

Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*

Elena de la Cruz Vergari

Universitat Rovira i Virgili (Tarragona, Spain)

elena.delacruz@urv.cat

This is a preprint version. The final version has been published in

JOHN BENJAMINS PUBLISHING COMPANY

Reference to this paper should be made as follow : "Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*". The article is published on pages 17-34 of our book : "*More about 'Tirant lo Blanc' / Més sobre el 'Tirant lo Blanc'*", edited by Babbi, A.M. and Escarti, V.J. (2015).

Resum

Aquest estudi proposa la lectura del *Tirant lo Blanch* a la llum de l'*Epitoma rei militaris* de Vegetius, el manual militar per excel·lència al llarg de tota l'edat mitjana. De fet, Joanot Martorell presenta al pròleg el que avui es considera una novel·la cavalleresca com un manual; i l'obra mostra com la pràctica militar, més enllà de ser un exercici i un deport constitueix, sobretot, un art que confereix a l'heroi la possibilitat de l'ascens social i la cura de tot un imperi.

Paraules clau: *Epitoma rei militaris*, Vegetius, Vegeci, *Tirant lo Blanch*, Joanot Martorell, tractat, militar, guerra.

Resumen

Este estudio propone la lectura del *Tirant lo Blanch* a la luz del *Epitoma rei militaris* de Vegetius, el manual militar por excelencia a lo largo de toda la edad media. De hecho, Joanot Martorell presenta en el prólogo de lo que hoy se considera una novela de caballerías como un manual. En éste se observa cómo la práctica militar, más allá de ser un ejercicio y un deporte constituyen, sobre todo, una arte que confiere al héroe la posibilidad del ascenso social y el cuidado de todo un imperio.

Palabras clave: *Epitome rei militaris*, Vegetius, Vegecio, *Tirant lo Blanch*, Joanot Martorell, tratado, militar, guerra.

Abstract

This study proposes reading of *Tirant lo Blanch* in the light of Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris*, the military manual *par excellence* of the Middle Ages. Indeed, in the prologue to what we now consider a chivalric novel, Joanot Martorell describes his book as a manual, in which military practice, beyond mere exercise and sport, is primarily an art that offers the hero a means of social advancement and the chance to command an empire.

Keywords: *Epitoma rei militaris*, Vegetius, *Tirant lo Blanch*, manual, military, war.

Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch**

1. State of the art

The most recent edition of *Tirant lo Blanch* (Hauf 2005)¹ contains a series of notes to help readers understand this fifteenth-century Valencian novel. By examining the vast and exhaustive bibliography² consulted by Hauf in the preparation of his notes, we can quickly identify the topics that have been most widely studied.

The critical literature has focused predominantly, and with particular intensity, on intertextuality – that is, on those aspects that can be related to contemporary sources and romantic literature – and has left military themes to one side. Nevertheless, *Tirant* is universally acknowledged to be a chivalric novel,³ and the author himself, Joanot Martorell, presents the work as a *libre de cavalleria*.⁴

Martí de Riquer (1973), in his article “L’art militar al Tirant lo Blanch”, addresses these military themes and the notes to Hauf’s edition also draw on the editions published by Martí de Riquer and his monograph *L’arnès del cavaller: armes i armadures catalanes medievals* (1968), which provide information that is particularly useful for understanding the work.⁵ Edward T. Aylward (1985), Albert Pons (1991) and Antoni Espadaler (1997) have also analysed the function of military themes in *Tirant lo Blanch*, although from a more political and social perspective.

With respect to the relationship between the *Epitoma* and *Tirant*, Lola Badia noted the influences of the military treatises by Vegetius and Frontinus on Martorell’s chivalric novel, and it should be noted that frequent reference to the importance of this relationship is made in the literature (Badia 1983-1984, 215 and note 57; Badia 1993; Cingolani 1995-1996, 375-376; Pujol 1999 and 2002). Indeed, Vegetius’ work is among the references for the Hauf edition, appearing in the list of “most directly related sources” (2005,

¹ This is the edition we shall refer to in our study (see Joanot Martorell 2005 in the Bibliography).

² For the bibliography, see Hauf (2005) and the updated descriptive bibliography presented in “Tirant”, an informative and bibliographical bulletin on chivalric literature directed by Rafael Beltran and Josep Izquierdo (Universitat de València), available in open access at: http://parnaseo.uv.es/Tirant/BIBLIOGRAFIA/bibliografia_descriptiva.htm.

³ Martí de Riquer was the first to propose this definition; for more on this point, see Limorti (1999).

⁴ See chapter 1, taken from the *Llibre de l’Orde de Cavalleria* by Ramon Llull and, more generally, the dedication and prologue.

⁵ The extensive bibliography on *battle letters* (*lletres de batalla*) begun by Martí de Riquer also provides a number of useful clues (for the different editions, consult the bibliographical listings in note 3, *supra*).

1574); in the notes, the text is cited six times, although unfortunately the citations could not be based on any previous bibliographic study (2005, in the index of proper names, on page 1642).

We propose to analyse the presence of Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* – the military treatise *par excellence* throughout the Middle Ages (Badia, 1983-1984, 207, 210-211; Richardot 1998; Allmand, 2010) – in *Tirant lo Blanch*. We shall also attempt to determine the sources through which this intertextuality is established and to identify which of the military themes addressed by Vegetius were incorporated into *Tirant*. Our aim, then, is to give a brief description of the functions attributed to this late Roman classic by Martorell (Avalle-Arce 1974, 237-238; Hauf 1993; Cingolani 1995-1996, 374).

2. Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in the Middle Ages

Before discussing the reasons for the presence of Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*, we must first mention the importance of this medieval military treatise.

While the *Epitoma* is little known today, more than 300 medieval texts testifying to its existence have survived, including manuscripts (complete or fragments), translations, incunabula, prints and *excerpta*. Of the translations made during the medieval period, there remain four into French from the thirteenth century, among them, according to Reeve (2000, 316), what could be the first complete translation into vulgar tongue of an ancient Latin work. As early as the Middle Ages, the *Epitoma* had already been translated into Italian, Spanish,⁶ English and German (Richardot 1998; Reeve 2000). In fact, it was the first military text to be printed, in 1470, before the works of Julius Caesar, for example (Richardot 1998, 5).⁷

Similarly, references to Vegetius can be found in the work of the great medieval authors, treatise writers and encyclopaedists: Isidore of Seville, the Venerable Bede, Rabanus Maurus, John of Salisbury, Christine de Pizan, and Vincent de Beauvais, among many others (see Richardot 1998 and Allmand 2010). The great religious and secular libraries of Europe held at least one copy of the *Epitoma*, and numerous manuscripts, letters and

⁶ A translation by Jaume Castellà (14th century?) in Palma de Mallorca, Fundació Bartolomé March, Ms. 73-V; and another, anonymous translation (14th century?) in Madrid, Archivo-Biblioteca Francisco Zabálburu, 11-141, both listed in Badia (1983-1984); Matilló (1988, see Badia 1983-1984) and pending publication by Alomar (Universitat de les Illes Balears, to whom we are grateful for making them available). The translation by Jaume Castellà, which is presented as an extract from a French translation, and the Catalan translation conserved in Madrid do not correspond to any of the surviving medieval French translations of the full text (Anglo-Norman translation, the Crusader translation, the translations by Jean de Meun et Jean de Vignay, and an anonymous translation dated 1380).

⁷ *Tirant*, let us remember, appeared in print in 1490.

prologues testify to its importance as recommended reading for all those called to govern and fight (Stebbins 1974, v. 135-143):

Mais a ce ne s'accorde mie
Le Livre de Chevalerie
qui dit bien que grant multitude
et force sans doctrine et rude
ne vainquent pas si prestement
com art et exercitement
et cest art par la grant noblesce
de la lettreüre en mielx s'adresce
et a sa perfection monte.

In the Catalan-speaking territories, we believe that Vegetius' military treatise was present in the court of Joan I and Alfonso the Magnanimous (Badia 1983-1984, 207).⁸ On the Valencian collections of the period, we refer readers to the Mercader collection, which included two copies of the *Epitoma* (Wittlin 1998, 95, 98). We also know that Francesc Eiximenis included Vegetius' treatise in his encyclopaedic political work *Dotzè llibre del Crestià* or *Tractat de Regiment de prínceps e comunitats* (1484); in chapter 217 of the second volume, Eiximenis gives a particularly clear illustration of the popularity of the *Epitoma*:⁹ *Alaius Cassinus (...) consella aquest a son fill estudiar lo gran vegeci de re militari q[ue] aquesta materia tracta fort altament.*

3. The prologue to *Tirant lo Blanch* and the influence of Vegetius

It may seem surprising that Joanot Martorell does not refer to Vegetius in his enumeration of military *auctoritates* in the prologue to *Tirant lo Blanch*:¹⁰

Homero ha recitat les batalles dels grechs, troyans e de les amazones; Titus Livius, dels romans: de Scipió, de Aníbal, de Pompeu, de Octovià, de March Antoni e de molts altres. Trobam scrites les batalles de Alexandre e Dari.

Indeed, throughout the whole of this vast work, the name of Vegetius does appear once, despite the fact that Martorell clearly states his intention to address military and chivalric themes and that, as we have seen, Vegetius was the foremost bibliographic reference of the age on military matters. We should not forget, however, that Vegetius constructed an *epitoma*, a compendium that cited both the authors and the heroes (Reeve 2004, 173-

⁸ We have located a copy of the *Epitoma rei militaris* dedicated to Alfonso the Magnanimous: Oxford, Bod. Canon. Class. Lat. 274 "written at Naples by Iacopo Curlo *mandato serenissimi regis Alphonsi Aragonum et utriusque Siciliae triumphantissimi*" (Reeve 2000, 297).

⁹ We await the publication of part one, volume two of the collected works of Francesc Eiximenis. Here, we have chosen to transcribe the facsimile of the document (see References).

¹⁰ The enumeration of *auctoritates* is resumed in ch. 37 of *Tirant*.

180) who appear in the prologue to *Tirant* and of which Vegetius claimed to be merely the compiler, in much the same way as the medieval scholars Vincent de Beauvais (*Speculum maius*) and Francesc Eiximenis. Vegetius is not a legendary name in the writing of histories or heroic deeds, and with the Roman Empire at the height of its decadence his task indeed appears broadly similar to that of a medieval compiler, a nostalgic conserver of the golden age of Rome:¹¹

Sed nos disciplinam militarem populi Romani debemus inquirere, qui ex parvissimis finibus imperium suum paene solis regionibus et mundi ipsius fine distendit. Haec necessitas compulit evolutis auctoribus ea me in hoc opusculo fidelissime dicere quae Cato ille Censorius de disciplina militari scripsit, quae Cornelius Celsus, quae Frontinus perstringenda duxerunt, quae Paternus, diligentissimus iuris militaris assertor, in libros redegit, quae Augusti et Traiani Adrianique constitutionibus cauta sunt. Nihil enim mihi auctoritatis assumo sed horum quos supra rettuli quae dispersa sunt velut in ordinem epitomata conscribo [I.8.9-12].

Though the knight Joanot Martorell does not cite Vegetius directly, and while scholars lament their ignorance of the physical or mental library from which the author of *Tirant* worked (Wittlin, 1998), the sources apparent in his novel reveal Martorell's profound literary awareness. It seems implausible, then, that a fifteenth-century knight would have been unfamiliar with Vegetius' military compendium. Indeed, not would a learned medieval knight have been familiar with the *Epitoma*, he would have known it from memory, associating it with the maxims applicable to all men of his status.

Hauf implicitly acknowledges this when glossing the final paragraph of the prologue in a three-page note (Hauf 2005, 69-73):

Antigament l'orde militar era tengut en tanta reverència, que no era decorat de honor de milícia sinó lo fort, animós, prudent e molt spert en lo exercici d'armes [II.3.1] [III.prol.6]. Fortitud corporal e ardiment se vol exercir ab saviesa, com *per la prudència e indústria dels batallants diverses vegades los pochos han obtesa victòria dels molts*: la saviesa e astúcia dels cavallers ha bastat aterrar les forces dels enemichs [I.1.1] [I.8.5] [II.23.11] [III.prol.7] [III.26.10]. E per ço foren per los antichs ordenades justes e torneigs, nodrint los infants de pocha edat en lo exercici militar perquè en les batalles fossen forts e animosos e no hagessen terror de la vista dels enemichs [I.4.4-9].¹²

The same editor relates the phrase marked above in italics to the following statement from Vegetius: *Amplius iuvat virtus quam multitudo* [III.26.10]. Seemingly, the phrase that opens the treatise may be a reference to

¹¹ For the text of Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris*, we follow Reeve's edition (2004). References to Vegetius' text are given in square brackets, following the paragraph division established by Önnorfors in his edition (1995), and generally followed by Reeve (2004). These references are structured as follows: [book.chapter.paragraph/s].

¹² The other references to Vegetius' text, which will be discussed *infra*, are given in square brackets.

Vegetius' great maxim: *In omni autem proelio non tam multitudo et virtus indocta quam ars et exercitium solent praestare victoriam* [prol. to Reeve (2004); I.1.1 in the Önnersfors edition (1995); see also *supra* the citation of section 2]. Hauf states (2005, 73):

(...) recorda també una vella màxima de Vegeci (...), que Tirant i el seu mestre Guillem de Varoic demostren haver assimilat perfectament. Basta referir als c.23 on Guillem de Varoic brinda als seus la doble opció de vèncer la batalla per força o per "aptea de guerra" i de fet, el seu discurs-arenga pot considerar-se una glosa de Vegeci. El tema es plantejarà més endavant en forma de *disputatio* cortesana entre la Princesa i l'Emperadriu (ch. 180-186).

Having established the undeniable influence of Vegetius' military treatise on *Tirant lo Blanch*, we shall endeavour to trace a line between the themes addressed by the Roman author and their reflection in the late medieval *Tirant*. We will examine the intertextuality which helps the modern reader understand the allusions to Latin military literature that sound throughout Joanot Martorell's great literary symphony.

It is not our aim to establish a direct connection between *Tirant* and the *Epitoma*, since the military themes we present here belong to the medieval period. However, it would seem appropriate to relate some fragments of *Tirant* to passages from the most widely known military manual of the Middle Ages, so that these passages can serve as a gloss to the modern reader of *Tirant* who may not be familiar with them.

3.1. Flor de cavalleria by Joanot Martorell

Scholars have attributed to Joanot Martorell a *Flor de cavalleria*,¹³ of which one folio is conserved (2013a). Through reference to Lucifer's rebellion against God, it explains the origin of battles, followed by a description of the mental battle that the Devil instigates through the temptation of original sin. Next, the text describes the conflict that arose from the construction of the tower of Babel, which is interpreted as a structure inspired by the desire to fight against God. Finally, we come to classical antiquity. Let us consider the final paragraph:

Los òmens vils e de baxa condició e estaments no són disposts a batallar, car no estimen llur onor e fama, e facilment fugen, tota vergonya per aquells postposada. Me[s] los cavallers, nobles e generosos, e altres òmens onrats e virtuosos són molt pus disposts e ordenats a batallar car, estimant llur onor e fama, an temor de ser envergony[i]ts molts.

¹³ Similarly, the Italian translator Lelio Manfredi is thought to be the author of an *Ordine di cavagleria* (Zilli 1991, 209-219), which he composed by plagiarising elements from his translation of *Tirant lo Blanch*. I am grateful to Chiara Concina for informing me of this treatise and refer readers to chapter ?? of this volume.

És axí matex gloriosa la batalla de aquells que la emprenen per la defenció de la cosa pública, com aquests són reputats viure perpetuament per glòria.

The text probably alludes to the passage in which Vegetius addresses the selection of men of arms and the defence of the common good:

Iuuentus enim, cui defensio prouinciarum, cui bellorum est committenda fortuna, et genere, si copia suppetat, et moribus debet excellere. Honestas enim idoneum militem reddit, uerecundia, dum prohibet fugere, facit esse uictorem [I.7.5-6].

A knight's nobility and the military aptitude with which it is associated is among the themes that generate the most variants in the numerous medieval translations, since the Latin expression *genere (...) et moribus* can be taken to mean either the quality of all men or that which is the preserve of noblemen. In this sense, although in the about quotation Joanot Martorell initially excludes men of humble origin, in the second sentence he then appears to include them (*e altres òmens onrats e virtuosos*).

4. *Warcraft and the military topoi of Vegetius*

The themes that *Tirant* borrows from the *Epitoma* are not original, but they are consistent with those that would have been familiar to a medieval audience and can be related to Vegetius' compendium. This is borne out by the fact that numerous *topoi* coincide with the *Regulae bellorum generales* listed in chapter 26 of book three and which many scholars have in fact come to consider a later composition. Indeed, these general maxims came to function independently of the rest of the work, forming a compendium of their own from the original military compendium (Löfstedt 1982). As such, we believe that the author of this celebrated chivalric novel did not cite his source directly as the references would have been more than evident to his readers. The author intended his novel to be a *divertimento*, thus he wished his readers to interpret these identifiable passages as an invitation for collective enjoyment. The novel aimed to be a diverting intellectual challenge, a theme that scholars have examined with relish.¹⁴

Given the length of *Tirant*, the list presented here is by no means exhaustive; the aspects we highlight serve to illustrate the broader, most frequently appearing themes, which, when grouped together, give the title of the corresponding section. The order in which the themes are presented reflects the degree of abstraction with which they appear in *Tirant* (from greater to lesser). The list underlines the extent to which variations on a single theme exist in the pages of *Tirant lo Blanch*.

¹⁴ It should be noted that *Tirant* provides both models and anti-models of Vegetius' themes: for example, the Duke of Macedonia represents the anti-model of the commander-in-chief, as given in the *Epitoma* (see 4.6, *infra*).

The themes that constitute the chivalric ideal have been divided into two functions, theoretical and practical, as established in the *Epitoma* itself. Thus, in *Tirant* we have, on the one hand, themes dealing with military techniques and practices and, on the other, themes which articulate a more ideological function; that is, themes which allude to political content, which include the diplomatic prowess that ennobles our hero and ultimately sees him made Caesar.

4.1. *Forts pocs vencen molts e que poca força venç gran (technical function)*

As we have seen in section 3, the maxim *amplius iuvat virtus quam multitudo* [prol. to Reeve (2004); I.1.1 according to the Önnersfors edition (1995)] is associated with Vegetius (see *supra* the citation in section 2), which Francesc Eiximenis summarised masterfully with the expression: *forts pocs vencen molts e que poca força venç gran* (see *supra*, II ch. 216).

In *Tirant* this theme appears in the prologue (see *supra* the citation in section 3) and in ch. 12 and 23 (*en les guerres més val aptesa que fortaleza*, see note 4 in the Hauf edition), 131, 141, 156, 239, 310, 315 and 343. In Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris*, this theme is also repeated in [I.1.1] [I.8.5] [III.prol.7-8] [III.1] [III.9.20] [III.26.10] [III.20.5] [III.20.28]. The debate over *fortitudo et sapientia* (ch. 23, 73, 123 and 315) was covered by Martí de Riquer (1973, 325-326).

4.2. *The selection of men of arms (technical function)*

This question, which was crucial for Vegetius (taking up the first part of book I, and addressed in detail in [I.7] and [I.8]), in fact receives little attention in *Tirant* (nevertheless, see *supra* the citation from the prologue in section 3, and in ch. 47, 321 and 333).

4.3. *Res publica or service to the common good (political function)*

The knight's service to the common good (or the Christian faith) is a major theme in the dedication and prologue to *Tirant* (see also the Italian dedication in Manfredi; on the military treatise of Joanot Martorell, see *supra* section 3) and in ch. 1, 32, 35, 107, 124, 125, 133 and 134 (on the Duke of Macedonia, who represents the antithesis of this ideal), 143, 145, 146, 221, 252, 253, 275, 327 and 334 (on justice and precepts), and 387, 402, 417, 451, 452, 453, 475 and 482 ([I.prol.1] [II.3.7] [II.5.5] [II.24.2-3] [III.1.11] [III.10.2-4] [IV.prol.8] [IV.30.5]). The *Epitoma* also refers to the honours that knights merit for their contribution to the public interest ([II.8.2] [II.8.7]).

4.4. *The transmission of knowledge and exemplary deeds (technical function)*

The notion of perpetuating technique through literary transmission appears in the dedication of *Tirant*, in the final sentence of the prologue (see *supra* the citation in section 3) and ch. 1, 37 and 107bis (where the hero is presented as the model of the ideal knight), 124, 125, 133 and 134 (on the Duke of Macedonia, who represents the antithesis of this ideal), and 137, 140, 143, 145, 156, 166, 181, 275, 328, 402 and 475 ([I.prol] [I.28.1] [II.prol] [III.prol.2-4] [III.10.17-18]). Another clear theme is the didactic justification for historical writing through knowledge of the events and heroes of the past (note that this is addressed predominantly in the prologues, and particularly in [I.9.9] [II.3.6] [III.prol.5-7] [III.1.4] [III.9.1-3] [III.10.17-24] [III.26.35-37]), and of virtuous peoples ([III.prol.1] [III.10.3] [III.26.36-37]), which also serves as a justification for Vegetius' work. In *Tirant*, commemoration of heroic feats of the past serves as the justification for the work in its entirety, which recounts the deeds of Tirant.

4.5. *Ars et exercitatio (technical function)*

The notions of *ars* and *exercitatio* are also clearly apparent in *Tirant*. According to the *Epitoma*, it is the combination of these notions that guarantees military success (this idea can be seen in the citations in section 3).

4.5.1. *Exercitatio*

The importance of *exercitatio* is at the heart of Vegetius' statement, *omnes artes in meditatione consistere* [II.24.4] (see also *supra* 4.1).

Evidently, *Tirant* is well aware of this fact, as illustrated in ch. 221, 227, 239, 387, 402 and 425, and made particularly clear in ch. 143: *sabuda cosa és que los hòmens han de exercitar les armes e han a saber la pràctica de la guerra e lo gentil stil que aquest benaventurat orde de cavalleria té.*

In the *Epitoma*, *exercitatio* is addressed in [I.4.9][I.8.6] [I.9.9][I.15.3] [II.1.6] [II.3.1] [II.12.3] [II.18.5] [II.23-24] [III.prol.5] [III.prol.8] [III.2.8-11] [III.10.1]. Training is also associated with morale [II.23.11], valour [III.10.1-10] and health ([III.2.7]).

Tournaments are explained in the first section of *Tirant* (particularly ch. 8) as a means of ensuring *exercitatio* in times of peace (ch. 143). This theme is also linked to the state of military relaxation that distances Tirant from his military responsibilities, echoing the *Epitoma*'s warning about the decadence that accompanies peace and the relaxation of routine ([I.8.6] [I.28.6-9] [II.3.1] [III.10.17]).

Another important aspect is the initiation in such “exercise” from childhood: in ch. 21 (Hauf in note 1, Vegetius and Eiximenis) and in ch. 20 and 25 [I.4]. Chapter 25, as also alluded to in [III.10.9] (Espadaler 1997, 12), refers particularly to the hermit’s son, and we witness the furious treatment meted out by the father when, *pres al petit infant per los cabells e lançà ’l damunt lo moro e freguà ’l fort, que los hulls e la cara, tot stava ple de sanch, e le mans li féu posar dins les nafres, e axí lo enconà en la sanch de aquell moro.*

4.5.2. Ars

We associate the notion of *ars* with the tactics, skills and ingenuity of military practice; it is also linked to the underlying theoretical knowledge, as opposed to its practical implementation (ch. 21; Espadaler 1997, 11). Pons (1991) explains why the author of *Tirant* can be considered a modern hero, who displays particular mastery of strategy and of the organisation and administration of large armies.

The general question of tactics encompasses diverse aspects that we have categorised thematically in order to make them easier to identify.

Martorell discusses *ars* (or chivalry), or tactics in general, in ch. 8, 10, 14, 15, 58, 105 (disputes between knights),¹⁵ 108, 117, 123, 131, 133, 141, 142, 144, 145, 148, 149, 153, 155, 157, 159, 164, 208, 286, 287, 288, 303, 304, 309, 315, 321, 327, 343, 345, 349, 369, 386, 387, 394, 404, 409, 414, 415, 418, 419, 426, 428, 451, 452, 453, 456, 465, 466, 476 and 486 (as we have seen, the success of the *Epitoma* can be explained by its transmission of this military *ars*, as manifested in the prologues to books I, II and III; see *supra* 4.4). *Tirant* also deals with naval warfare: ch. 100, 104 and 164 (we recall that the end of book IV of the *Epitoma* deals particularly with naval battles).

River crossing and general strategy where rivers are concerned are addressed in ch. 131, 140 and 334 ([III.19.1] [III.7] [III.22.20]).

The importance of order in military formation is clearly apparent in ch. 133, 153, 154, 155, 156 and 157 (Albert Hauf, in note 3, describes the exercise of recognising and understanding signals), 164, 315, 321, 337, 345, 348, 386, 387, 394, 395, 401, 409, 414, 418, 421, 425, 455, 458, 465 and 485. The *Epitoma* acknowledges the importance of ordered formation in [II.13.2-3] [III.prol.5-8] [III.3.12] and of discipline in [III.10.19-23], virtues which are set against the vicissitudes of Fortune [III prol.6-8].

¹⁵ On literary discussion between knights, readers are referred to the work of Vicent Escartí in this volume (ch. ??).

The importance of the concealment of strategy is referred to in ch. 5, 99, 106, 133, 141, 335 and 414 ([III.6.8-10] [III.26.5] [III.26.28-29]), during a river crossing, and while marching [III.6.10]).

Tirant features frequent ambushes, for example in ch. 133. The *Epitoma* also addresses this theme ([III.6.25-26] [III.26.11], and during the siege [IV.7.2]).

The use of spies or informants is crucial to the plot (ch. 133, 145, 149, 159, 310, 334, 414, 418, 420 and 425). In the *Epitoma*, they are described as having a range of functions: finding out the number of enemy soldiers [III.6.30], providing an advantageous knowledge of the enemy ([III.9.4-12] [IV.27.1-3]), and ensuring a decisive element of surprise ([III.19.1] [III.20.15] [IV.45.2], and also during the siege [IV.27.5]; see *infra* 4.7).

Feigned retreat from battle is addressed in ch. 131, 157, 418 ([III.22.3], and during the siege [IV.26]).

Tirant also refers to the importance of advice when taking decisions [III.9.4-5], for example in ch. 343, 384, 422 and 427. On the importance of not delaying a battle in which victory is assured [III.9.19], see ch. 343. By contrast, we learn that battle should not be waged if victory seems unlikely [III.9.14] [III.9.20], as stated in ch. 374.

During the siege, there are a number of recurring themes: the use of mines to topple the city walls [II.11.5] [IV.5] [IV.24]; precautions to prevent enemy penetration into a besieged city [IV.25]; and the indolence and over-confidence of besieged forces, which allow the attacker to launch a sudden assault [IV.27]. The importance of being armed and prepared for battle at all times is also noted [III.6.17], and exemplified by *Tirant*.

4.6. *The engines and machines of war (technical function)*

The first part of book IV of the *Epitoma* deals with the use of machines of war and fire. In the modern era, Vegetius' military treatise was rendered obsolete by technological innovation, new tactics and the greater protection they brought. In this sense, *Tirant* was clearly influenced by the innovations referred to in the treatise of Francesc Eiximenis, such as the use and preparation of bombs.¹⁶

Engines of war appear in ch. 5, 10, 123, 145, 164, 321, 339, 394, 418, 419 and 466 ([II.11.1-4] [II.25] [IV.13-17] [IV.21.3-7] [IV.22] [IV.44]). Fire is referred to in ch. 10, 25 and 53 ([IV.4.1-2] [IV.8.1] [IV.18.6]), and also appears in relation to the siege [IV.8.6-7] [IV.9.5]), to naval warfare in ch.

¹⁶ Albert Hauf alludes to this in his edition (2005). Martí de Riquer also examines the contribution of Francesc Eiximenis (1973, 326-327).

100, 106, 141, 164 and 343 ([IV.44.7], and to quicklime, resin and oil.¹⁷ In [IV.46.7-8], we learn how skilled sailors cut the ropes supporting an enemy vessel's rudder and of the arms employed in a naval battle [IV. 44].

Very precise details can be found in ch. 340 and 387, such as the use of mattresses or hide to protect the city walls from the blows of the siege-engines [IV.4.1], or the use of cuirasses ([I.20.3-7] [IV.23.1] [IV.6.2]).

4.7. *The morale of the soldiers (technical function)*

In both *Tirant* and the *Epitoma*, morale is a vital component that plays a key role in warfare, since fear leads to defeat (for example, see *supra* the citation in section 3), starvation [III.3] [III.9.8] [III.26.4] [III.26.17] [III.26.32] [IV.7] and besiegement [III.3.10], crucial factors in the victory of a skilled military leader and in the defeat of a desperate and mediocre military leader (ch. 427 and 444).

Fear and morale, in general, are discussed in the dedication and prologue, 164, 340, 343, 345, 354, 374, 387, 394, 402, 418, 422, 430, 446 and 459. The theme of fear and morale can be perceived, for example, in the shows of opulence that Tirant prepares for the ambassadors in ch. 14, 137, 164 and 425. The *Epitoma* addresses these themes in [III.7] [III.9.13] [III.18.10-14] [III.18.13-14] [III.21.5] [III.22.10] [III.25.9] [III.26.4] [IV.12.2] ; it also deals with the impact on morale of unexpected events, in [III.6.2] [III.6.17] [III.6.34] [III.9.3] (in day camps [III.8.1] and night camps [III.8.2], while marching or fleeing [III.22.11-12]). The war cry and fear among the enemy force [III.18.9-10] are also addressed in *Tirant*, as are the lustre of weaponry and its impact on enemies [II.14.8] and the use of bearskins [II.16.3] (as well as why an enemy should not be driven to desperation, as this increases his courage to its highest point [III.21.2] [III.21.6]).

4.8. *The military leader (technical function)*

Exhortations, morale and the example set by leaders are highly important elements in military command. They are often associated with the morale of the troops (see *supra* 4.7). Equally important are the administration and management of troops and of the provisions required during a siege, during transport, and in maintaining an empire.

In *Tirant* this theme is illustrated in ch. 10, 117, 123, 133, 137, 139, 149, 154, 156, 157, 159, 194 (see the *Epitoma* [II.10.6]), 201, 338, 340, 387, 402, 417 and 422 ([III.9.13] [III.12.3-4] [III.25.10], in the siege [IV.12]; the war cry of the captain [III.18.9-10]; tenacity and temperance [III.25.2-4], in training [II.12.3]).

¹⁷ On the specialised terminology for this particular area, consult Monreal (1971) and Alomar (1992).

The example required of a military commander is also alluded to frequently: ch. 24, 108, 133, 134, 137, 140, 141, 145, 154, 157, 159, 164, 304, 338, 343, 349, 384 and 418 ([III.9.13] [III.22.4] [III.25.4]). Similarly, the *Epitoma* addresses the figure, function and qualities of the commander-in-chief ([II.14.3-7] [II.12.1-3] [III.prol.6] [III.4.10] [III.6.4-7] [III.9] [III.10.6] [III.20.28] [III.26.38] [IV.prol.4]).

The function of the commander-in-chief is examined in ch. 105, with the reconnaissance of the besieged city. Chapter 116 deals with preparations and provisioning for war (where our hero demonstrates his knowledge of *ars*), 123, 124, 133, 137, 140, 239, 314, 386, 387, 401, 409, 415, 419, 423, 430, 483, 484 and 486 (on the effect on morale of the distribution of provisions, see *supra* 4.7 and *infra* 4.9).

Generous and prompt payment of military costs and the mens' wages [II.18.8] is also a recurrent theme in *Tirant*. These details reflect the captain's humanity, revealing him to be a man who does not concern himself solely with brandishing his sword.¹⁸

4.9. Desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum (*technical function*)

Tirant also deals with siege-craft and famine (see *infra* section 4.8). Highly practical questions are addressed that bolster the novel's realism, for example in ch. 5, 97, 98, 99, 123 (Hauf cites Vegetius in note 2), 133, 159, 313, 422, 427, 444 and 448: destroying the defended walls ([II.11.5] [IV.5.1-2] [IV.24]); attacking from ramparts [IV.25.1-3]; projectiles and weapons launched from the wall ([IV.6.2] [IV.8.3-4] [IV.29]); the use of siege ladders [IV.21.2] [IV.30.1] (see also the sections concerning the siege *supra* 4.5.2).

The importance of provisioning is addressed in ch. 112, 123, 124, 131 (on the lack of provisions), 133, 141, 145, 154, 159, 163, 288, 307, 310, 321, 339, 383, 384, 394, 401, 406, 408, 409, 418, 419, 421, 422, 423, 424, 430 and 459. The *Epitoma* also refers to the vital nature of gathering food [III.3.8] [IV.7.4], (see *supra* 4.8).

5. Functions of the references to Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*

The theoretical function, which we have examined as a political function, operates in *Tirant lo Blanch* as an ideological framework. *Tirant* provides the model of a captain who rises to the command of an imperial army, for whom matters of war bring a fleeting hero a means of social advancement. This theme provides the macrostructure that frames the story.

¹⁸ Pons (1991) saw in the vulnerability of the modern hero his essential humanity.

Vegetius' ideas are exemplified in the evolution of our hero's conduct: *nemo prouocare, nemo audet offendere quem intellegit superiorem esse, si pugnet qui secundos optat euentus, i continua dimicet arte, non casu*. This crystallises the interpretation of the great maxim *desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum* [III.prol.8], which we also come across in [IV.31.3]. Vegetius advises against direct confrontation [III.9], as illustrated in the pact that is reached thanks to the science and ingenuity of Tirant.

This explains how the practical function serves the ideal, building a plot full of action from the most immediate of events, such as tournaments and battles. Similarly, ingenuity is vital to the hero in overcoming unexpected situations, as is meticulous preparation for war, which can delay the onset of an earth-shattering battle.¹⁹

Beyond its didactic function,²⁰ however, *Tirant* is also a complex amalgam of different sources. Ultimately, it can be considered the reflection of a burgeoning political debate that brings coherence to a frenetic plot.

6. The sources

References to Vegetius' *Epitoma* are less directly textual than the examples found from Joan Roís de Corella or the great Italian writers (see Pujol 1999 and 2002). In any case, we have been unable to find in the numerous partial references any text that coincides with those passages of *Tirant* in which Vegetius is most clearly visible. It seems clear, however, that Martorell would have been able to consult the work of Eiximenis, although he did not appear to copy from it, nor did he use any of the conserved Catalan translations (see *supra* 2).

7. A European debate

Like Eiximenis, Martorell belongs to a school of writers who not only translated Vegetius but also borrowed from him, inserting Vegetius' ideas into his own work to pursue a political agenda. While the first translations of the *Epitoma* were into vulgar languages (the earliest conserved translation dates from the thirteenth century), its themes were later put to use in political or didactic works, which became mirrors of princes that transmitted the political debate of the era.

In French and English texts, the *Epitoma* is often related to the Crusades and features in the mirrors for princes. In Italy, Bono Giamboni²¹ translated

¹⁹ On science and ingenuity of Tirant (and the *prudentia* of the modern hero), consult Cherchi (2014).

²⁰ I am grateful to Vladimir Agrigoroaei for informs about the debate over this question. On the didactic content of chivalric texts, we refer readers to the work of Vicent Escartí in this volume.

Vegetius in the thirteenth century, but Brunetto Latini also made extensive use of the *Epitoma* in his *Li livres dou Tresor*, and a citation appears in Dante's *De Monarchia* [II.9]; Machiavelli also cites Vegetius in his *Dialogo sull'arte della guerra*.

In the Late Middle Ages – a period of profound social and political transformation – the late Roman compendium inspired the new figure of a political leader proposed by social theorists.²² The imperialist Roman spirit of the *Epitoma* was aligned with the ideas of Marsilius of Padua, of monarchists and imperialists. Without doubt, the military compendium written by Vegetius – the Christian Roman author most representative of the Antiquity inherited by medieval scholars – was later championed by the humanists. The fact that so many medieval and Renaissance copies of Vegetius' text survive demonstrates that his manual was used both by feudal warriors and by princes, whose imperial aspirations drove them to assemble national armies and claim new status as representatives of their peoples (Allmand 2010; Richardot 1998).²³

Beyond this political and didactic function, which is set out in the dedication and prologue to *Tirant*, the minutiae of military strategy, which are apparent in Vegetius' *Epitoma* and were widely known to medieval readers, are used by Joanot Martorell to furnish his novel with descriptions of grand military manoeuvres, fleeting skirmishes, dastardly ambushes and violent naval battles. What is more, love is satisfied by a victorious hero, whose eroticism is constructed through military imagery.

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²¹ We have found no evidence linking Lelio Manfredi's translation of *Tirant lo Blanch* to Giamboni's translation of the *Epitoma*.

²² On the political function, consult Ducos (2012).

²³ Cherchi stresses this point in the introduction to his Italian translation (Joanot Martorell 2013).

** The original Catalan text of this paper was translated into English by Peter Cottee.

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Abbreviations

ch. chapter/s

ed. edited

Epitoma Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris*

intro. introduction

ms. manuscript

Tirant *Tirant lo Blanch*

trans. translated

v. verse/s

Short title for the running head: Vegetius' *Epitoma rei militaris* in *Tirant lo Blanch*

Elena de la Cruz Vergari

e-mail: elena.delacruz@urv.cat

Postal mail:

Departament de Filologies Romàniques

Facultat de Lletres – Campus Catalunya

Universitat Rovira i Virgili

Av. Catalunya, 35

43002 Tarragona – Espanya