Holy Roman Empire of the time.

Historians interested in the collective functions of memory have come to use the term 'social memory' for the process whereby individuals come to agree or disagree about which recent or past events are important and how they are to be remembered.<sup>1</sup> Events are commemorated in individual texts (or also in artworks, rituals and ceremonies), yet the survival of these works and the continued transmission of the memories they convey is also the result of a process of selection, rejection and compromise. Michael Beheim's songs are artifacts of collective and social memory in this sense, commemorating princes, battles, crusades, and other subjects of interest to his noble and urban patrons. In the middle decades of the fifteenth century, Beheim served and sang at all of the major courts of the southern German-speaking lands, in Brandenburg at the court of Albrecht Achilles Hohenzollern, in Prague serving Ladislas Postumus, in Vienna under the

Emperor Frederick III and lastly in Heidelberg as chronicler and poet for Frederick the Victorious, the Elector Palatine.<sup>2</sup> The overwhelming majority of his songs are adaptations of moral-didactic prose texts, handbooks of vernacular piety that he turned into verse for sung performance or for private reading, but as well as the hundreds of songs on such pious topics, he wrote a number of chronicle songs recounting recent events in Germany or elsewhere, as well as stories from his own life and travels.<sup>3</sup> His songs on Balkan topics come partly from his own life but also from the appetite at the German courts for news from these regions. Beheim's individual memories, and the memories of eye-witnesses he interviewed for their newsworthiness, were thus presented to the courts and integrated into the collective memory of the events his songs recount. These historical songs may be read against the background of the moral values and the understanding of history taught in the pious songs, which I attempt here in the case of his portrayal of three different princes.

In an earlier article I have examined what is probably Beheim's most famous work, song 99 'On a madman called Dracula, voyvode of Wallachia' ('*von ainem wutrich der hies Trakle waida von der Walachei*') and how the allegations of misrule against Vlad Tepes/Dracula invert the princely virtues presented in song 308 'a song on how a king should reign' ('*wie ain kung regiren sol sagt dies getiht*'), which Beheim based on a widely read handbook of the time, a *Fürstenspiegel* or mirror for princes.<sup>4</sup> The literary character 'Dracula' (*Trakle*) encodes various cultural stereotypes about princes and misrule, not least in the context of a bitter fraternal war being fought between Albrecht and Frederick Habsburg in Austria just before Beheim composed his song about Dracula for the court at Vienna. This article covers the Dracula song in rather less depth, but builds on the earlier analysis to show how the image of the bad prince contrasts, not just with the ideal prince of the *Fürstenspiegel*, but also with the portrait of Wladyslaw Jagiello in song 104, 'a song about Wladyslaw, king of Hungary, and how he fought with the Turks' ('*hie dises geticht sagt von kung Pladislavo, dem king von Ungern, wie der mit den Turken strait*'). Vlad Dracula and Wladyslaw Jagiello were both involved to varying degrees in the Turkish wars of the time, though in Beheim's narratives the characters of 'Trakle' and 'Pladislavo' are presented as, respectively, much less and much more successful than their historical models. Vlad Dracula enjoyed considerable military success against Turkish invasions for years, but 'Trakle' is an enemy of Christendom: Wladyslaw's poor political and military leadership led to his own death and a major defeat for the

crusading effort, yet 'Pladislavo' is remembered as a praiseworthy prince whose deeds other rulers should imitate. Taken together, the three songs examined here span around a decade in the dates of their composition. Song 308, the *Fürstenspiegel*, is associated with the coronation of Ladislav Postumus as king of Bohemia in 1453; song 104 on Wladyslaw Jagiello most probably dates to 1459; and song 99 on Dracula was composed in response to news of Dracula's arrest by Matthias Corvinus of Hungary, in 1463.

This article will read the three songs together to show how they reflect moral values and historical understanding, and also glances at other contemporary presentation of the same characters and events. For reasons of space however, the focus is on Beheim's songs and on German reception of Balkan events, rather than on chronicles or other historiographical tradition in other languages.

### I. 'On how a king should rule'

Song 308 is a mirror for princes, a *Fürstenspiegel*. Rather than portraying a specific prince, this genre offers an ideal type, though the song bears a dedication to Ladislav Postumus, the young king of Bohemia and Hungary. Ladislav was born in 1440 after the death of his father Albrecht Habsburg, spent his childhood in Vienna as the ward of his cousin Frederick III, and then reigned in Bohemia from 1453 to 1457, visiting Hungary only occasionally. He had been crowned king of Hungary as an infant, in a contentious ceremony for which his mother Elisabeth arranged the theft of the crown.<sup>5</sup> Song 308 was perhaps composed for his Bohemian coronation in Prague, or more likely a year or two later when Beheim entered service at his court. The song is based on a mirror for princes originating in the *Wiener Kreis* of translators and originally associated with the Habsburg dynasty.<sup>6</sup> This text was composed around 1390 and widely circulated in manuscript in the half-century since, so that no direct Habsburg connection can be proven for Beheim's use of the text decades later, though Albrecht Habsburg, Frederick's brother and rival, may have provided Beheim with the text when the poet went to join Ladislav's court at Prague. (Note that this Albrecht is distinct from Ladislav's father the Emperor Albrecht II.) The song bears a dedication in its final lines, stating that 'I, Michael Beheim, made this [song] and will give it to my most gracious lord, king Ladislav.'

ich Michel Pehamer  
 wil es hie schenken einem,  
 dem kunig Lasslau, meinem  
 allernedigsten hern. (Song 308, lines 347-50)

The name, Lasslau, does not occur in a rhyming position here, and it would be a relatively simple task to change the name of the dedicatee in any subsequent performance. Below I shall discuss reasons why I suspect that the name may not have been changed in later performances, and how the song may even gain extra meaning if Ladislas' name stays in the song even after his death. Theories of collective memory study exactly such vehicles of social and moral values as the *Fürstenspiegel* genre. Song 308 follows its model as far as enumerating the four virtues that a ruler should have; the fear of God, the love of God, good councilors and trustworthy soldiers.

These four princely virtues are a mixed group; the love and the fear of God are qualitatively different from wise ministers and loyal fighting men. The song states that good governance is based on these four virtues, as Christian faith is based on the four gospels and Church doctrine is based on the four fathers, and these number comparisons yoke the four virtues together despite their dissimilarities, imposing unity onto a text which is in fact only an excerpt from the longer source. The fear of God is the first virtue and, proverbially, the beginning of wisdom. A God-fearing monarch is assured of a place in heaven as well as of a secure reign on earth; his subjects are loyal, his good deeds will be rewarded and he knows that his crimes will certainly be punished. We have nothing of our own on earth, and should use our allotted time to win God's approval and serve him worthily, not earning his anger.

The second virtue recommended to princes and other listeners is the love of God, which underlies acts of charity, 'without which no work is pleasing to God, no matter how good it seems' (*'an die kain werk mit nichten,/ wie gut es ümmer schein,/ Got mag peheglich sein'*, song 308, lines 73-75). the love of God also begets other virtues, teaching wisdom and prudence (*'weltlich fursihtikait'*, line 85). Again the moral benefits are emphasized so that non-noble listeners can appreciate the message. The fear of God prevents evils, the love of God promotes virtues; God created man from nothing and has made him strong and wise. The two virtues together, the fear of God and the love of God, are compared to the Old and New Testaments, which must both be fulfilled.

The next pair of virtues are wise councilors and loyal fighting men. These are more specifically royal, and concern the composition of a court and government rather than personal virtues. The Habsburg mirror from which Beheim worked was not unusual in bringing together dissimilar categories in this way. Werner Rösener's study of the genre and its descent uses Giles of Rome's *De regimine principum* and derived texts to show that the *Fürstenspiegel* bring together monastic, economic and political texts, in the technical sense of these terms.<sup>7</sup> Monastic rule is the government of one's own self and thoughts, for laymen as well as clerics or monks, and the virtues of the fear and love of god are monastic virtues in this broad sense. Economic texts discuss the composition of a prince's household (*oikonomia*), such as Konrad von Megenburg's taxonomy in the fourteenth century of courts both great and small, with *servi honestes*, *servi utiles* and *servi delectabiles*. Political texts discuss the government of a whole realm, overlapping at times with chronicle history.

Like its source, song 308 discusses the economic and political virtues in greater detail than the monastic virtues, at about twice the length. Councilors are political servants, like soldiers, rather than solely economic members of the household. Some councilors at least are chosen for their knowledge of the affairs of the kingdom, or because they are powerful lords in the own right. Each councilor, says the song, should be consulted within his area of expertise: 'a king should have loyal/ and wise councilors/ and take advice/ on any undertaking'.

auch sal ain fürst getreu  
 und weiss rat pei im hane,  
 waz er wil vahan ane,  
 dar uber nemen rat (Song 308, ll. 127-30).

Noble councilors give political advice in matters of rulership, ideally twenty-four in the great council, the *eusser rat* (line 256), twelve in the privy council, the *rechter rat* (line 266) and three great magnates. Later we shall see how the Dracula of song 99 disregards all these *Fürstenspiegel* maxims on good council, fiscal prudence and the keeping of a household. Wladyslaw Jagiello is a slightly different case since song 104 describes a military campaign rather than the activities of a king within his own realm, yet Wladyslaw also fails to regard advice, in his case that of the three great magnates.

The final virtue in the list is loyal soldiery, whom the king should trust and treat well. Beheim highlights the importance of soldiers by ending here; had he used more material from his source, he could have gone on to describe an ideal prince's conduct in making oaths and treaties, his choice of bride, the necessary balance between almsgiving and parsimony, or the role that angels can serve in governing a realm. He closes instead with four strophes on why soldiers are necessary and how they should be maintained. 'You should know for sure that without strong fighting men no king or prince can safely hold any realm or country.// This is because of the greed that is in the world. [...] The soldiers that he has, he should reward each according to his deeds, giving him what he has deserved, without disgrace to any.'

Und wissent sicher, daz  
on sterk streitperer leute  
küng oder furst mit neüte  
mag weder reich nach lant  
Hant haben sunder krant.

daz macht die geitikait  
dy die welt an ir trait.  
[...]  
waz er der mag gehalten,  
die sol er all pegaben  
yeglichen sunder schmach  
Nach seinen werken ach,  
als er verdienet hat.

(Song 308, lines 299-305 and 313-18)

In these lines Beheim the singer expands considerably on his source and there is a certain amount of personal interest in these lines, since the poet was also a soldier at the many courts where he served.

If the lines on loyal soldiers are to some extent autobiographical for Beheim the singer, they are also very relevant to Ladislav Postumus, the song's dedicatee, as are the lines on wise councilors and the need to seek advice from those who know the kingdom well. The Emperor Frederick III had only released his young ward from tutelage in Vienna and allowed him to be crowned in Prague after a concerted effort by the Hungarian, Bohemian and Moravian estates in 1452, a war in which inner Austrian

factions had joined against the Emperor for reasons of their own. Once Ladislas became king in Bohemia, George of Poděbrady served as his chief councilor and regent in a kingdom still troubled by the aftermath of the Hussite wars, and his regent in Hungary, the Transylvanian magnate János Hunyadi, led the military effort against the Turks virtually independently of his king. After Ladislas' death in 1457, allegedly the result of Hussite poisoning, Podiebrady was crowned king in Bohemia and Hunyadi's son Matthias Corvinus was crowned in Hungary. To put Ladislas' name into a song which so strongly argued for wise councilors and loyal soldiery was to pass comment, tacitly but unmistakably for any well-informed listener in Austria, Bohemia or Hungary, on the actual state of affairs.

Any original performance of the song in the 1450s, or any subsequent performance after Ladislas' death, or any modern reading of the song is thus influenced by the knowledge that the king was unusually dependent on his regent councilors to help him govern, and that in each kingdom he also faced significant opposition or rebellion. Lines such as those describing a prince's relations with the assembled estates of his realm thereby take on new meaning. 'When he is with any or all these [councilors], the king should simply listen, and not reveal his whole will.'

Pei disen allen sam  
 der kunig nur sol hären  
 und doch nit offenbören  
 sein willen gancz da pei. (Song 308, lines 267-70)

The traditional image of a wise king who keeps his own counsel is shaded by the concrete historical reality of a young king not able to impose his will in all matters. The light and shade of this image is only intensified when we bring in knowledge of Ladislas' early death at the age of seventeen, probably of plague but rumored to have been by poison. For a modern reader of the song, or for a medieval listener in the years after the king's death, the closing lines, dedicating the song to Ladislas by name, become an act of commemoration, not of Ladislas the king but of his memory, prompting listeners to think either of regional politics in Central Europe or, more broadly, of the vicissitudes of human fortune and the comparatively greater importance of faith and good works.

## II. 'A song about Wladyslaw, king of Hungary, and how he fought with the Turks'

The portrait of Wladyslaw Jagiello in song 104, though it may seem to be a more concrete portrait, also tends toward the ideal type, since it praises a Christian prince whom Beheim never served and who had died at least fifteen years before the song was composed. Whereas song 308 was based on a widely-read source known in dozens of manuscript copies from the early fifteenth century, for song 104 there is no independent corroboration of the supposed source. The song tells the story of Wladyslaw's two years fighting in Bulgaria in 1443 and 1444, when he attempted to strengthen his claim to the crown of Hungary by fighting against the Turks, a campaign which ended in his death at the battle of Varna. Wladyslaw led a coalition of regional forces and volunteers from further afield who joined an expedition which Pope Eugenius IV had proclaimed a crusade. In the closing lines, Beheim claims to have heard the story from Hans Mägest, a soldier captured by the Turks after the battle. No other documentary or archival evidence for Mägest's existence has yet come to light and Beheim does not say where Mägest was from or where they met. Our reactions to this lack of evidence may range anywhere from acceptance of the idea that after five centuries, the fate of a footsoldier may well be hard to trace, to an extreme skepticism that sees Mägest, and his fifteen years reportedly spent in captivity, as a fiction invoked to explain why the story of Varna is being retold so long after the event. Another gap in the evidence is that there is no indication, in the song itself or in the manuscript history, about the patron for whom Beheim wrote this account of the crusade. The only certainty is that it was not for Wladyslaw Jagiello himself, dead in battle.

The major determinant of any crusading effort in the mid-fifteenth century was the memory of Nicopolis, the disastrous campaign and battle of 1396 in which an army of western European crusaders led by Burgundian grandees was massacred by the Turks.<sup>8</sup> The experience of this defeat stifled any impetus to a new crusading coalition in western Christendom for some time. The lasting effects of Nicopolis made it difficult to persuade western nations to send troops to the Turkish wars, and the crusade of 1443/44 was a largely Central European effort led by Wladyslaw as king of Poland and of Hungary, with some volunteers from Italy, Germany and France and substantial support from Wallachian and Serbian forces. The importance of Nicopolis as a common traumatic

memory can be seen in the circulation of various accounts of the battle in the early and mid fifteenth century, for instance in Germany the memoirs of Johann Schiltberger, a Bavarian squire who had spent thirty years in captivity.<sup>9</sup> It is remarkable indeed that Schiltberger's account of Turkish ways and wars was copied and read all around southern Germany, and even became a success story of the early printed book trade, but that Beheim passes over Mägest's time in captivity with almost no comment. 'I made this song the way Hans Mägest told me, who was in the battle himself. He was prisoner with the Turks for as long as fifteen years. I Michael Beheim tell you this, as it was told to me.'

Dis liedlein ich getichtet hab,  
als mir Hans Maugest füre gab,  
der selb waz in dem strite.

Wol auff funff zehen jare  
er den Turken gevangen waz.  
ich Michel Beham kund euch das,  
als mir ist offenpare. (Song 104, lines 944-50)

This claim that the song repeats the story just as the singer heard it displays how social memory functions, as does the total silence on Mägest's time in captivity. Either because Beheim was a professional storyteller, or because Mägest had spent fifteen years going over his experiences in his own mind and making them into a story for himself and others, many features mark the song as a shaped narrative rather than unmediated experience. It is a version of events made to be shared with others, using familiar tropes of its cultural and historical context.

The historical background to the crusade and defeat at Varna must be explained before we examine how song 104 presents Wladyslaw. The most detailed study of the prelude and aftermath to Varna is a 1950 article by the Ottomanist Franz Babinger.<sup>10</sup> Beheim's song was also edited and meticulously commentarized in the 1930s by the Romanian bibliophile and historian Constantin Karadja, who passed over its literary qualities and used it mostly as a source on the comparative contributions of Polish, Hungarian and Wallachian forces to Wladyslaw's army.<sup>11</sup> As well as the land expedition through Bulgaria, the crusade was supported by a fleet, jointly commanded by a Roman cardinal and a Venetian admiral. The ships were supposed to blockade the Bosphorus, making it impossible

for Turkish troops from the Ottoman capital at Edirne/Adrianople to enter the Balkan theatre, but the fleet either failed in its task or abandoned it. Beheim's song squarely accuses the Venetians of having taken payment from the Turks to ferry soldiers across the straits, but we shall see that there are other possible explanations of the fleet's actions. Beheim's hostility may have had at least as much to do with a Venetian-Habsburg war over the city of Trieste as it had to do with the real course of events. Not long after 1459, when he composed the song, Beheim was also at work on a long chronicle *Buch von der Stadt Triest* about this war. His audience in Vienna may thus be presumed to be ready to hear a version of Varna that blames Venice for the defeat.

One example of how the song shapes its material is the way in which the narrative moves around from character to character. During the heat of the battle at Varna the song reports on a bragging match between two Turkish commanders, Halil Pasha and Murat, about who will capture more Christians. This episode seems to depend entirely on models from epic narrative, such as boastful Muslim enemies from the *Song of Roland*, rather than on anything which Mägest could plausibly have known about. Throughout the song, the various commanders on all sides are shown talking, disputing, making decisions, breaking their promises, giving way to fear or seeking glory in battle, in familiar epic fashion. Wladyslaw Jagiello, his allies János Hunyadi, Vlad Dracul and the Serbian despot George Brankovic, and the Turkish enemies are all depicted in detail far in excess of anything that Hans Mägest may have known about at the time, or discovered later; indeed Mägest is only named as eyewitness, in the lines quoted, at the very end of the song. Whether or not Mägest actually existed, Beheim seems to have named his source to lend authenticity to a largely invented story.

Another example of narrative shaping comes in the depiction of Cardinal Giuliano Cesarini. The first curious feature here is that Beheim's song never identifies the cardinal by name, always referring to him instead as 'the papal legate'. 'The third battalion or banner was led by a legate from Rome. Here were all those who fought without payment, to do God's will.'

Der drit van oder panir daz  
 aines legaten van Rom was.  
     dar under warn dy leüte,  
 Dis on solt durch gocz willen furn,  
 dy selben all dar under wurn [...] (Song 104, lines 341-45)

Cesarini was already a somewhat controversial figure before he joined the crusade. He negotiated with the Hussite schismatics of Bohemia, presided over the great council of the Western church at Basel, and then went over from the conciliar to the papal camp, taking a leading role in the brief Union of Florence-Ferrara with the Greek Orthodox church.<sup>12</sup> This church union did not reconcile Catholic with Orthodox for long, but allowed the Pope to reassert his primacy within the Catholic camp. Cesarini then became the papally-appointed spiritual leader of the crusade of 1443/44. It has been argued that the winter campaign of 1443 was a military failure with only some fortuitous gains, and that Cesarini persuaded Wladyslaw Jagiello to continue. When the cardinal died at Varna his body was never found and the Curia hesitated to hold a requiem mass until the following year, possibly hoping that he had survived. This absence of a corpse gave rise to various rumors, and Beheim's song repeats one of these, that the cardinal was captured, taken to Adrianople and flayed alive, becoming a martyr for the Christian faith (lines 914-20). Other stories were far less favorable, such as the version that had Cesarini's body discovered on the battlefield, weighed down with saddlebags full of gold. The combination of these two features of song 104, first of all that the cardinal is never named, and secondly that Beheim tells the most dramatic and most heroic version of his death, gives the impulse to look more deeply into Cesarini's history is needed.

Forgetting is part of the process of collective memory, so that events or aspects that are awkward, troubling and difficult to fit into an acceptable narrative are quietly dropped from the story. As it happens, Beheim's song 104 conveniently forgets much about Varna. Although it meticulously recounts the progress of the two separate campaigns of 1443 and 1444, wherever possible giving the German, Turkish, Hungarian and Slavonic names of every fortress along the route, detailing tactics, weather conditions, casualties and plunder, the song remains scrupulously silent about events between the two campaigns, and the acrimony that resulted from the defeat at Varna. No mention is made of the controversial question of whether Wladyslaw had concluded a truce with the Turks in the summer of 1444, and whether Cesarini had then encouraged him to break it. If he did so, the cardinal would have made himself culpable on two levels; morally because he enticed the king to perjure himself, and strategically because the confusion over the validity of the truce led the Venetian fleet to hold back from its task of blockading the Bosphorus. According to some reports, Turkish naval commanders had been able to show Wladyslaw's

ratified truce to the Christian admirals, who felt that they could not carry out their task. The charge that the Venetians actively colluded with the Turks thus becomes an attempt to gloss over Wladyslaw's truce-breaking and Cesarini's moral sophistry.

The disputed truce was signed, if it was signed at all, at Szeged, between the two campaigns of the crusade. The battles of 1443 had been harrying raids against Turkish garrison forces in the Balkan region, and only in 1444 did the sultan's main army take the field; the battle of Varna itself may have been the largest land battle in fifteenth-century Europe, by number of combatants. The questions of whether Wladyslaw would have rested content with his early victories, of whether he signed the truce at all, and if so whether he intended to hold to it, were controversial at the time, and in modern times have mostly been discussed by Central European scholars. The doyen of Polish historians, Oscar Halecki, seemed determined in his writing on the question to exculpate Wladyslaw and to show that the truce was never signed.<sup>13</sup> The Romanian historian Francisc Pall held that the truce was indeed signed, but that Wladyslaw was young, keen to prove himself to his peers and susceptible to persuasion.<sup>14</sup> Halecki and Pall argued the matter over during the Second World War, in the early 1940s, while Halecki was in America, so that their scholarly debate in books and journals took a while to cross the Atlantic; there is a poignant reminder, in this dispute about events of almost five centuries before, of how collective identities sustain themselves on stories and memories, in Polish historian arguing that Wladyslaw never made a truce with the Turks, while his Romanian colleague accepted that kings could vacillate between idealism and pragmatism. The German Ottomanist Babinger, writing after the war and a decade after Pall and Halecki had argued the matter, calls the question of the truce of Szeged an insoluble historiographical problem, but concedes that Cesarini was most likely to have been the *éminence grise* who spurred Wladyslaw on to fight. 'We will hardly ever be able to decide how far the young prince was the master of his own decisions or how far he was the pawn of other forces [...].'

Long before the scholarly debate in the mid-twentieth century, arguments over the supposed peace of Szeged, its moral dimensions and consequences fed debates and rumors. One legend had it that Wladyslaw himself survived the battle and became a wandering mendicant to expiate the sin of breaking a truce.<sup>15</sup> Yet none of these rumors or controversies surfaces in Beheim's terse description of Wladyslaw's actions between the

campaigns of 1443 and 1444. 'The king held court and rested until Saint James' day, when he decided to march against the Turks.'

der künig ain zeit waz hoven

Und ruwen bis Sant Jacobs tag.  
da machet er ainen anslag  
an dy Türken zu zihen. (Song 104, lines 360-63)

The court which took place on the feast of Saint James the Great, 25 July 1444, was the disputed court of Szeged. Beheim does not mention the truce at all, even to deny that it was signed.

Having sketched the historical background, we should now ask whether the song depicts Wladyslaw as a good ruler, in terms of the ideal portrait of song 308. Song 104 opens by attacking the rulers of Christian Europe for failing their duties in one way or another, holding up Wladyslaw as the only exemplar of a Christian monarch as he should be. 'Whatever they say of kings, princes, counts and barons here, that they rule as they should, seems shameful to me, for I know of only one who acted as a prince truly ought.'

Was man von kungen fursten hie,  
von graven freien sagt, wie sy  
rengniren mit getursten,  
Das dunket mich so gar ain tant,  
dann aines werk sein mir pekant,  
der tet geleich ain fürsten. (Song 104, lines 1-6)

Wladyslaw's crusading wars are defined in terms of Christian zeal and duty. Going to war shows that the prince fears God and loves God, which are the first two virtues he must possess. Notably, song 104 hurries over the first war in its narrative, the fighting in Hungary between nobles who supported the claims of the infant Ladislas Postumus, and those who elected the Jagellonian Wladyslaw. Beheim offers no opinion as to the rightness of either claim to the throne, saying only that 'the Turkish enemy took advantage of the confusion, gathering in great numbers' (*in der zwitrecht pesammelt sich/ das turkisch volk, gewaltiglich*, lines 24-25).

Not all wars are just and pious: and equally, not all wars are described in detail.

The narrative goes into much greater detail describing the crusade and dwells on individual episodes. Wladyslaw, merciless toward the Muslim enemy from the outset, kills and burns without offering truce or negotiation. His first great victory is described as having taken place at Christmas (line 123), although this date has no moral or religious significance; the season is only important because heavy snows stop the defeated Turks from escaping.

That Wladyslaw's martial zeal is inspired by fear of God rather than by worldly ambition is emphasized in an episode at the fortress of 'Steinpurğ' when he forbids looting. 'He said, "Throw away these treasures! We have come to do God's will, even if that means suffering.'" (*Er sprach: "das werffent von euch gar!/ wir kamen noch, ob got wil, dar,/ da wir daz not ansehen."*) (lines 514-16) This common trope in crusade narrative, when the leader of the army restrains his less pious companions from looting, can be found for instance in *The Song of Roland*. Song 104 underlines the point by telling how when Christian forces piled up the rich clothes and plunder and set them on fire, they also burned the inner fortress where the Turks had sought refuge.

The love of God is also shown in mercy to fellow Christians, amongst scenes of otherwise indiscriminate slaughter of 'Turks', including women and children, in the captured Bulgarian towns. At 'Peterspurğ', Wladyslaw forbids his troops to open fire because captive Christian women are inside along with the Turkish garrison (lines 574-82); after the fortress is won by hand-to-hand fighting, the Christian forces make up for lost opportunity by throwing the Turks into the moat and shooting them full of arrows. The fear of God and love of God come together in the prominence given to the cardinal, and the army's preparations before the climactic battle. Wladyslaw, Hunyadi and Cesarini visit the whole army on the eve of battle and remind them that they fight for the faith; the legate then gives absolution to all those who have not recently confessed (lines 637-50). Probably such visits and ceremonies were almost routine throughout the campaign, but the narrative gives them special emphasis only here, before the battle in which Wladyslaw is killed and Cesarini captured. This is again either a feature of how Mägest remembered the battle and its aftermath, or Beheim's manipulation of the narrative.

Wladyslaw's death becomes proof of his piety and love of God. When the course of the battle initially seems to favor the Christians, he takes

this as a sign of divine favor and plunges into the fight to seek out single combat despite warning voices. 'The king of Hungary spoke, "Since God has given us such victories, I will not fall back until I see the emperor himself." Hunyadi himself advised him against this, because of the Turkish emperor.'

Da sprach der kung von Ungern: 'seit  
 das uns got so vil siges geit,  
 ich nit erwinden wile,  
 Ich sech den kaiser selbe.'  
 daz selbig wider rit im der  
 Hunadienusch sunderper  
 des Turken kaisers helbe. (Song 108, lines 754-60)

One study of late medieval battle songs calls this exchange an unrealistic detail in an otherwise plausible account.<sup>16</sup> Yet the description of the battle is retrospective, put together from various reports, and does not represent Mägest's own immediate experience at Varna; the conversation between Wladyslaw and Hunyadi is no more realistic than the exchange between Halil Pasha and Murat, and is included to show the king's piety just as the latter shows the Muslim's pride.

The king's indifference to Hunyadi's advice can also be read though in terms of a prince's political virtues, and make it entirely clear to the listener that Wladyslaw lacked the virtue of prudence. A ruler should ideally have three great men of his realm to be his closest councilors, whose advice he should follow; '*Mechtiger herren drei/ sol er dar nach erwellen...*' (Song 308, lines 271-72). Historically it would be problematical to call the Transylvanian magnate Hunyadi, the Wallachian voyvode Vlad Dracul and the Serbian despot George Brankovic Wladyslaw's vassals, but they serve this function in the narrative of song 104. They contribute troops to his army, discuss tactics and offer advice, and defer to the king more than perhaps they did in reality. An example comes after the first major victory, when the Christian army have captured Turkish officers (song 104, lines 137-54). Brankovic wishes to blind them, in revenge for Murat's blinding of his sons, but Hunyadi dissuades him; 'Your son will not regain his sight thereby; let the king take them prisoner, and do not create disgrace!' ('*dein sun gesehen nit da van,/ du salt dem kung dy gfangen lan./ tu niht ain solche schmauche!*', lines 148-50). Hunyadi invokes the

king's honor as a motivating force for his own and Brankovic's behavior. Yet Wladyslaw disregards Hunyadi's good advice when the time comes, which leads to his death.

The failing though is not Wladyslaw's alone. Not all of his great magnates are true councilors. Vlad Dracul, loyal throughout the campaign of 1444, falls at the last hurdle and holds back from battle at Varna when the sultan reminds him that he holds his brothers hostage; 'then the great voyvode withdrew, and abandoned the Christians in their hour of need' (*'da zach der gros waida bei seit/ und liess die kristen sider/ In den nöten peleiben'*, lines 745-47). Barely ten lines later, Wladyslaw makes his fatal assault. The narrative thereby links Dracul's desertion directly to Wladyslaw's death, although this may not accurately reflect the course of the battle. Beheim/Mägest's account passes judgment on Wladyslaw's relations with his vassals and troops. Since the Wallachians proved to be unreliable, the king stands condemned for failing to ensure the loyalty of those who fight for him. (In another example of twentieth-century historiography reading its own concerns into the medieval sources, though, Constantin Karadja devoted much of his study of Beheim's song to arguing that Romanian troops also served with Hunyadi, who remained loyal throughout the battle.)

Thus Wladyslaw is outstanding in what one may call the monastic virtues of a prince, the regulation of his own desires and duties, but deficient in the economic and political virtues, the ability to take advice and command others. Hans Mägest's supposed status as eyewitness may make it problematical to read song 104 through the prism of the virtues set out in song 308; can we expect him to have been familiar with the *Fürstenspiegel* tradition? Yet the values set out in the mirror for princes certainly shaped the perception of personality and events. I am arguing here not for a reading that exalts Beheim's artistic contribution above the material from which he worked, but rather for a view of Beheim's songs as an archive of common knowledge. He certainly shaped Mägest's experience in song 104, as we have seen in the examples drawn from the *Song of Roland*, and interpreted the experience of the war in moral terms.

### III. 'On a madman called Dracula, voyvode of Wallachia.'

Vlad Dracula, the son of the voyvode Vlad Dracul mentioned in song 104, was like his father a fierce fighter against the Turks when this suited his purposes. He was however also caught up in local conflicts with neighboring Christian actors, especially the Saxon merchants of Transylvania who tended to see any prolonged war in the Balkans as disruptive of trade. Romanian scholars have closely examined how news of Vlad Dracula's reign was disseminated in the rest of Europe and what basis these reports had in historical fact. As such they have been interested in Beheim's song 99 "on the madman Dracula". A doctoral dissertation by Gregor Conduratu at the beginning of the twentieth century offered an early edition of song 99, and Matei Cazacu also included the song in his authoritative study of several streams of Dracula narrative.<sup>17</sup> Although his presentation of Wallachian events is meticulous, Conduratu did not go deeply into the Austrian context within which Beheim worked. The geopolitics of the Balkan frontier are certainly relevant, but the song also documents cultural and courtly values which Beheim upheld, and to which his audience at least nominally subscribed. Cazacu is better in examining how each tradition projected onto Vlad certain of their own preconceptions about princes, political rule and warfare; in German reports these led to negative judgments, while the Russian tradition saw Dracula as a model prince because of his administration of justice and his relentless foreign policy. My reading of the Dracula portrait here opposes Vlad both to the model prince presented in song 308, the *Fürstenspiegel* for Ladislas Postumus, and to the presentation of Wladyslaw Jagiello in song 104.

The most detailed examination of the cultural and political context of Beheim 99 is an article by Helmut Birkhan.<sup>18</sup> A failed military alliance with Matthias Corvinus of Hungary ended with Corvinus taking Vlad prisoner in January 1463 rather than lending him the troops and support which the voyvode expected. Birkhan proposes that this act of *Realpolitik* required vigorous propaganda to justify what Corvinus' western neighbors would otherwise see as an act of treachery and a compromise with the Turkish aggressors. Beheim thus becomes a witting or unwitting collaborator in a smear campaign; either he denounced Dracula on behalf of the Hungarian court, or he heard news of the capture, decided that this was worth a song and was influenced by the black reports already circulating. At this time Beheim was working at the imperial court in Wiener-Neustadt, where

Frederick III was his primary patron. According to his own account, Beheim heard stories of Dracula's cruelty and injustice from a certain Brother Jacob, who had fled the vojvode's persecution of Catholic monks and had arrived at the imperial court seeking refuge, where the poet spoke to him frequently (Song 99, lines 805-16). Jacob cannot have been his only informant, since the song also describes events in Wallachia after the monk had left, recounting Vlad's capture and imprisonment in some detail. Therefore the song was composed after the news had reached Wiener-Neustadt and Beheim judged that Frederick would not object to a version of events that commended Corvinus for the arrest, despite their enmity in other areas of regional politics. Like song 104, which names Hans Mägest merely to invoke the authenticity of the supposed eyewitness account, song 99 uses Brother Jacob to lend credence to the story and to episodes which are clearly shaped by narrative tradition.

In preparing his edition of the song, Conduratu established that Beheim had drawn on a written source as well as on his interviews with Brother Jacob, a short tract or digest on Dracula's doings, circulated by his political opponents. Although it reports the usual roster of outrages, this tract does not mention the prince's capture, describing the crimes (impalement, torture and murder of various innocent victims) but not the punishment. Therefore it was composed before the imprisonment in 1463, and probably with a view to urging some such intervention. Conduratu concludes that it was written on behalf of the Saxon towns of Transylvania, to dissuade Corvinus from offering Vlad military or political support. He remarks on the minimal information that the text gives about Transylvanian and Wallachian affairs and infers that it was written for an audience who already knew this background. It is also noteworthy that the tract is written as a list of facts and events, rather than as persuasive rhetoric. Each act of cruelty is described in a somewhat dry documentary style, so that the text was more likely compiled as notes which envoys could consult before speaking, rather than as a letter to be sent to a recipient. The text was probably sent from the Saxon towns to Buda, and then onward to Austria. There may even have been a concerted effort in Matthias Corvinus' chancery to circulate this propaganda before Corvinus deposed his neighbor.<sup>19</sup>

Beheim uses many narrative and topographical details from this source, suggesting that he saw one such tract in manuscript late in 1462. Yet he completed his song only after the situation was resolved; once Vlad was imprisoned, and clearly without political support, Beheim expanded upon

his sources to write the portrait of a villain. He incorporated Brother Jacob's testimony, the tract distributed by Saxon merchants or envoys, and news from the Hungarian court.

Beheim's own contribution in building on his sources was to offer a moral judgment on Dracula's misdeeds and to write about him as a character rather than as an unmotivated brute. He frequently uses direct speech and dialogue, putting words into the prince's mouth as for instance in the encounter with Brother Jacob and his fellow monks (Song 99, lines 681-804). Here the poet claims to report the conversation as Jacob told it to him, just as in many other episodes where he also presents Dracula's crimes as the culmination of a debate or argument. Beheim's portrait of the articulate, self-justifying tyrant is clearly a literary construction, just as were the conversations in song 104, the dialogues in the description of the battle at Varna. Examples of Dracula's mordant wit include an encounter with another group of monks, with a preacher, and with a band of Gypsies who enter Wallachia and make the mistake of questioning the prince's authority. In each instance Dracula speaks directly and cogently: in each instance he makes his point by resorting to violence which is disproportionate, but also inventive and even entertaining. In the prose narratives these violent acts are not reported with such circumstantial detail, and Dracula does not emerge as a character. Compare the dialogues of Murat and Halil, or Wladyslaw and Hunyadi, in song 104; without these conversations (which Mägest probably never heard and which Beheim invented), the narrative would remain at the level of a dry catalogue of events.

The compilers of the Saxon tract felt that the facts spoke for themselves: modern readers may also feel that the violence is clearly repugnant. Yet Beheim inserted speech not simply to underline the suffering of the victims but to present a Dracula who acknowledges and reflects upon his own cruelty. Birkhan's article discusses how the cruelty most commonly associated with Dracula carried specific connotations for a late medieval audience which are no longer obvious today. Compared with breaking upon the wheel, hanging and other spectacular executions, Birkhan established that impalement was perceived as crueler than any of these because of its association with pagan Rome and with the Turkish enemy. Capital punishment was not condemned as such, nor were punishments which could be more painful and lingering than impalement.

Birkhan also reads Dracula as an antithesis of the *Endkaiser*, the Last World Emperor of medieval prophecies, citing a number of other songs

dating from Beheim's Vienna years which celebrate the Emperor figure. Dracula's manifest injustice should remind Frederick III of his own duty to administer justice, with the implication that as Dracula is the worst possible tyrant, so Frederick has the opportunity to become the most perfect and just of all monarchs. Thus the hyperbole of Beheim's opening lines becomes a programmatic statement in political eschatology. 'There was a madman and tyrant worse than any that I have ever heard in all the earth, anywhere beneath the broad circle of heaven, since the world began there was none worse; and I will sing about him.'

Den aller grosten wutrich und  
 tirannen den ich ye erkund  
 auff aller diser erden  
 Under des weiten himels ring,  
 seit her das dy welt ane ving  
 mocht nie kein pöser werden,  
 Von dem so wil ich tichten. (Song 99, lines 1-7)

There are certain obstacles to the *Endkaiser* interpretation, for instance that the tyrant Dracula could be seen in the context of the standard theory of just rule without reference to the more esoteric prophetic scheme. Similarly Wladyslaw is praised in song 104 as a perfect Christian prince but the end of the world is not invoked; the hyperbole which opens both songs seems to be a simple rhetorical device, rather than a coded reference to eschatological events or figures.

The political terminology in the next lines of the song is quite conventional; 'He was called Dracula, and Wallachia is the land that stood under his care.' ('*Er was Trakel waida genant/ und Walachei, das selbig lant/ stund under seinen pflichten*', song 99, lines 8-10) The song goes on to detail how the prince failed to fulfill his duties of care in the land. To some extent, the qualities which Dracula notably lacks are those recommended to a prince in song 308, but in decade or so between Prague and Vienna Beheim accumulated further material which went into his portrait of the tyrant. Beheim was also working from an established text and from sources he discovered for himself, so that the resulting Dracula song is also about three times the length of the mirror for princes.

Dracula is clearly not a God-fearing monarch. Beheim reports that before he was elected to the throne of Wallachia, he worshipped idols

(*apgöter*) but renounced them and promised to uphold the Christian faith (song 99, lines 22-30). The song goes on to describe how he went against this promise; he burnt the church in the St Bartholomew's suburb of Kronstadt and plundered the plate and vestments (lines 210-16); he persecuted monks and priests such as Brother Jacob, the refugee whose story Beheim heard at Wiener-Neustadt. Riding back from a bloody campaign in Serbia, Dracula met three monks on the road and asked them whether God would reward him, a notorious killer, for sending so many people to heaven. Brother Michel replied that God had indeed rewarded many people who seemed far from His grace: Brother Hans denounced Dracula at length, predicting hellfire and damnation. Both were impaled for their answers although Jacob, the third monk, escaped to tell the tale (lines 681-816).

The fear of God teaches us that we have nothing of our own on earth (song 308, lines 57-60), but Dracula distorts this precept in a gruesome attack on a priest who had preached that stolen goods must be returned. Dracula invited him to discuss the sermon over a meal and crumbled bread into his own dish. The unfortunate priest took some of this bread with his spoon, whereupon Dracula reminded him of the sanctity of private property by impaling him (99, 414-42). There are echoes here of the Biblical advice against dining with princes, given in Proverbs 23. 1 and 6-8.

When thou sittest to eat with a ruler, consider diligently what is before thee [...] Eat thou not the bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his dainty meats: for as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee. The morsel which thou hast eaten shalt thou vomit up, and lose thy sweet words.

The punishment is absurdly disproportionate to the offence, and the pretence of defending the private ownership even of breadcrumbs is hypocritical coming from a plundering warlord. Unlike Brother Jacob's tale, this was already present in the Saxon tract. Again though Beheim builds upon his Saxon source, inventing dialogue to show how Dracula deliberately rejects princely piety and virtues. For Beheim, the news of Dracula's deposition gave his song its moral and narrative structure. In his discussion of the *princeps iniustus* motif, Birkhan reminds us that the Council of Constance had sanctioned the deposition and murder of tyrants, half a century before. The historical facts did not allow Beheim

to kill off his villain, but he structured his story to emphasize that even a prince has nothing of his own.

The second virtue of a prince should be the love of God, which validates acts of charity. Beheim's song distorts this virtue by expanding another tale from the Saxon source. Dracula invited the poor of his realm to a feast and once they had eaten, burnt them all. Beheim hikes the number of victims from two hundred to six hundred, again introduces dialogue into the episode and embroiders his account with more detail (lines 861-70). In the Saxon tract the victims are simply called poor folk (*arm lütt*): Beheim describes them as the sick, the blind, the halt and the lame. These deserve kindness and Dracula begins well, but reveals that his charity is cruelty. In a further twist on the duties of a prince, Beheim has Dracula explain that he had the beggars killed because they were useless in war; 'These people do not carry arms' ('*dis volkes für nicht wer*', line 868). In a just kingdom, the soldiery exists to protect prince who in turn protects the poor and needy; in Dracula's kingdom, war is an end in itself and the ruler pays no heed to justice or mercy.

The third feature of a good prince is good council, both economic and political. Political councilors should be delegates from the whole kingdom who know its affairs and are able to advise on government (song 308, line 251-97). Beheim reports that Dracula called nobles together and asked the assembly how many voyvodes they could remember in the realm; some remembered thirty, some twenty, even the youngest could remember seven. Concluding that such frequent changes of ruler could only be due to faction and insubordination, Dracula had all five hundred delegates impaled (song 99, lines 443-80). Much later in the song, their replacements were chosen for rather different criteria. 'Whoever could think up much mischief was his closest councilor. He filled his government and state with the worst villains you might find on earth, and held them in great honor. Wherever they came from, Hungary or Serbia, Turkey or Tartary, they were all accepted.'

Wer vil passhait kunt tichten,  
 der waz sein ynderister rat.  
 er furt sein reigement und stat  
 mit den ergesten wichten

dy man mach finden auff der erd,  
 dy hielt er gar in grassen werd.  
 wa sy her woren kummen,  
     Auss Ungern oder der Sirvei,  
 von Turken oder Tartarei,  
 dy warn all auff genummen.      (lines 917-26)

A prince should also have servants to keep watch on income and expenditure, though we have seen that Dracula preferred to draw income from plunder rather than good management. He called his closest councilors to help him bury his treasure, and beheaded them to conceal the secret (lines 587-96). These examples of bad economy are drawn from throughout Beheim's story, which follows the Saxon tract in its movement from scene to scene. He enlarges upon his source by passing comment at certain points, for instance in a wry remark on the eventual composition of the court; 'This was a bad example' (*'da waz pös ebenpilde,'* line 930). None of this disparate assembly could trust one another or even speak the same language, and Dracula's reign only lasted as long as it did because he could exploit disunity. There is an implicit parallel with the legend of Babel, when the speakers of various tongues found it impossible to cooperate; whereas God had created this confusion as a punishment, Dracula sees it as a desirable state of affairs.

There is also an explicit contrast with the well-ordered court of Matthias Corvinus, who brings the misrule to an end. Beheim repeats the accusation that Dracula had offered to betray his neighbor to Mehmed II. 'He wanted to bring King Matthias of Hungary and all his good councillors into the Sultan's hands.' (lines 984-87) Matthias gets wind of the plot and allows Dracula to propose a military alliance, then turns the tables by having him imprisoned. The historical evidence suggests that in fact it was Matthias who sought a temporary truce with the Turks, and Vlad who would have preferred to prosecute the wars. Beheim disregards this in order to contrast the two rulers, and emphasizes the obedience of Matthias' courtier Jan Jiskra who performs the arrest.

The final item in the list of princely virtues is a loyal army, and here again Beheim ignores Vlad's actual military achievements to paint a black picture. A true prince should reward his troops well and win their trust: Dracula's methods are more inventive, though presumably less effective in raising a reliable fighting force. A group of three hundred Gypsies arrived in Wallachia, and the voyvode had three of their leaders killed

and roasted. He forced the others to eat the flesh of their companions and promised to continue the process until the Gypsies had eaten one another down to the last man and child, or agreed to fight for him against the Turk. They quickly agreed to do so (lines 821-60). This is not the first instance of cannibalism by coercion in the song, though it should be emphasized that Dracula is not himself a cannibal or vampire at this stage of the tradition. He forces his subjects – whether Gypsies or Wallachian boyars (lines 601-16) – to eat one another, contradicting the precept that earthly rule was instituted to prevent men from devouring one another ‘as big fish eat little fish.’

#### **IV. Ladislav, Wladyslaw and Vlad**

A work which gave an important impetus to the flourishing field of memory studies was Maurice Halbwachs' *Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*. Halbwachs was particularly interested in how group identities are formed by sharing and strengthening the memories of common experience, such as going to school, serving in the military or taking part in political rallies.<sup>20</sup> It may seem ambitious to use theories of collective memory to discuss events which happened elsewhere, and in which few of the audience for Beheim's songs were involved. In the Viennese context where he composed and performed songs 104 and 99, very few courtiers or townsfolk had any personal experience of Bulgaria or Wallachia, and only a handful had direct ties with the neighboring kingdom of Bohemia. Yet group identities are also formed by reacting to news from elsewhere, as well as by living through events, and memories do not strongly distinguish between personal experience, hearsay and fictions. Even in the medieval era, before newsreel, radio, television or the other media which shape modern memory formation, manuscript culture and agents such as Michael Beheim, a professional singer and chronicler, spread news to groups who listened eagerly and drew lessons from the stories told.

## NOTES

- 1 Peter Burke, 'History as Social Memory', in Burke, *Varieties of Cultural History*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 1997, p. 44. An excellent introduction to collective memory theory can also be found in James V. Wertsch, *Voices of Collective Remembering*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002, especially the first three chapters.
- 2 On Beheim's biography see most recently Friederike Niemeyer, *Ich, Michel Pehn: Zum Kunst- und Rollenverständnis des meisterlichen Berufsdichters Michael Beheim*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 2001.
- 3 The standard edition is edited by Hans Gille and Ingeborg Spriewald, *Die Gedichte des Michel Beheim*, Deutsche Texte des Mittelalters 63, 64 and 66, Akademie-Verla, Berlin, 1968-72. Songs are cited by the numbering used in this edition.
- 4 Samuel Pakucs Willcocks, 'Michael Beheim's Dracula Song as a Dark Mirror for Princes', in *Studii și Materiale de Istorie Medie*, 25, 2007, pp. 183-196.
- 5 These events are recounted in *The Memoirs of Helene Kottaner*, edited by Maya Bijvoet Williams, Brewer, Cambridge, 1998.
- 6 The full prose version of the text is published in a commentarised edition by Gerd Brinkhus, *Eine bayerische Fürstenspiegelkompilation des 15. Jahrhunderts: Untersuchungen und Textausgabe*, Artemis, Munich, 1978.
- 7 Werner Rösener, 'Der mittelalterliche Fürstenhof: Vorbilder, Hofmodelle und Herrschaftspraxis', in *Mittelalterliche Fürstenhöfe und Erinnerungskulturen*, ed. by Carola Fey, Steffen Krieb and Werner Rösener, V&R unipress, Göttingen, 2007, pp. 21-41.
- 8 On Nicopolis and its coverage in chronicle accounts from across Europe see particularly Ovidiu Constantin Cristea, 'La Défait dans la Pensée Médiévale Occidentale: le Cas de la Croisade de Nicopolis (1396)', in *New Europe College Yearbook*, 1999-2000, pp. 37-69.
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- 10 A comprehensive study of Varna is Franz Babinger, 'Von Amurath zu Amurath: Vor- und Nachspiel der Schlacht bei Varna', in *Oriens*, 3, 1950. Babinger includes Beheim's song 104 in his survey of the sources but also refers to French, Venetian, Papal and Ottoman accounts. A commentarised collection of sources, also including Beheim 104, has more recently been published in English translation by Colin Imber, *The Crusade of Varna 1443-45*, Ashgate, Aldershot, 2006.
- 11 Constantin Ioan Karadja, 'Poema lui Michel Beheim despre Cruciadele împotriva turcilor din anii 1443 și 1444', *Buletinul Comisiei Istorice a Romania*, 15, 1936.

- <sup>12</sup> For a biography see Gerald Christianson, *Cesarini: The Conciliar Cardinal*, EOS, Sankt Ottilien, 1979.
- <sup>13</sup> Oscar Halecki, *The Crusade of Varna: A Discussion of Controversial Problems*, Polish Institute of Arts and Sciences in America, New York, 1943.
- <sup>14</sup> Francesc Pall, 'Autour de la Croisade de Varna: la question de la paix de Szegeed et de sa rupture (1444)', in *Românii și Cruciade târzie*, ed. by Ionut Costea, Argonaut, Cluj, 2003, pp. 131-42; the article was originally published in *Bulletin historique de l'Academie Roumaine*, 22, 1941.
- <sup>15</sup> The legends are summarised by Bohuslav Šalanda, 'Oral History and the Symbols of Royal Power in Central Europe', in *Cultural Symbols and Ethnic Consciousness* ed. by Jan Pargač, Institute of Ethnology, Prague, 1998, pp. 94-105.
- <sup>16</sup> Sonja Kerth, *Der Landsfrid ist zerbrochen: Das Bild des Krieges in den politischen Ereignisdichtungen des 13. bis 16. Jahrhunderts*, Reichert, Wiesbaden, 1997, p. 231.
- <sup>17</sup> Gregor C. Conduratu, *Michael Beheims Gedicht über den Woiwoden Wlad II. Dracul, Mit historischen und kritischen Erläuterungen*, Eminescu, Bucharest, 1903; Matei Cazacu, *L'Histoire du Prince Dracula en Europe centrale et orientale*, Droz, Geneva, 1988.
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- <sup>20</sup> Maurice Halbwachs, edited and translated by Lewis A. Coser, *On Collective Memory*, Chicago, Chicago University Press, Chicago, 1992.