

Veteran Politics and Memory: A Global Perspective
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Memorializing *Fama* and Trauma in Colin de Beaumont's "On the Crécy Dead"

In "On the Crécy Dead," Colin de Beaumont utilizes a composite genre of dream vision and dialogue to process the trauma at the Battle of Crécy. As trauma tends to resist direct representation, the hybrid genre enables Beaumont to form a discourse on grief using an allegory in a liminal space to articulate trauma. The central debate over the value of death in battle between allegorical personifications concludes with Honor's ruling that "there can be no end more noble," reasserting honor as a justification for the fatality of warfare. His verse both borrows from and perpetuates a chivalric tradition at a time when the logistics of war were changing.

Beaumont deploys dialogue for decidedly undialogic ends to respond to threats that the introduction of the longbow and the increasing importance of siege warfare posed to the long-established honor system. Originally, the verse likely appeared in a mortuary roll owned by a religious house where monks read it aloud as an emotional script for the community to memorialize the dead. The text disseminates the trauma of Crécy to an audience that likely did not experience it while also regulating the audience's reaction to the trauma by demonstrating the appropriate performance of mourning.

"On the Crécy Dead" acted as a form of memorialization that perpetuated individuals' post-mortem *famas* and enabled their reputations to live on in the collective memory of a community. The verse constitutes a significant example of how a "textual community" and an "emotional community" could intersect to aid with the communal memorialization of trauma into collective memory. When read in the historical context of the Hundred Years War alongside tomb effigies and chronicles from both sides—including those of the English, the French, and their respective allies—it reveals how post-mortem *fama* underpinned the value medieval society applied to death in combat.

Bio:

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