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*Raoul De Cambrai* and Inheritance Disputes in Feudal Society

*Raoul de Cambrai* has been called, by various critics, "the most famous of the rebel poems...perhaps also the most typical of the genre and its masterpiece" and also the chanson de geste "qui contient le noyau historique le plus appréciable." As a significant example of the feudal or baronial revolt cycle of *chansons*, *Raoul de Cambrai* lends itself well to a socio-historic examination. In particular, this work presents a vivid picture of the use of violent extra-judicial means in attempting to resolve important legal disputes, especially those concerning inheritance rights, since it centers on the dispossession of its titular hero and his subsequent efforts to regain his father's lands.

As most chansons de geste derive their inspiration at least loosely from either an actual historical event or personage, and in some cases both, an examination of the degree of this historicity would help in determining the extent to which that particular *chanson* mirrors its society. In most cases, however, a definite assessment of exact parallels between life and literature proves difficult, if not nearly impossible, to establish, due in great part to the lack of firm and reliable documentary evidence. One must therefore assume the literary texts, especially the epic poems, to be representations of (or rather, commentaries on) the general social and cultural conditions of the period, if not the actual events or people they describe:


Voilà pourquoi, alors que la connaissance du monde féodal nous aide à pénétrer les chansons de geste, à en expliquer les obscurités, à en comprendre la psychologie, celles-ci nous renseignent à leur tour sur la société, non tant comme elle était, mais comme elle se voyait, et surtout comme elle souhaitait être. N'est-ce pas d'ailleurs en cela justement que ces poèmes nous sont précieux? Ils nous livrent l'âme d'une société, alors que les chartes et les chroniques en décrivent l'anatomie. 3

Also of particular interest to this study is the view of R. Howard Bloch, who sees the medieval epic as a re-enactment of the social and, above all, judicial relationships between the members of the audience's society, 4 "a ceremonial demonstration of the principles by which the community defined itself, at once the code and the inventory of its most basic values." 5

For Raoul de Cambrai, the "noyau historique" previously referred to consists of the invasion of the territory of a deceased count Herbert, located near Saint-Quentin, by a certain Raoul, son of Raoul de Gouy, in 943. The said Raoul fils perished in this endeavor, killed by Herbert's sons, news of which greatly afflicted the current king, Louis IV. 6 Upon this much, the vast majority of critics agree; far less is their concurrence on any additional information concerning these historical figures. Theories and speculation abound as to the identity of Raoul, the precise location of the property "de Gouy," the names and number of Herbert's sons, and Raoul's feudal ties to the place with which he is identified, as well as his personal relationship with the king, and why Raoul's death should affect the latter so strongly.

3 Matarasso 106.


5 Bloch 3.

However, we may put these dilemmas aside for the time being and devote our attention to the aim of this study: an examination of an historical phenomenon, a social mechanism, rather than the establishment of parallels between an historic event and a semi-fictional work, or the recreation of such an event by means of a literary text. Likewise, the questions of authorship, text origin, and manuscript tradition rest outside the scope of the proposed topic. For our present purpose, we shall simply concur with the general consensus, which affirms the single surviving complete manuscript as a product of the twelfth century (dating from about 1180; certainly after 1152, if one subscribes to the theory connecting the *chanson* with the abbey at Waulsort). As such, it represents the society of that era overlaid upon the foundations of its historical point of departure. Additionally, this study will limit itself to the examination of the first 5555 rhymed verses of what has come to be referred to as the *Raoul de Cambrai*: for reasons of stylistic, formal and thematic differences, as well as those of tone, several critics have concluded that the second, assonanced, portion of the composite text represents a later continuation of, or an independent poem subsequently attached to, the former—in any case, the work of another poet.

Having thus set aside many of the purely textual questions commonly raised concerning *Raoul de Cambrai*, my analysis will concentrate on some of its socio-historic aspects: the justness and legality of Raoul's disinherition according to feudal law and custom, and the means employed in attempting to resolve the resultant dispute.

In verses 19-23 of the poem, Raoul Taillefer, father of the hero, receives the Cambrésis in fief from King Louis; the elder Raoul dies, leaving his wife pregnant with a son, the hero, who later

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7 Matarasso 28-9, 39-40 ff. passim; and Calin 19, 26.

8 Calin 14-20.

9 This and all subsequent citations from *Raoul de Cambrai* refer to the P. Meyer and A. Longnon edition (Société des Anciens Textes Français, Paris: Firmin Didot, 1882).
claims the territory as his rightful inheritance. However, Louis has already awarded the fief to another of his favorites, leaving young Raoul effectively disinherited. From this arises the major conflict of the chanson, hence the principal point of this study. As one can see from only a moderately close examination of the chansons de geste, although many (in fact, the majority), have as their central point of departure an actual historical event or person, this occurrence or figure is set in an environment which, for the most part, mirrors the social mores and customs of the author's (or remanieur's) era, rather than those of the age in which the action ostensibly takes place. Thus, one would expect that Raoul de Cambrai, dating from the latter half of the twelfth century, would represent the feudal customs of that period, in which the inheritance of a fief by a direct blood-descendant of the deceased was a firmly established legal tradition. Even as early as the tenth century, the setting in which the action of the chanson is set, the hereditary right of the son to his father's fief was the custom rather than the exception, although of course it did not have the longstanding tradition of precedents that would later be the case.\(^{10}\) How, then, can Louis justify giving the Cambrésis to Gibouin, when it clearly seems to be Raoul's legal birthright? Several arguments present themselves in response to this question, many dealing with the nature of the assignment of the fief.

The first possibility, that Louis gave the Cambrésis to the elder Raoul as a fief to hold only during his lifetime, to revert to the Crown after his death, is insupportable considering the general acceptance by critics of the firm establishment of the tradition of the inheritance of fiefs. In addition to this supposition, we must note that nowhere in his various arguments, apologies, or other declamations, does Louis ever claim to have awarded the fief under such conditions. Never does he tell the young Raoul that he has no claim to the land, that it had reverted automatically to the Crown. On the contrary, the poet has Raoul repeatedly referring to it as his land, not his father's land, nor the king's land that his father had held. Even the king, in verses 123-24, acknowledges Raoul's right to the land by saying to Gibouin, "Par tel convent la te veul je livrer, / L'enfant Raoul n'en vuel deseriter" (my emphasis). The king could not possibly fear disinheriting the hero unless Raoul had

\(^{10}\) Matarasso 108-9.
indeed rightfully inherited the property, and unless Louis recognized that right. Furthermore, in verses 135-38, the poet condemns Louis's action as "folaige," and uses the verb "tolir," implying forceful and unjust seizure. He also vilifies Gibouin for committing the "outraige" of wanting another's land:

Roys Loeys fist le jor grant folaige  
Qi son neveu toli son eritaige;  
Et Giboïn refïst molt grant outraige  
Quant autrui terre vost avoir par barnaige.

Then, when the king outlines the possible consequences of Aalais's refusal to marry Gibouin, he threatens not to reclaim, but to seize Raoul's estate: "Et s'ele i faut, trestot par son outraige, / S'irai saisir la terre et l'eritaige" (151-52).

P. Matarasso proposes a second situation, in which the Cambrésis was not given to Raoul Ta illefer directly, but rather as Aalais's dowry. Matarasso cites verses 23-24 to support this hypothesis,11 "De Canbrisin an droit fié le vesti, / Et mollier belle, ains plus belle ne vis," her inference being that since the two actions are mentioned in such close proximity to each other, they must necessarily not only have occurred at the same time, but must also be intrinsically related events. But these same verses, and especially verse 23, would seem to refute the very premise they ought to confirm. We read concerning Raoul and the Cambrésis that Louis "an droit fié le vesti." There is no mention of dowry or marriage portion; the verb used is "vestir," not "donner," though had this been the situation, once the marriage had taken place the husband would of course do homage for the fief. Moreover, the poet cites Louis as investing the elder Raoul with the fief in question before giving him Aalais's hand in marriage. On first glance, verses 151-52 and 129-30 also seem to corroborate Matarasso's theory, in that she sees Louis as considering the possibility of forcing Aalais to forfeit her dowry through refusal to remarry in the former, and in the latter, Gibouin agreeing to take possession of the land by accepting Aalais's hand in marriage: "Dist Giboïn: «je nel doi refuser, /«Mais qe la dame me faites espouser.»" However, a closer

11 Matarasso 110.
examination shows that what Matarasso has interpreted as circumstantial evidence of a marriage gift must rather be considered, in both instances, merely the narrative juxtaposition of two concurrent but independent actions. Support for this position comes again from verses 123-24, for if it were indeed a question of dowry, Louis would never have mentioned the possibility of disinheritance, since the young Raoul would have no legal claim to his mother's dowry until after her death. Furthermore, in verses 129-30, if the territory were in fact a marriage portion, Louis would have mentioned it in conjunction with the offer of Aalais's hand. Yet the king offers Gibouin the fief before the latter's proposal to marry Aalais. Verse 147 («Toute la terre li doin en mariaige») also appears to substantiate the dowry theory, but in light of verses 127-28 («Cambrai tenra; nul ne l'en puet veer, / Mais l'autre terre te ferai deliverer»), the "terre" in question may not be the Cambrésis at all, but another estate entirely, and perhaps indeed Aalais's dowry. In any case, the greater part of the evidence seems to indicate that the Cambrésis was not Aalais's marriage portion, and one may regard Louis's actions as an indication of his basic ill intent; granting favor to Gibouin has already become his idée fixe, pushing him either to forget or blatantly disregard the true status of the territory in question.

Yet another factor must be taken into account in analyzing the status of Raoul's claim to his father's territory, that of the legal rights of minors and their guardians. In the case of Raoul, one can infer any of several possibilities concerning his guardianship. Although conclusive identification of the hero's guardian is unlikely—the poet never directly mentions it—the most likely candidates are Aalais, Guerri, and Gibouin, and one can find circumstances supporting each hypothesis. As Aalais appears to remain in possession of the town and fortress of Cambrai through to the end of the poem, it would appear that she had been awarded

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12 A fourth possibility, the bishop of Beauvais (line 16), can be effectively dismissed; although he is identified as Raoul's godfather, he never appears again after the christening.

13 She can be seen in residence in verses 106-09, 155-60, 319-20, 1176, 3511, 4102-05, 4277-80, 4766-69, 5522-24, 5554-55, and laisse CXCVII.
guardianship of her son, since the guardian of a minor heir has the right to use the fief in question to support his or her ward. This supposition, however, is far from conclusive, for her presence at Cambrai can also be explained in at least two other manners. If the customary laws of the Cambrésis regarding a widow's rights over her late husband's property resembled those of nearby Beauvaisis, Aalais would have been entitled to occupy the castel (that is to say, the chief fortification of the fief) until the heir had given her a residence of sufficient value in exchange. And the heir in this case being a minor, he had no authority to make such a substitution; neither did the guardian, since one of his prime limitations of guardianship was the obligation to turn over the property to the ward, upon his attaining majority, in exactly the same condition in which it had been received. More likely, Aalais and her relatives, firmly convinced of Raoul's right to the property, simply refused to vacate, and Gibouin, realizing the shakiness of his position and the probable lack of support from the king, declined to press the issue to the point of a military confrontation: «Drois emperere, or me va molt sordois. /«Vos me donastes Cambrizis lés Artois; /«Ne la poés garantir demanois» (713-15).

The second possible guardian, Guerri, appears at least as likely as Aalais. Once again, in the feudal customs of Beauvaisis, we find that guardianship is normally conferred upon the nearest relative on the side of the family from which the property descended. Assuming Guerri to be Raoul's paternal uncle (the poem mentions no blood relation between him and Aalais and Louis) and that the fief descended directly from Raoul Taillefer (discounting the dowry theory), Guerri meets these qualifications. Several passages in the text support this view, among them laisses XIV-XVI, where he pleads Raoul's case before the king; and laisse

14 Philippe de Beaumanoir, Les Coustumes du Beauvoisis, ed. le comte Beugnot, Société de l'Histoire de France 29 (Paris: Jules Renouard, 1842) 211.

15 Beaumanoir 245.

16 «Drois empereres,» ce dist G. li ber, «Volez le vos por ce desireter «Qe il ne puet chevalchier ne errer?» (295-97)

«Vos niés est l'enfes, nel deüssiés penser,
XXXII, where he incites his now adult nephew to assert his own rights.\textsuperscript{17} The first indicates a guardian's protection of his ward's rights and property, the second a concern for the development of a sense of honor, related to the guardian's responsibility for educating his charge.

Thirdly, the laisse in which Louis offers Gibouin the Cambrésis (IX) can be construed as the assignment of guardianship, especially considering Louis' insistence upon not disinheriting Raoul. Additionally, the reader can view Gibouin's homage for the fief as being done in his new ward's stead, consistent with the customs of the Beauvaisis.\textsuperscript{18} The strongest argument, however, comes from verses 125-28:

\begin{quote}
«L'enfes est jóvenes; pense del bien garder
«Tant qe il puist ces garnemens porter.
«Cambrai tenra; nul ne l'en puet veer,
«Mais l'autre terre te ferai délivrer.»
\end{quote}

As we have seen in examining the dowry theory, it appears that there are two separate properties discussed here: Gibouin receives the Cambrésis in trust for Raoul, and some other unnamed estate either as an outright fief, or, as later verses imply, as Aalais's marriage portion. Moreover, the king, as Aalais's brother and presumably head of the family, as well as the lord from whom the fief was held, has a considerable say in the determination of his

\begin{quote}
«Ne sa grant terre vers autrui delivrer.» (305-06)
\end{quote}

Guerri's use of the word "enfes," and of the expression "ne puet chevalchier" clearly indicate that he is safeguarding the interests of a minor. If any doubt remains as to Raoul's status, it is removed by line 344: "Il ot .iij. ans, par le mien esclant."

\textsuperscript{17} Especially verses 661-64: «Fil a putain!» le clama, si menti, / «Malvais lechieres! por quoi joes tu ci? /«N'as tant de terre, par verte le te di, / «Ou tu peüses conreer .j. ronci;» and verses 668-71: «Qui la me tout? trop le taing a hardi!» / G. respont: «Ja te sera gehi: / «Li rois meïsmes, bien te tient a honni, / «Dont devons estre tensé et garanti.»

\textsuperscript{18} Beaumanoir 245.
nephew's guardian. One may even infer, from lack of any other information, that wardship had indeed been held by Louis up to the point when he reassigned it to Gibouin.

Regardless of the identity of Raoul's guardian, one fact remains manifest: upon attaining the accepted age of majority, he had legal right to be released from wardship and to be invested with his fief, in his own name, and in the condition in which his father had left it. That he has reached majority at the time when he claims his birthright is unarguable, whether one considers this age as the point at which the youth can bear arms, or the more specific fifteen years stated in the customs of Beauvaisis. In either case, the poet shows Raoul as qualifying as a legal adult when he demands his rights in laisse XXXIII: "Son effant voit grant et gros et formé. / Li .xv. an furent acompli et passé" (375-76), and "Dame A. voit son fil enbarnir, / Bien voit qu'il peut ses garnemens soufrir" (402-03). A further attestation to his majority, Raoul is dubbed by the king himself (verses 460, 519).

For the modern reader, this situation poses a puzzling question: why, if Louis's usurpation of Raoul's inheritance was such a heinous injustice, did no one do anything to attempt to rectify it until twelve years later? Why, in laisse XIV, does Guerri merely denounce Louis' action, and then depart from court without taking any other action? Why, instead (in laisse XVI), does he hurry back to Cambrai to inform Aalais of the misdeed and make Raoul swear to avenge it? Why, after learning of the injustice, does Aalais not take any steps to resolve the problem (she, being the king's sister, would appear to have the most influence with the perpetrator)?

The simple answer to this apparent dilemma is that, under feudal customary law, only the victim could bring process against a malefactor. This consideration also argues strongly for not viewing the territory as a dowry. Had it been Aalais's marriage portion, it would have been her duty to make formal complaint to the king. The considerable length of time which elapses between

19 Beaumanoir 251, 256.
20 Bloch 16.
Raoul's learning of the disinheritance and his plea to Louis derives from his status as a minor—he cannot present his case until he has reached the age of bearing arms, at which time he will be considered a legal adult. Moreover, had any other lord perpetrated such an injustice upon one of his vassals, that vassal would have recourse to an appeal to the king's justice, or to arbitration. However, since Louis as lord is the defendant in this situation, Raoul cannot appeal to Louis the king in his function as judge. Additionally, since it appears that all or most of his barons are united in their opinion of the unworthiness of his deed, the king would be hard pressed to find anyone among his advisors acceptable to him as a neutral arbitrator; no less difficult would be finding a mediator to which Raoul's faction would submit. Thus, Louis's action serves but to close all legal (that is to say, judiciary) avenues of recourse to Raoul, leaving him warfare as his only possible means of resolving the dispute.

Louis, when confronted by Guerri, quickly realizes the unjustness and foolishness of his actions: «Par maintes fois m'en sui piu repentis» (651). Yet his response to Raoul's justifiable though unfulfillable request is to compound the already serious problem by potentially disinheriting yet another vassal's descendants. Had Louis qualified his offer by specifying the next estate to escheat to the crown through lack of heirs (rather than simply becoming vacant), he could have solved the dispute to the

21 We see the same conflict of interest with Charlemagne in Roland (Ganelon's trial), and with Arthur in La Mort Artu (Guinevere accused of killing a knight with a poisoned apple). In both instances, the king's function as magistrate is in danger of being compromised by his close personal association with the case: Charlemagne as the aggrieved party, and Arthur as the husband of the accused.


23 Verses 731-38 make it plain that it is not a question of an estate whose holder's line has died out, but quite simply the next landed vassal to die, regardless of the absence or presence of descendants:

«Biaus niés,» dist il, «por Dieu qui fist les lois,
probable satisfaction, or at least acquiescence, of all parties concerned. However, due to the terms of the agreement, Louis is forced, in order to honor his word, to deprive the sons of Herbert de Vermandois of their fief, an action even more unjust and contrary to feudal custom than was the first disinheritance. This creates a potentially quite volatile situation in the context of military retaliation, since these sons are full-grown, arms-bearing men: there can be no question of minority and guardianship, no doubts as to their right to claim and hold the land. As such, the new comte de Vermandois and his brothers, each with his complement of vassals and retainers, are fully capable of mounting armed offensives to regain that which has been taken from them. Louis recognizes the potential upheaval inherent in this situation, but is helpless to extricate either himself or the other parties involved: his word has been given, oaths sworn on holy relics, and hostages exchanged to seal irrevocably his bargain with Raoul (laisses XXXV-XXXVIII).

Paradoxically, though, Raoul himself clouds the issue of the precedence of inheritance rights over royal prerogative. Up to the point where only the Cambrésis is in question, he bases his arguments solely on his hereditary claim to his father's land. However, after Herbert de Vermandois's death, Raoul insists upon Louis's adherence to his promise to provide a fief, even though it involves the very same injustice the hero so vehemently opposed earlier. It would seem that, as a result of his démesure, and his will to win at all costs, Raoul is not adverse to adopting a somewhat Machiavellian attitude towards inheritance rights. What is "right" is that which furthers his own interests, not necessarily that which is truly just or acceptable to common legal custom. Nevertheless, this ambiguity is quite understandable, given the transitional nature of the legal customs of the poet's era, a "période intermédiaire entre, d'une part, le droit absolu du souverain à disposer des terres

Lai li encore tenir .ij. ans ou trois
Par tel couvent con ja dire m’orrois:
Qe, c’il muert conte de ci qu’en Vermendois,
D’Aiz la Chapele de ci en Tellentois,
De Monloon de ci en Ollenois,
Qe les honnors et la terre tenrois;
Ja n’i perdrais le montant d’un balois.»
octroyées à ses vassaux et, d'autre part, l'établissement de l'hérédité des fiefs."24

Nevertheless, in examining the nature of the elder Raoul's holdings and the textual indications of young Raoul's position as a minor with feudal possessions in guardianship, we arrive at one logical conclusion, that upon which most critics agree: that Raoul Taillefer held the Cambrésis in fief, and that the feudal legal customs of that time and region admit the rights of his legitimate male heir (regardless of age) to inherit the property, the title, and all other wealth.25 We must therefore conclude, as the chanson so clearly indicates in several instances,26 that Raoul de Cambray was unjustly and illegally deprived of his rightful inheritance. Like the original audiences of the poem, we cannot fail to identify Louis as the first, and perhaps greatest, transgressor. Even the disputing parties, that is, the few surviving members of the opposing camps, eventually come to this conclusion despite the heat of their emotions and their relatively short-sighted view of the matters involved. In laisse CCXLI, realization dawns upon them as to the true origins of their dispute, and reconciliation soon follows, along with the formation of a unified front against the abuses of the king.27 Louis, who had until then been enjoying an unusually secure and powerful position as long as two of his greatest vassals were occupied with each other rather than consolidating pockets of local power in actual or potential competition with the Crown, attempts to keep the two factions in conflict. He proposes to Ybert, in verses 5397-98, to give the disputed Vermandois to yet another of his vassals, thus adding a

24 Huguette Legros, "Raoul de Cambrai et Dom Juan: héros luciférien ou personnage écartelé entre deux ordres moraux?" In: La Chanson de geste et le mythe carolingien: Mélanges René Louis (Saint-Père-sous-Vézelay: Musée Archéologique Régional, 1982) 2: 1029.

25 Note the use in line 152 of both "terre," in reference to the fief, and "eritaige," meaning all other property.

26 E.g. verses 135-36, 182-84, 650-51, 670.

27 Verses 5362, "Puis s'entrebaissent com ami et parent," and 5369-72, "'Cis rois est fel, gel taing a sousduiant. / Iceste guère, par le cors s. Amant. / Commença il, se sevent li auquant. / Faisons li guere, franc chevalier vaillant.'"
third party to the dispute to counteract the coalition formed by the reconciliation of the first two: «Après vo mort, par Dieu le droiturier, /«Vuel Vermendois donner a j. princier.» Not only does this promise ensure the maintenance of friction between the already disputing parties, it effectively prolongs the unrest into the next generation. It becomes increasingly apparent to both the reader and the combatants that the manipulation (or blatant disregard) of customary hereditary rights is a policy of Louis's administration rather than an isolated incident. He appears to share with William the Conqueror the rather idealistic notion of feudalism which maintains that all land belongs ultimately to the Crown, and that fiefs are held both at the total discretion of the king, and only during the lifetime of the vassal: death dissolved the contract, and the land came once again under direct control of the monarch, his to reassign to whomsoever he would. Additionally, in a further attempt to centralize his royal authority, he has been playing his vassals one against the other, in order to keep a balance of power with himself in control, or (diabolical as it may seem) even with the intent of having them completely eliminate each other, leaving Louis entirely without rival, and with the added benefit of all their territories escheating to the Crown.

Regardless of his design, Louis is clearly in the wrong, and in obvious defiance of increasingly well-established traditional legal customs in his dealings with his vassals' heirs.28 Once these vassals realize Louis's part in their difficulties, they have no recourse but to engage in military action against the king. Since the fief comprises the basis of the feudal contract, anything which interferes with a vassal's holding of this property must be considered a major threat to the feudal structure as a whole. It is for this reason that both parties (Raoul and his relatives on one the hand, the Vermendois brothers on the other) feel themselves justified in the extreme measures they take to remove this threat, even though it eventually

28 Legros maintains that Louis is forced into taking the actions he does by his conservative and archaic view of legal custom: "Louis est peut-être moins falot qu'il n'y paraît de prime abord: il est surtout, lui aussi, prisonnier d'une conception du droit qui n'est déjà pas reconnue de tous" (p. 1029). Yet one cannot fail to note a certain (and in my view, substantial) degree of maliciousness in his application of these conceptions, surely no less than Raoul's self-serving vacillations of principle.
involves open revolt against a corrupt ruler. For, as William Calin states, "Cheating the Rightful Heir... is one of the greatest injustices a ruler can perpetrate." Furthermore, the type of warfare common to the Middle Ages, especially in territorial disputes such as this, was a limited conflict, not with the intention of destroying the opposition, but merely of re-establishing rights, honor, or a balance of power. "Elle est faite aussi pour renforcer un avantage temporaire et obliger l'ennemi à négocier les problèmes profonds du conflit... une attaque rituelle et limitée, destinée à indiquer la gravité de la situation."

Although many barons perish in the course of the dispute over the Vermandois, it is due rather to the démesure of Raoul and others, than to any basically murderous intent. What they begin fighting for is family honor and the landed property necessary for the fulfillment of the feudal contract, and the reason for the final confrontation is simply the preservation of the most basic rights of a vassal in the face of increasingly vigorous royal interference and oppression.

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29 Calin 61.
30 Geary 1118 (my emphasis).
31 Specifically, Raoul's acceptance of the substitution of the Vermandois for the Cambrésis, rather than attempting to secure Gibouin's ouster, which creates for himself four enemies in the place of one; his destruction of the convent at Origny, which turns Bernier against him; and his repeated refusal to listen to counsel or consider any offer of compromise. Huguette Legros more extensively examines Raoul's crimes of démesure in her article. Indeed, if not for this obstinacy, Louis may well have been faced with a united front of Cambrésis and Vermandois from the start, since, as Legros points out (p. 1022) the two families had been allies formerly.