

Quidditas

*On-line Journal of
The Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance
Association*



*The Adams Shakespearean Theatre at the Utah Shakespearean Festival in Cedar City
© Utah Shakespearean Festival. Photo by Karl Hugh*

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From the Editor

Our cover for this volume of *Quidditas* features the Adams Shakespearean Theatre at Southern Utah University in Cedar City, Utah. The theatre is the site of the annual Utah Shakespeare Festival. The festival also sponsors The Wooden O Symposium; a scholarly conference held in August, centering on early modern drama, with special attention to the plays presented that season.

This volume is the second one to incorporate our new features: Notes, Review Essay, and Texts and Teaching, all designed to furnish readers and contributors venues not offered in most other scholarly journals. In this issue one Note discusses problematic meanings ascribed to translations of an ambiguous word used in Old Iceland poetry. The second Note discusses a letter-writing technique used in college classes studying medieval texts—specifically the letters of Heloise and Abelard. Our Review Essay examines and recommends Islamic sources that could be used to flesh out general world history courses and upper level medieval history courses.

Quidditas is a Latin legal term that originally meant “the essential nature of a thing.” In fourteenth-century French the word became “quiddite.” In the early modern period, the English adaptation, “quiddity,” came to mean “logical subtleties” or “a captious nicety in argument” (OED), and is so used in Hamlet (“Why may not that be the skull of a lawyer? Where be his quiddities now, his quillets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks?” 5.1.95–97). Thus, the original Latin meaning, together with the later implied notions of intense scrutiny, systematic reasoning, and witty wordplay, is well suited to the contents of the journal.

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Notice to Contributors

Quidditas is the annual, on-line journal of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association. The editor and editorial board invite submissions from scholars whose work falls within the broad domain of all Medieval and the Renaissance (or Early Modern) disciplines: literature, history, art, music, philosophy, religion, languages, rhetoric, philology, or interdisciplinary studies.

Quidditas also now features a “Notes” section for short articles (2 to 12 pages) pertaining to factual, bibliographical and/or archival matters, corrections and suggestions, pedagogy and other issues pertaining to the research and teaching of Medieval and Renaissance disciplines. Our “Books” section features a “Review Essay” and a “Texts & Teaching” focus: short (3 to 7 pages) reviews of texts and books instructors have found especially valuable in teaching Medieval and Renaissance subjects. We also welcome longer literature-review articles. Membership in RMMRA is not required for submission or publication. Articles appearing in *Quidditas* are abstracted and indexed in *PMLA*, *Historical Abstracts*, and *America: History and Life*.

All submissions are peer-reviewed. Submissions must not have been published elsewhere. Long articles should be 20 to 30 double-spaced manuscript pages. Long articles, notes, and review articles should follow *The Chicago Manual of Style* (14th ed.), *footnote format*. The author’s name must not appear within the text. A brief (200 word) abstract should accompany all long articles. A cover letter containing the author’s name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, and title of paper must accompany all submissions. Authors of accepted works will supply a copy of the manuscript compatible with Microsoft Word on a CD.

E-mail submissions in Microsoft Word are accepted, but should be followed by two hard copies. Please send submissions for Articles and Notes to:

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Annual Conference 2008

The 40th annual conference of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association will be held April 24-26, 2008, hosted by the University of Colorado, Boulder. The conference theme is:

HISTORICAL ENGINES: TEXTS, TECHNOLOGY AND
INNOVATION IN THE MIDDLE AGES AND RENAISSANCE

The conference hopes to present several papers exploring the relationship between technology and history from scholars in all disciplines on any aspect of technological or intellectual innovation during the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

For further information please contact Professor Kellsey, local organizer, email: charlene.kellsey@colorado.edu, or surface mail: 184 UCB, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO 80309-0184

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ALLEN D. BRECK AWARD WINNER

2006

Kimberly Johnson

The Allen D. Breck Award is given in honor of Professor Allen D. Breck (1914-2000), a founder of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association. As Professor of History at the University of Denver, he also served for 20 years as department chair. As Professor Emeritus he became the historian of the University of Denver, writing *From the Rockies to the World—The History of the University of Denver*. His specialties included medieval and church history, particularly John Wyclif. He also taught Anglican studies at the Hiff School of Theology, and wrote, edited, or contributed to histories of Jews, Methodists, and Episcopalians in Colorado and books on medieval philosophy, the lives of western leaders, and the relationships between science, history, and philosophy. In addition to his involvement with RMMRA, he was a fellow of the Royal Historical Society and belonged to the Medieval Academy of America, the Western History Association, and the Western Social Science Association.

The Breck Award recognizes the most distinguished paper given by a junior scholar at the annual conference.

**Temples of Caesar: The Politics of Renaissance *Georgics*
Translations**

Kimberly Johnson
Brigham Young University

*Between the last years of Elizabeth I's reign and the regicide of Charles I, three major English translations of Virgil's middle poem, the *Georgics*, were published. Each translation appeared at a moment of religio-political crisis in England, a coincidence made more significant by the ambivalent political stance of Virgil's text, which simultaneously communicates praise for Octavian and suspicion about an imperial program that disenfranchised the agricultural classes, an oversight which Virgil records in the *Georgics* as impiety. This paper charts the ways in which seemingly innocent translation decisions manage to perform a critical interrogation of monarchal authority, particularly as it pertains to the administration of a state church. Shielded by the authority of Virgil's venerable text, the three Early Modern translators each interrogate the relationship between national governance and religious polity, a project that becomes more aggressive and more urgent in the later translations, as the status and scope of Jacobean monarchic authority moves toward its fatal redefinition.*

The last few years have seen an efflorescence of new English translations of Virgil's middle poem, the *Georgics*. There have been no fewer than five new renderings of the *Georgics* since 2001, a profusion unprecedented since the years just following the Second World War, and before that, since the seventeenth century. This historical pattern of *Georgics* translations coming in bunches

(or perhaps, more aptly, flocks) at moments of political instability is not coincidental, I think. For, far from enacting a skittish retreat from the political into the simple and stable labors of country life—the *good life*, if you will—Virgil’s poem concerns itself explicitly with *instability* and *uncertainty*. Its rural considerations are never immune to the tumults of political life, but rather argue for the necessity of intellectual labor to ensure the continuation of social and political structures against the encroachments of chaos.

A little ancient history, for context: Virgil composed the *Georgics* over a seven year period, from 36 to 29 B.C.E., so the work would have been begun less than a decade after the uncomfortable resolution of Roman civil war (49-45 B.C.E.), in which Julius Caesar defeated the supporters of Pompey at Pharsalus. Rome emerged from this first civil war only to enter into another, following Julius Caesar’s assassination in 44 B.C.E., which pitted Julius’s heir Octavian (later Caesar Augustus) and his ally Marc Antony against Brutus and the forces of Republicanism. Though Octavian gained the triumph, the predictable rivalry between Antony and Octavian flared into yet another conflict, which culminated in the defeat of Antony’s (and Cleopatra’s) forces at Actium in 31 B.C.E.

Virgil observed this political turmoil from an irresolute position. On one hand, he had gained the patronage of Maecenas, dedicatee of the *Georgics*, who was a member of Octavian’s inner circle of advisors; hence under Maecenas’s sponsorship Virgil enjoyed the kind of security that attends an established regime. On the other hand, as the poet’s earlier *Eclogues* indicates, Virgil clearly harbored real unease about imperial domestic policies, especially the seizure of rural land and its reassignment to war veterans, a practice which had radically changed the demographic of his native Mantua.¹ Virgil’s political ambivalence surfaces throughout the *Georgics*, as for example in the contrast between Book Two’s praise of Rome’s “warhorses charging haughty on the

¹ *Eclogue* 1, explicitly, and famously, thematizes the divestiture of agricultural land, as Meliboeus laments his new indigency to Tityrus.

field” (“*bellator equus campo sese arduus infert*” [2.145²]), and the indictment that closes Book One, where Virgil’s catalogue of Rome’s sins include that she gives

No rightful honor to the plow; the croppers commandeered,
soil weeds to rot; and hooked sickles are forged to rigid
swords”

*non ullus aratro
dignus honos, squalent abductis arva colonis
et curvae rigidum falces conflantur in ense* (1.506-508).

Though John Dryden’s remains the most well known translation of the *Georgics* from the seventeenth century, it was in fact preceded by three other English translations, each of which garnered a measure of popular attention. Considering the civic ambivalence of Virgil’s own text, it seems significant that each of these three earlier translations appeared at a moment of religio-political crisis in England. The degree to which these translations function as political commentary is keenly in evidence in the way they handle the many passages that negotiate issues of piety or statecraft—and even more so at moments where piety and statecraft intersect. This essay will devote its attention to one such node of intersection, a passage whose subtle integration of the relationship between governance and worship provides its translators with an opportunity to comment on their respective historical moments. It is not surprising that such passages should occasion editorializing in their Renaissance translators; after all, the relationship between church and state becomes a flashpoint of early modern controversy that ultimately culminates in England’s own civil war.

The passage in question appears at the beginning of Book Three. Virgil has just imagined a sort of artistic abduction, in which he will seize the Muses from their Aonian home to his native Mantua. The poet declares that, to mark this relocated site

² All Latin citations from P. Virgili Maronis, *Opera*, ed. with commentary by R.A.B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969). All English translations, unless otherwise indicated, are mine.

of inspiration, he will construct a marble shrine near the banks of the Mantuan river Mincius. In a gesture clearly designed to register the divine position of Rome's emperor, Virgil announces, "*In medio mihi Caesar erit templumque tenebit*" (3.16)—which translated means, "In its center for me will be Caesar, and he will hold the temple."

I have tried in this inelegant literalism to preserve the ambiguity of the word "*tenebit*"—*he will hold*. The Latin verb is a supple term, which can mean anything along the spectrum of holding, real and metaphoric: to *grasp with the hands*, or to *repress*, or to *occupy militarily*, or to *charm*—that last, I suppose, because of the hold it suggests on the attention. This line, with its fusion of national and religious piety, clearly posits an association between civic governance and worship. But how is this passage rendered by our three Renaissance translators, each of whom is working from a historical moment in which the relationship of the monarch to the church is under debate?

Abraham Fleming published his *Georgics* in 1589, on the heels of Spain's aggressions against Elizabeth's monarchy, which of course climaxed in a sunken Armada. This event would have represented a significant religio-historical moment for Fleming, who was an avowed Protestant, and a dedicated supporter of Elizabeth against what he perceived to be the conquistadoring intentions of continental Catholicism. In fact, in his capacity as the general editor for the 1587 edition of Raphael Holinshed's Protestant-nationalist *Chronicles*, Fleming inserted a number of anti-Catholic comments into that text, including this tart summary of Elizabeth's sister's time on the throne:

Thus farre the troublesome reigne of Queene Mary the first of
that name (God grant she may be the last of hir religion),
eldest daughter to king Henrie the eight.³

³ Quoted in Elizabeth Storey Donno, *Abraham Fleming: A Learned Corrector in 1586-87* (*Studies in Bibliography*, 42 [1989]), 205. For Fleming's involvement in the *Chronicles*, see William E. Miller, "Abraham Fleming: Editor of Shakespeare's Holinshed," in *Texas Studies in Literature*

Fleming's editorship of Holinshed's work introduced a strong bias into the 1587 *Chronicles*, which Stephen Booth describes as "urgently and often violently, and sometimes grotesquely Protestant and patriotic." But Fleming was equally suspicious of the Presbyterian sympathies of English puritans; he declares his allegiances in dedicating his translation "To the Most Reverend Father in God, John [Whitgift] Archbishop of Canterburie," whose enforcement of conformity among Anglican clergy saw a number of Puritan agitators brought before the Star Chamber.⁴

The resistance of these reformers to Whitgift's constraints was, by extension, a resistance to the ecclesiastical authority of Elizabeth herself. Presbyterian puritans refused to place the church under the license of the state, and so refused to acknowledge the queen as the "Supreme Governor" of the Church of England, her rightful title according to the 1559 Act of Supremacy and the Thirty-Nine Articles of 1562. So when Fleming turns his translator's attention to the passage from Book Three, his rendering sounds a reprimand that resonates with his establishment loyalties. It reads: "In midst for me shall Caesar be, and shall possesse the church" (3.22). In Fleming's line, Caesar's central

and Language, 1 (1959-60), 89-100, and William Lowndes's *Bibliographers Manual of English Literature* (London, G. Bell & sons, 1871). Fleming's editorship of Holinshed's work introduced a strong bias into the 1587 *Chronicles*, which Stephen Booth describes as "urgently and often violently, and sometimes grotesquely Protestant and patriotic" (*The book called Holinshed's Chronicles : an account of its inception, purpose, contributors, contents, publication, revision and influence on William Shakespeare* [San Francisco: Book Club of California, 1968], 66).

⁴ Abraham Fleming, *The Bucoliks of Publius Virgilius Maro, prince of all Latine poets; otherwise called his pastoralls, or shepeherds meetings. Together with his Georgiks or ruralls, otherwise called his husbandrie, conteyning foure books. All newly translated into English verse by A.F.* (London: By T[homas] O[rwin] for Thomas Woodcocke, dwelling in Paules Churchyard at the signe of the black Beare, 1589).

position is affirmed not only in his material presence in the *templum* but also in his dominion over it.

Fleming's insistence on Caesar's *possession*, along with his translation of *templum* as church, brings Virgil's gesture into contemporary significance, advancing a determined rallying cry in support of Elizabeth's rightful management over the Church of England. The association of Elizabeth with Caesar is not Fleming's invention, but was culturally prevalent when his translation was completed; the critic Jeffrey Kahan has documented the proliferation of plays set in ancient Rome as Elizabeth's reign progressed, in order to demonstrate the degree to which the nation internalized her self-representation as *princeps*—Latin for prince and, not incidentally, the title first given to Virgil's emperor Augustus.⁵ Fleming's translation makes use of the cultural inscription of Caesar's position onto Elizabeth, in order to argue against her opponents, within and without England, that her political authority *contains* her ecclesiastical authority, that rightfully Caesar does indeed, as Fleming's English has it, "possess the church."

The monarch's role in church governance remains an issue under consistent negotiation through the balance of Elizabeth's reign, and the issue is only amplified under her successors. Thomas May's translation of the *Georgics* appeared in 1628, in the early years of Charles I's reign. Though May is unfortunately perhaps best remembered by modern readers through Marvell's sour elegy "Tom May's Death," and was derided during his own lifetime as a would-be poet and a parliamentary stooge, he did gain the patronage of Charles, who commissioned him to write metrical histories of English monarchs in the early 1630s. Charles's encouragement may have led May to expect the post of Poet Laureate upon the death of Ben Jonson in 1637, but he was thwarted in this ambition when the laurels went instead to Sir William Davenant. He subsequently quit the court, openly joining

⁵ Jeffrey Kahan. "Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and the Anticipation of 1603," *Cithara*, 44.1 (2004), 3-24.

with the parliamentary party in 1640, for whose cause he produced his best-known work, the 1647 apologetic *History of the Parliament of England*.

Modern critics have been, perhaps, swayed by the willingness of May's contemporaries to ascribe his parliamentary support to sour grapes at having been passed over for the laureate position. But long before this formal political conversion, May seems to have harbored a particular nostalgia for what he calls in his *History* "The right waies of Queen Elizabeth, long ago forsaken" and for the Elizabethan legislation which "established the Reformed religion" and "settled a new interest in the State."⁶ May's account of Elizabethan history imagines a happy conjunction of Reformed church and English state, administered under the righteous authority of the English monarch. Though he may have enjoyed some preferment in Charles's court, May's reformist leanings seem to have been in place at an early age; he attended Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, which Archbishop Laud would later denounce as a hotbed of sedition and Puritanism (the two terms being, of course, interchangeable in his estimation), and at which May's attendance overlapped Oliver Cromwell's.

It is perhaps not remarkable that May's commentary on the relationship between religion and politics smacks of anti-Catholic suspicion, even in the poems he produced at Charles's command. His 1633 narrative poem on Henry II, for example, written for Charles, spares no criticism of Rome and its church—hardly a politic stance in the court of Charles and Henrietta Maria.⁷

⁶ *History of the Parliament of England which began November the third, MDCXL. With a short and necessary view of some precedent yeares. Written by Thomas May, Esquire, Secretary for the Parliament, Published by Authority* (London: Moses Bell for George Thomason, 1647), bk. 1, 12.; Preface to *History* B2v. For May's biography, consult Allan Griffith Chester, *Thomas May: Man of Letters, 1595-1650* (Philadelphia: 1932).

⁷ *The Reign of King Henry The Second, Written in Seaven Bookes. By his Majesties Command* (London: A.M. for Benjamin Fisher, 1633).

May's objections to the influence of Rome are, as his praise of Elizabeth's "right waies" suggests, tied to his view that religious governance must be bound up with English national polity; for May, the sense of increasing sympathy for Rome among England's clergy constitutes an attack on the self-directing authority of the English state, and compromises the monarch's unified dominion over church and state. Even before the ascension of Laud, there is some evidence that May's anxiety is well founded.

The growing fissure in the Church of England between reformers and more conservative clerics was widened by the 1627 publication of John Cosin's controversial volume *A Collection of Private Devotions in the practice of the Antient Church, called the Hours of Prayers*. Commissioned by Charles himself, Cosin's text scolds the English church for abandoning "Antient forms of piety" (fol. A8r),⁸ and provides practical instruction toward a devotion that, with its focus on works and the seven sacraments, feast days and urgings to confession, strikingly resembles Catholic worship. Apparently, many of his contemporaries thought as much; William Prynne's loud criticism of the book as yet another sign of the rampant papistry under Charles was published under the title *A Brief Survey And Censvre of Mr Cozens His Couzening Deuotions. Proving how the forme and matter of Mr Cozens his Booke of Private Devotions or the Houres of Prayer, lately published, to be meerey Popish*.⁹

⁸ John Cosin, *A collection of private deuotions: in the practise of the ancient church Called the houres of prayer. As they were were after this maner published by authority of Q. Eliz. 1560. Taken out of the Holy Scriptures, the ancient Fathers, and the diuine seruice of our own Church* (London: Printed by R. Young, 1627).

⁹ Prynne's title continues, trenchantly: ". . . to differ from the priuate prayers authorized by Queene Elizabeth 1560. to be transcribed out of popish authors, with which they are here paralelled: and to be scandalous and preiudiciall to our Church, and aduantagious onely to the Church of Rome. By William Prynne Gent. Hospiti Lincolniensis (London: Thomas Cotes, 1628).

While it will be some years before May speaks out explicitly in the *History* against the role of Charles's "evil counselors" among the clergy in religious matters, his translation of our passage in Book Three offers its own admonition regarding the monarch's proper role in regard to church governance. May's version reads: "In midst shall Caesars altar stand; whose power/ Shall guard the Fane" (3.31-32).¹⁰ Note how May's translation departs from his Latin original, importing an "altar" in place of Caesar himself, and registering Caesar's power as invested in that altar—invested sufficiently to "guard" the temple. Such a defensive posture is absent from the Latin (if anything, *tenebit* has *offensive* overtones). May's translation implies that there is something the temple requires defending *from*, and invokes Caesar's sacred investiture as a shield against it. May's phrasing links the altar's protective quality to Caesar's power, suggesting that it is efficacious only if it is *Caesar's* altar. May's concerns regarding Charles's willingness to turn over religious polity to his "evil counselors" seem to govern the translator's embellishments of his Latin source. In May's translation, Caesar's altar becomes a doomed appeal for Charles to take up his divinely appointed role in oversight of the English church.

May's warning seems especially plangent when compared with our third and final translation. John Ogilby's *Georgics* was published in late 1649, the same year that saw the English Civil War's decisive stroke in the regicide of Charles I. Unlike Thomas May, Ogilby was a staunch royalist throughout his life. In 1637, he was appointed Charles's Master of the Revels in Ireland, where he remained until the Irish Rebellion of 1641 drove him back to England. Ogilby began translating Virgil, with the help of his friend James Shirley, after his patrons dropped one after another into exile or execution.

Though Ogilby's livelihood was eventually restored with Charles II's monarchy, his *Georgics*, written in a darker hour, is

¹⁰ *Virgil's Georgicks Englished. by Tho: May Esqr* (London: Printed by Humphrey Lownes for Thomas Walkley in Brittain's Burse, 1628).

the most despairing of the translations. Its pervasive sense of hopelessness seeps into the line we've been exploring from Book Three, which Ogilby translates as follows: "Amidst the fane, shall *Caesar's* statue be" (3.17, italics in original).¹¹ In contrast to the Latin original, and the two earlier translations, in Ogilby's line there is no talk of possession, of ownership, of defense. He omits "*tenebit*" entirely. Likewise, there is no sign of Caesar himself; only Caesar's statue stands powerlessly in the middle of the temple, stripped in translation of either defensive or offensive force, bereft of vitality.

Ogilby's royalist sympathies find expression earlier in the poem as well. At the conclusion of Virgil's first book, the poet prays to the Roman gods for Rome's security following the calamities of civil war, pleading "*hunc saltem everso iuvenem succurrere saeclo/ ne prohibete*" (1.500-501), which is to say "at least do not prevent this youth from succoring a world upturn." But in Ogilby's hands, "this youth" who is to save the war-torn nation is transformed into a more specific figure: "Ah! for *young Caesar* now your selves ingage/ That he again repair this ruined age" (1.507-508). Ogilby's decision to identify the youth as "young Caesar" articulates the anxiety of the royalist party as the English Civil War heads to its bloody close, their hopes now fixed on a second Charles, a young prince with his father's name, who may "again repair" the social structures upturn by the English Civil War and—in Ogilby's view—the impious depredations of Brutus's political heirs.

Despite the suggestive social commentary performed by these three Renaissance translators, their translations of Virgil's middle poem have gone largely unregarded by literary critics. In *The Georgic Revolution*, his seminal work on the development of the georgic mode in early modern literature, Anthony Low mentions our three translators only once, and only in a footnote,

¹¹ *The works of Publius Virgilius Maro translated by John Ogilby* (London : Printed by T.R. and E.M. for John Crook, 1649).

without additional comment (17 n. 13).¹² This critical elision persists in the half-dozen other significant works on the status of the georgic in seventeenth-century England.¹³

Dwight L. Durling's classic survey *Georgic Tradition in English Poetry* refers to the three translations considered in this essay only in an appendix list of "Translations of Didactic Poetry into English to 1850" (219).¹⁴ Surveying the reception history of Virgil's poem in Renaissance England, Classics scholar L. P. Wilkinson mentions only Fleming's translation, and only to dismiss it:

No one translated the poem as a whole into English until 1589, when Abraham Fleming made what was avowedly a mere crib; and it does not seem to have been much admired (296).¹⁵

¹² The footnote appears in the context of Low's declaration that "in English poetry the georgic is usually said to begin with Dryden's translation of Virgil's *Eclogues* and *Georgics*, which was published in 1697" (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985, 16). Low's decision to overlook the three earlier translations is especially odd in light of his observation, concerning Henry Vaughan's translation of Neolatin rural poetry, that "The personal views of a translator...are revealed by what he chooses to translate as well as by what he changes from the original" (25).

¹³ One notable exception is Alastair Fowler's essay "The Beginnings of English Georgic," which works to establish the cultural currency of the georgic mode throughout "the first Protestant century" (107). Arguing for the relevance of the georgic mode—and particularly Virgil's *Georgics*—to English poetry during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (long before Dryden's translation signaled the modishness of the convention), Fowler acknowledges that "some of the earliest English activity [in georgic literature] was in editing or translation" of ancient texts, including Virgil's (116). However, Fowler mentions only two of the three translations considered here—Fleming's and May's—and these only once, in a single sentence (116-117). Fowler's essay appears in Barbara Kiefer Lewalski, ed., *Renaissance Genres: Essays on Theory, History, and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1986).

¹⁴ New York: Columbia University Press, 1935.

¹⁵ *The Georgics of Virgil: A Critical Survey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969).

And though the 1992 collection *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England* concerns itself explicitly with “interactions between husbandry and writing” (1), during a period in which “the georgic came into its own” (8), only Ogilby is mentioned—not for his translation but rather for the illustrations which accompany it, in order to compare them with Dryden’s.¹⁶

Despite—or perhaps because of—the general modern neglect of these translations, critics have seemed content to believe that the georgic flourished only in England’s Augustan age, following Dryden’s translation, when the nation had become committed to an austere course of industrious labor. Even Anthony Low, who sets out to demonstrate the persistence of georgic themes and imagery across the seventeenth century, and “as early as Spenser” (117), holds that a general aristocratic prejudice against the abasements of agricultural work (and its Puritan associations) produced a resistance to the principle of virtuous labor that animates the georgic mode during much of the period. But this account effectively limits the interpretive scope of Virgil’s *Georgics*, reducing the project to its attempts to “come face to face with the realistic details of farming life, see them for what they are, yet accept and even glorify them”¹⁷—as a sort of farmer’s almanac in verse—instead of recognizing the complex interplay of social and political arguments that undergird Virgil’s rural descriptions.

¹⁶ *Culture and Cultivation in Early Modern England: Writing and the Land*, edited by Michael Leslie and Timothy Raylor (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1992), 210-211, 219. Dealing primarily with negotiations of the georgic mode in eighteenth-century literature, John Chalker’s *The English Georgic: A Study in the Development of a Form* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969) devotes an entire chapter to Dryden’s translation, which he identifies as the strongest spur to georgic writing in eighteenth-century England. Chalker does not mention any of the three Renaissance translations.

¹⁷ Low, *The Georgic Revolution*, 23.

Our three Renaissance translators do not make this mistake, but recognize, and seize upon, the rich opportunity for political commentary and critique readily available in the poem. Fleming, May, and Ogilby do not shrink from using Virgil's complex middle poem to comment on their local crises of state and religion; indeed, with its backdrop of civil conflict and political ambiguity, Virgil's text seems to offer an ideal forum for such negotiations. Under the auspices of Virgil's venerable antiquity, these three translators each weigh in on one of the central points of significant religio-political anxiety during the Tudor and Stuart periods, using Virgil's ancient civic strife as both shield and object lesson for more contemporary divisions and instabilities—a practice which, it's worth noting, Virgil's translators continue to this day.

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**Charlemagne's *Denarius*, Constantine's *Edicule*,
and the *Vera Crux***

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In 806 a much-discussed silver denarius bearing the likeness of Charlemagne was issued. This is called the "temple-type" coin due to the (as yet unidentified) architectural structure illustrated on the reverse side, and which is explicitly labeled as representing the epitome of "Christian Religion." By examining different kinds of archeological and documentary evidence, this building can now be finally identified. It is, in short, the "Edicule" built by Constantine the Great in 326 to cover the Tomb of Christ (or Holy Sepulcher) in Jerusalem.

Both Europeans and Americans (their colonial cousins) owe a great deal to the Emperor Charles the Great, *Carolus Magnus*, and now most commonly known by his later appellation as "Charlemagne."¹ Although already familiar to medievalists, the basic chronological parameters for my arguments are as follows. Born in 742, the son of King Pepin the Short (ca. 714-768), Charlemagne ruled as king of the Franks after 768, then sharing the

¹ For standard biographies in English, see R. Winston, *Charlemagne: From the Hammer to the Cross* (New York: Vintage, 1954); M. Becher, *Charlemagne* (New Haven: Yale UP, 2003); A. Barbero, *Charlemagne: Father of a Continent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); for another perspective, see W. Braunfels, *Karl der Große* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rohwohlt, 1991).

kingdom with his brother Carloman, until the death of the latter in 771; he later additionally ruled as Emperor of the West, from 800 until his death in 814. Three centuries later, he became himself a “saint,” and literally so: Charlemagne was, in fact, canonized in 1165, and his sainted status remained effective for centuries, that is, until he was reduced to *beatus*, “blessed,” by Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58). Due to Charles’s driving will, his vast empire came to stretch from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, and from the Atlantic to the River Oder, so prefiguring the present-day European Union. His capital, the seat of his pan-European power, was placed in what is now northwestern Germany, at *Aquae Grani*, now known as Aachen. After the death of its founder, in 814, the Carolingian dynasty survived until 987, when Hugh Capet, the ancestor of a long line of famous French kings, succeeded, and the Capetians and their followers always rested their authority upon the now-legendary Charlemagne.²

Deliberately following the political and artistic example set by the Roman Empire, and particularly the “Christian” version later installed by Constantine the Great (ruled 306-337), Charles the Great also used his coinage both for the diffusion of symbolic messages to the people and as an instrument of centralized economic policy. Therefore, in its first role, *ideology*, frequently there will be presented a significant iconographic element in a given numismatic exemplar. Among the coins struck under the authority of Charlemagne, the “temple-type” coin has occasioned the greatest amount of discussion among historians (**Fig. 1-a & b**).

² For the cooption, as “Charlemagne,” of *Karl der Große* by the French, and beginning in the twelfth century, see Becher, *Charlemagne*, 138-47. For example, centuries later, another self-styled French “emperor,” Napoleon Bonaparte, would both reverently and rightly refer to him as “my great predecessor.” For a thorough exploration of the various monarchical “myths” later associated with Charlemagne and Aachen, see the various studies gathered in M. Kramp, ed., *Krönungen: Könige in Aachen—Geschichte und Mythos* (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 2000).

Accordingly, as first issued around 806, the famous silver *denarius* (a “penny,” *mais avant la lettre*), is the focus of what follows.³



Fig. 1-a
Silver denarius of Charlemagne, ca. 806 (obverse)
Portrait of “Karolus Imp. Aug.”

On the obverse of this coin (**Fig. 1-a**) there is presented a profile portrait of the emperor Charles, around which there is placed an inscription: *KAROLUS IMP[erator] AVGVSTVS*. This

³ For a particularized analysis of this famous “temple coin” type, also including a recital of the few previous interpretations of the building in question, and then connecting its pious motto to the *Libri Carolini*, see H. C. Fallon, “Imperial Symbolism on Two Carolingian Coins,” *American Numismatic Society, Museum Notes*, 8 (1958), 119-31; for its practical contexts, see K. F. Morrison and H. Grunthal, *Carolingian Coins* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1967).

depiction shows the emperor rigidly posed and staring wide-eyed into infinity. In its turn, this mode of imperial presentation has a clear iconographic prototype, and Wolfgang Braunfels has pointed out that, “beginning around 804, Charlemagne struck coins bearing his own likeness, with these following the model of the coinage issued by Emperor Constantine,” and as specifically characterized by “the laurel wreath and equestrian cape.”⁴ As this observations makes clear, the basic *leit-motiv* of Carolingian coinage is generally “Constantinian.”

The imperial portrait of *Karolus Magnus* is complemented by an equally significant architectural portrait. On the reverse of the widely circulated Carolingian coin (**Fig. 1-b**) there appears what scholars have called a “temple.” This schematically rendered building is surmounted by a Latin cross and, below, it also shows a complementary, Greek cross placed under a porch and framed by two pairs of columns *in antis* (or free-standing). The *tempietto* with a pediment-like gabled porch itself represents, according to its oddly spelled inscription: *XPICTIANA RELIGIO*, that is, “The Christian Religion.” It thus becomes a complementary symbol of Charlemagne’s self-designated title of *Defensor Fides*, “Defender of the Faith.”⁵ The central cross shown floating between the four columns *in antis* has four equal arms; rather than a “Latin” cross, this is instead a “Greek cross,” and so it suggests a certain building once belonging to the Byzantine realms first founded by Constantine. In this case, one calls attention to the much-reiterated contemporary references to Charlemagne as representing the “New Constantine.”⁶

⁴ Braunfels, *Karl der Große*, 64: “. . . hat Karl der Große nach dem Vorbild der Münze Kaiser Konstantins prägen lassen [mit] Lorbeerkrantz und dem Reitermantel.”

⁵ For Charlemagne’s custom of addressing himself in correspondence as “Defender of God’s Holy Church,” see H.R. Loyne, and J. Percival, eds., *The Reign of Charlemagne: Documents on Carolingian Government and Administration* (London: Arnold, 1973), Documents nos. 27, 30, 33.

⁶ For contemporary references to Charlemagne as the “new Constantine,” see L. Seidel, “Constantine and Charlemagne,” *Gesta*, 15 (1976),



Fig. 1-b
Silver denarius of Charlemagne, ca. 806 (reverse)
Pedimented temple front with a porch containing a cross

Although some explanations for the meaning of this building have already been advanced, as yet none has specified credibly its exact architectural identity, or its specific geographical location, which I shall now set about to do. There is a precedent for such architectural-geographical specificity, since we know of at least three other Carolingian coins or seals that do show structures identified with specific places, and two of these illustrated the

237-9; K. Hauck, "Karl als neuer Konstantin: die archäologischen Entdeckungen in Paderborn in historischer Sicht," *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 20 (1986), pp. 513-35; T. Grunewald, "'Constantinus novus': zum Costantin-Bild des Mittelalters," in *Costantino il grande dall'antichità all'umanesimo: colloquio sul Cristianesimo nel mondo antico* (Macerata: Università, 1992), 461-85.

cities of Dorestad and Lyons, and were so labeled.⁷ Accordingly, in 1896 a French scholar, M. Prou, suggested that the temple depicted on Charlemagne's *denarius* (**Fig. 1-b**) is "a summary representation of the basilica of St. Peter in Rome."⁸ Nonetheless, this image in no way corresponds to our present knowledge of the appearance of St. Peter's during the early medieval period.⁹ Moreover, and again to the contrary of Prou's architectural surmise, a clear-cut representation of "Rome" does appear on a third Carolingian numismatic example.

This is a leaden seal (*bullā*) issued by Charlemagne himself; labeled "*Kar[olus] Imp[erator]*" (**Fig. 2-a & b** below). The obverse shows his typically mustached portrait.¹⁰

⁷ For these two coins, see Fallon, "Imperial Symbolism on Two Carolingian Coins," 120.

⁸ M. Prou (otherwise un-named), as quoted in *ibid.*, p. 119.

⁹ For the original, and quite different, appearance of St. Peter's (and which it still generally retained in the ninth century), see R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986), figs. 21-25 (where the appearance of the atrium wall to the east remains somewhat conjectural, although the appearance of the basilica itself is perfectly clear).

¹⁰ For this *bullā*, see P. E. Dutton, *Charlemagne's Mustache and other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 24-5, fig. 1.10; citing the source for this illustration as (see *ibid.*, 207, n. 83) "François Le Blanc, *Dissertation historique [sur quelques monnays] de Charlemagne frappés dans Rome* (Paris, 1689-90), title page and 24." For other old references to the "Roma" seal, see James Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire* (London: MacMillan, 1897), 103, note q. (This *bullā* was not mentioned in Fallon's study.)



Fig. 2-a

Bulla of Charlemagne, ca. 800 (obverse)

Engraved frontispiece to François Le Blanc, Dissertation historique sur quelques monnaies de Charlemagne frappés dans Rome (Paris, 1689-90)

The reverse of the medallion bears a complementary inscription: “*Renovatio Roman[orum] Imp[erium]*,” so proclaiming the Frankish emperor’s well-known policy of instigating a “Renewal of the Roman Empire.” The reverse of the Carolingian seal (**Fig. 2-b** below)—and which is explicitly labeled “*Roma*”—shows a certain building, a tall structure with two towers flanking a high, flat masonry wall with an arched entrance set into its center, above which a towering, Latin cross arises.

**Fig. 2-b***Bulla of Charlemagne, ca. 800 (reverse)*

But *which* building was it selected by the Carolingian designer to generically represent “Rome?” Given its characteristic features, rather than Old St. Peter’s (which lacked the flanking bell-towers), it may be argued that the emblematic building shown on the Carolingian seal as symbolically representing “Rome” instead depicts the Lateran “Basilica Salvatoris,” Constantine’s first great building project in Rome. Erected ca. 312/13, and known throughout the Middle Ages as “Constantine’s Church,” it served as the Cathedral of Rome until 896, when it was rededicated

to John the Baptist.¹¹ To clarify this iconographic point, I reproduce a detail from the anonymous *Sette Chiese* engraving of 1575, with this showing "S. Giovanni Laterano."¹²



Fig. 3

Detail from the anonymous *Sette Chiese* engraving of 1575, showing "S. Giovanni Laterano"

¹¹ For the Lateran Cathedral built by Constantine as "his first Church foundation," see R. Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312-1308* (Princeton UP, 1980), 21-24.

¹² For another pictorial reference, the *Catara Map* (1576), showing "S. Joannis lateranensis," see Krautheimer, *ibid.*, fig. 52; for yet another, a fresco in the Vatican depicting the "Lateran Palace and Church as before 1588," see *ibid.*, fig. 93; the *Sette Chiese* engraving is shown complete in Krautheimer's fig. 194.

The emblematic importance of this particular church and, additionally, its personal significance for Charlemagne himself are points settled by the observations of E. Baldwin Smith:

The great “*Basilica Salvatoris*” at Rome, which was built by the first Christian emperor [Constantine] in connection with the Lateran Palace and which was known throughout the Middle Ages as “Constantine’s Church,” was rededicated in A. D. 896 to John the Baptist, and its traditional distinction of being “the Mother and the First Church of the City and the World” was eventually transferred to St. Peter’s. . . . [Hence,] Charlemagne, by dedicating his own Palace Chapel at Aachen to the Savior and then calling his palace “the Lateran,” was endeavoring to show that his *Sacrum palatium* was comparable to the Lateran at Rome.¹³

In sum, both the iconographic and the documentary evidence now serve to identify the emblematic building standing for “Roma” on the Carolingian *bull*a (Fig. 2-b) as representing none other than the “Basilica of the Savior” or “Constantine’s Church,” an edifice known to have been held in great regard by Charlemagne.

As may be concluded from this brief analysis of a given artifact, Carolingian medals and coins actually did encode ideological messages. In this example (Fig. 2), Charlemagne himself represents the imperial ideal (he being “*Karolus Imperator*”), and his on-going cultural policy is clearly stated (“*Renovatio Romanorum Imperium*”). In this case, the imperial will focuses its attention upon a specific place (“*Roma*”), and such as that spiritually resonant city was emblematically represented by the schematic sign of a single, specific building once found there (the “*Basilica Salvatoris*,” later to be dubbed “*S. Joannis lateranensis*”), with this edifice now recognized to be an important Christian place of worship commissioned by none other than Constantine the Great. Nonetheless, the structure depicted on the Carolingian “temple coin” (Fig. 1-b) does not remotely look like

¹³ E. Baldwin Smith, *Architectural Symbolism of Imperial Rome and the Middle Ages* (New York: Hacker, 1978), 90; see also 97, where Smith clearly identifies the building shown on Charlemagne’s *bull*a, “issued shortly after his coronation in A.D. 800” (his fig. 81), as representing “Constantine’s church, St. Savior of the Lateran.”

either of the two churches in Rome founded by Constantine, either St. Peter's or the Lateran Basilica, both of which generally had retained their original, fourth-century appearance into the Carolingian era. Nonetheless, as I will now argue, the structure shown on Charlemagne's *denarius* is, in fact, a Constantinian foundation, but that its location was in Jerusalem, and not in Rome.

In a broader context, and as is well known, in art as well as in governance, the pattern of "*renovatio*" so diligently pursued by Charles the Great was deliberately modeled upon that cultural "renewal" first initiated by Constantine the Great (ca. 274-337), the first specifically "Christian Emperor." Constantine specifically "renewed" the Roman Empire by making it "Christian." Accordingly, Constantine was, and for all the obvious reasons, later to be treated both as a "saint" and as the basic model for all subsequent Christian rulers by medieval historians.¹⁴ Richard Krautheimer has even specified that "all Charlemagne's political ideas, his conception of a new Empire, and of his own status were based upon the image of the first Christian emperor [Constantine]. Numerous [contemporary] documents testify to the parallel which time and again was drawn between the Carolingian house and Constantine."¹⁵ Hence, Charlemagne was himself specifically hailed as representing the "New Constantine" by Pope Hadrian I in 772; this was, however, only the first time that the Carolingian ruler would be so titled.¹⁶

¹⁴ Whereas Constantine was, and for all the obvious reasons, treated as a "saint" and the basic role-model for all subsequent Christian rulers by medieval historians, modern scholars have adopted a more skeptical, even negative, position; see, for instance, M. Grant, *Constantine the Great: The Man and His Times* (New York: Scribner's, 1994) (where he perhaps reminds the modern reader of Saddam Hussein); see also K. Deschner, *Kriminalgeschichte des Christentums* (Reinbek: Rowohlt, 1986), esp. chapter 5, examining the bloody career of "Saint Constantine."

¹⁵ R. Krautheimer, "The Carolingian Revival of Early Christian Architecture," *Art Bulletin*, 24 (1942), 1-38 (p. 36).

¹⁶ Hadrian, as cited in E. Kantorowicz, *Laudes Regiae. A Study in Liturgical Acclamations and Medieval Ruler Worship* (Berkeley: University of

Given its distinctive architectural and iconographic features, it will now be argued that Charlemagne's "temple" (**Fig. 1-b**) was, in fact, a straightforward representation of the vestibule-porch greeting pilgrims at the east end of a much revered building, a most holy shrine, one then known as the "Edicule" (from *aedicule*, a "little house"). This venerable edifice was, in fact, ordered to be constructed in 326 by none other than Constantine the Great. He had it erected directly above the subterranean cave-tomb of Christ in Jerusalem; this was the holy site that the emperor then piously enclosed within a colonnaded, circular monument, the Edicule (see below **Figs. 4-6**).

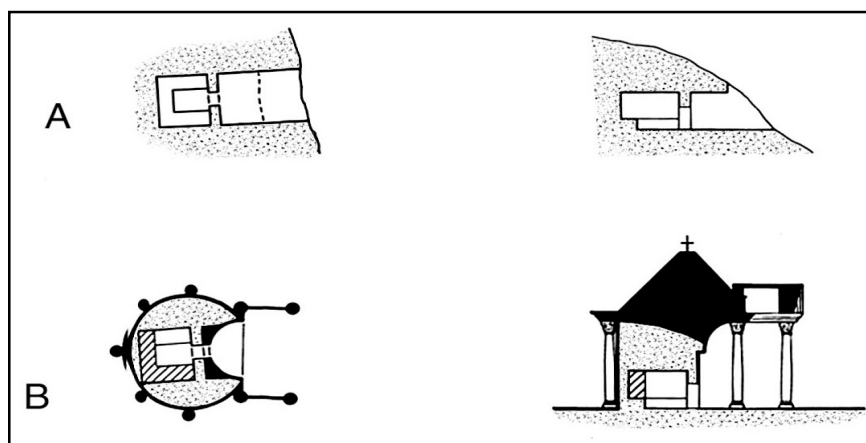


Fig. 4

A Reconstruction of the original appearance of the rock-cut Tomb of Christ. *B* The Edicule and its porch, as later erected directly over the Tomb of Christ by Constantine, ca. 326. The ground-plans of both the Tomb (*A*) and its later Edicule tomb-marker (*B*) are shown to the left; both structures are shown to the right in elevation, with this sequence revealing how Constantine had reshaped the natural lapidary formation in order to fit within the Edicule. (North is to the top of the plan.)

California Press, 1958), 93, n. 93. For more contemporary references to Charlemagne as the "new Constantine," beyond the one from Pope Hadrian I, see the publications cited in note 6 above.

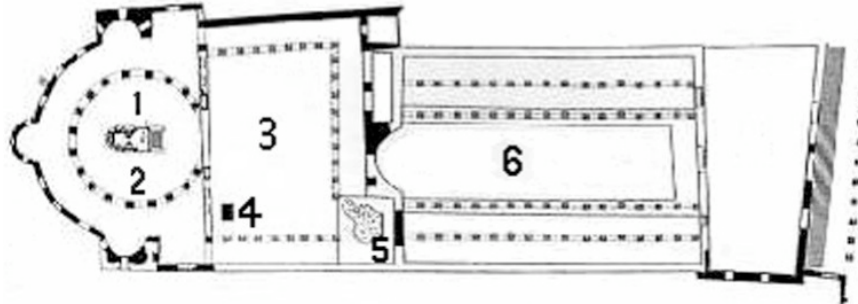


Fig. 5

Ground plan of the architectural complex built by order of Constantine at Golgotha-Calvary from 326 to 335

Left is (1) the Edicule, later completely covered by (2) the columned Rotunda of the Anastasis; directly east is (3) the great atrium, or "Court before the Cross": this contains (4) the repository of the True Cross, and (5) the small chapel sheltering the Rock of Calvary (Golgotha), and east of that is (6) the immense Martyrion Basilica (north is at the top of the plan).

Besides being characterized by a Latin cross placed at its pinnacle (see **Figs. 4-6**), the other recognized distinguishing feature of the Edicule was an open porch, supported on two pairs of columns, with a pediment-like gabled roof. The Greek-cross centered within the entrance to the building on the coin (**Fig. 1-b**) also appears as a standard feature on the other early-medieval, surviving representations of the Edicule venerated in Jerusalem--and which also typically show a complementary, or "Latin," cross placed upon the roof (see **Fig. 6**).

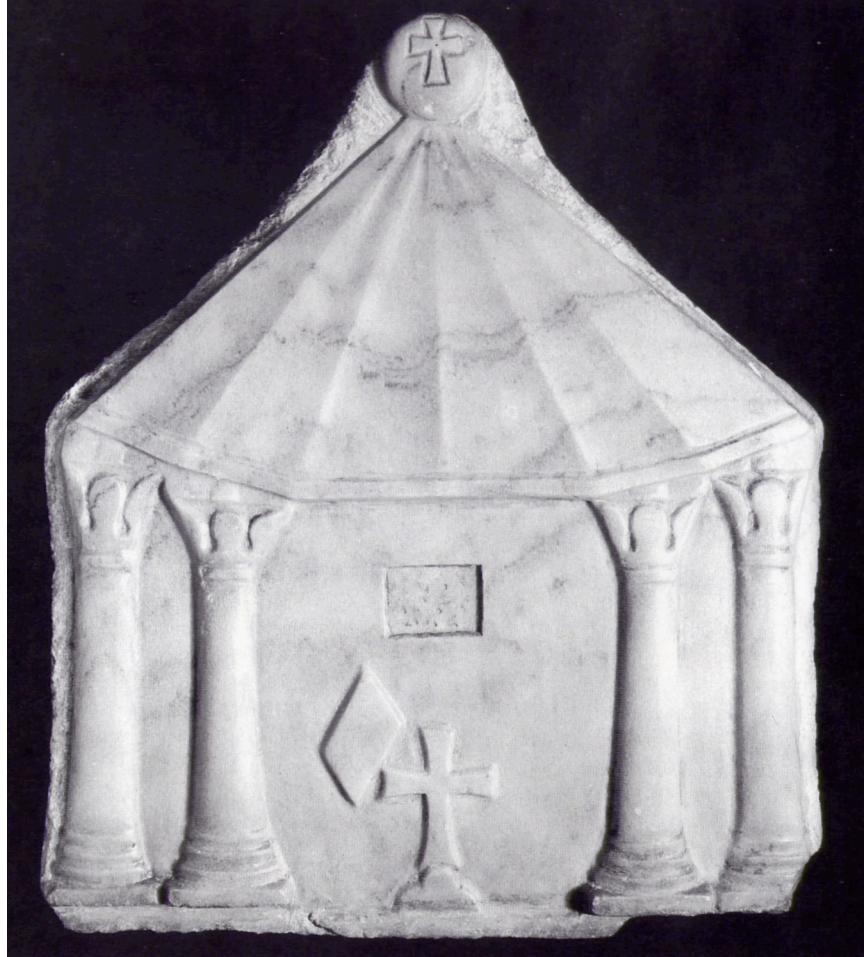


Fig. 6

*Constantine's Edicule in Jerusalem
as depicted on a marble plaque from a Syrian church, ca. 600
Washington DC, Dumbarton Oaks Byzantine Collection*

This initially modest-scaled building formed the exemplary spiritual core of an expanding architectural complex (see **Fig. 5**) that was later collectively known to devout Europeans as the *Santo Sepolcro* or *Sainte Sépulcre*, and to the Byzantines as the *Anastasis* ("Resurrection" or "Ascent"). This "Holy Sepulcher" was an architecturally evolving, potentially symbolic structure later to

become of great emotional significance for medieval Europe. Among other repercussions, the figurative "Tomb of Christ" later became a *raison d'être* for armies of pious Europeans embarking upon the various "Holy Crusades" designed to "liberate" the "Holy Land" (now called "Israel") from its heterodox "Saracen" overlords (an invasive outrage still very much on the minds of modern Moslems, some of whom still vigorously pursue their medieval *jihad* against the ever-intrusive West).¹⁷

On a somewhat less emotional note, Constantine's architectural archetype also provided the prototypical architectural pattern characterizing the medieval *martyrium*, or martyr's tomb. Normally given a centralized ground plan, these commemorative structures, themselves the venerated objects of pious pilgrimages, were also sometimes called *aediculae*, likewise meaning "little houses."¹⁸ The hallowed archetype for all those Christian sepulchral structures erected throughout Europe was, of course, the Holy Sepulcher, and as first erected by Constantine the Great in Jerusalem, and as spiritually centered upon the modestly-scaled Edicule initially built as a grave-marker to commemorate the tragic death and subsequent, and truly momentous, Resurrection of the Christian Savior.¹⁹

It was into the rock-cut tomb, later to be covered by Constantine's Edicule, that the body of Christ had been placed

¹⁷ For some idea of the immense later cultural and artistic importance of the Holy Sepulcher, see J. F. Moffitt, "Anastasis-Templum: 'Subject or Non-Subject' in an Architectural Representation by Jacopo Bellini?" *Paragone*, 33/no. 391 (1982), 3-24. (with ample bibliography). On the hundreds of years of disastrous warfare during the Middle Ages that were largely provoked by this symbolic building, and with its repercussions still plaguing us in the 21st century, see Zoé Oldenbourg, *Les Croisades* (Paris: Gallimard, 1965).

¹⁸ For this archetypal architectural genre, see A. Grabar, *Martyrium: Recherches sur le culte des reliques et l'art chrétien antique* (Paris: Collège de France, 1943-46).

¹⁹ For the post-Constantinian evolution of the "Santo Sepulcro," and particularly the way it was later illustrated by European artists, see J. A. Ramírez, *Construcciones ilusorias: Arquitecturas descritas, arquitecturas pintadas* (Madrid: Alianza, 1983), p. 56 ff. (see also Moffitt, as in note 17).

immediately after his Crucifixion on Good Friday (in the year 30 or, less likely, 33 AD). Two days later, on Easter Sunday, the tomb was visited by Mary Magdalene and two other women (the “Three Marys”), who then found it empty. There, however, they were hailed by an unknown youth “clothed in a long white garment.” As he explained to them (Mark 16: 6), “You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen [*surrexit*]; he is not here, behold the place where they had laid him,” so apparently attesting to the Resurrection into heaven of Christ (the “anointed one”: *Christós* or *Messías* in Greek; the latter term comes from the Hebrew *mashiakh*). This is the poignant scene that produced the most famous dialogue in early medieval literature, the *Quem Quaeritis* (“Whom do ye seek?”). Composed around 950, it consists of a probing question, an answer, and a triumphant reply:

*Quem quaeritis in sepulchro, O christicole?
Ihesum Nazarenum crucifixum, O celicole.
Non est hic, surrexit, sicut ipse dixit;
Ite, annunciate quia surrexit.*²⁰

(Whom, oh you Followers of Christ, do you seek in the tomb?
Oh you Heaven Dwellers,
it is Jesus of Nazareth, He who was crucified. He is not here
[reply the Heaven Dwellers];
He has arisen, and as He said [He would do]. Go; announce
[to the world] that He has indeed arisen [that is, from the
empty grave and, hence, He has ascended to Heaven.]

This purported event, nothing less than a heavenly apotheosis, proved decisive for the course of all subsequent European history. The crucial conundrum was that, other than the Resurrection, there was no real proof for the divinity of Christ—and hence no “divine” basis for Christian religion. This critical issue was so acknowledged by none other than St. Paul himself: *Si autem Christus non resurrexit, inanis est ergo praedicatio nostra [et] vana est fides vestra*—“And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain [and] your faith is without ground” (I

²⁰ *Quem Quaeritis*, in O. B. Hardison, *Christian Rite and Christian Drama in the Middle Ages* (Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 1965), 178-9.

Corinthians 15: 14, 17). Hence, the *empty* tomb—that is, such as it was taken to have been vacated by divine (versus mere mortal) intervention—subsequently validates the Christian religion.

The only documentation allowing for any identification of the tomb, and especially its specific physical location, is sparse indeed; it is all found in the New Testament, namely in Matthew (27: 32 to 28: 8); Mark (15: 20 to 16:8); Luke (23: 26 to 24: 10, and 24: 22-4); and John (19: 17 to 20: 18). According to these brief but complementary sources, Jesus was taken out of the (western?) gate of the city of Jerusalem (as suggested in Hebrews 13: 12, 13), and he was then brought to *Golgotha*—“the place of the skull,” or Mount Calvary, where Christ was crucified in front of “multitudes.” (Slightly later, however, and as due to an extension of the city walls ordered by Herod Agrippa in AD 41-2, this place was then to be included within the municipal perimeters of Jerusalem.) At that place, “Golgotha,” there was a garden, and here there was also a tomb, but one in which no one had ever yet been laid. According to the Gospel writers (Matthew 27: 57-60; Mark 15: 43-46; Luke 23: 50-54; John 19: 38-42), the body of Christ was removed from the cross by Joseph of Arimathea, who took it to his family-tomb, which he had himself hewn out of rock. He rolled a great stone across the entrance. Two days later, the three women came to the tomb and found it empty, the stone rolled away, and then they saw an angel perched upon it. Taking its message with them, they reported what they had seen and heard to the Apostles (as was again to be recounted in the *Quem Quaeritis*).

The manner of the crucial *invenio* (“finding”) by Constantine the Great of the tomb of Christ, and its subsequent architectural embellishment with the Edicule, were described by Constantine’s biographer, Eusebius of Caesarea (ca. 263-339). Moreover, and, as should be noted here, in a Latin translation made by Rufinus of Aquilaea, Eusebius’s *Vita Constantini* was likely known in northern Europe before the Carolingian period.²¹ As the

²¹ For the fame of Eusebius among the Carolingians, see G. Henderson, *Early Medieval: Style and Civilisation* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1972), 214-16, where Henderson clearly states that “the story of the apparition of the cross [as the *labarum* appears] in Eusebius’s *History* [sic: *Life*] of Constantine.

Greek historian explained (*Vita*, III, 25), Constantine, “moved in spirit by the Savior himself,” sought to find the long-lost location of a highly prized, decidedly holy tomb. Specifically, Constantine “judged it incumbent on him to make the blessed locality of our Savior’s resurrection an object of attraction and veneration to all.” According to Eusebius (III, 26), his task was made difficult because that last resting-place of Christ on earth was a “sacred cave [that] certain impious and godless persons had thought to remove entirely from the eyes of men.” To achieve their “impious” goal, these “godless” people, the Romans (specifically those working under the direction of Hadrian in 135), had

brought a quantity of earth from a distance with much labor, and they covered the entire spot; then, having raised this [artificial mound] to a moderate height, they paved it over with stone, so concealing the holy cave beneath this massive mound. Then, as though their purpose had been effectually accomplished, they prepared on this foundation a truly dreadful sepulcher of souls, by building a gloomy shrine of lifeless idols [dedicated] to the impure spirit whom they call Venus, and by offering detestable oblations therein on profane and accursed altars . . . thus burying the sacred cave [the tomb of Christ] beneath these foul pollutions.²²

Eusebius's *History* in a Latin translation by Rufinus was certainly known in England in the Early Christian period." Alas, he provides no source or bibliography for this assertion, which to me makes perfect sense. However, according to the editors of a new English translation of the *Vita Constantini*, it appears that, as is presently understood, the earliest manuscript copy now known of the work in Greek belongs to the tenth century, and it seems that there was no mention made of a Latin version until the sixteenth century; see the Introduction to *Eusebius, Life of Constantine*, eds. Averil Carmeron and Stuart G. Hall (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), esp. 48-53. Nonetheless, we do know that the survival rate of such perishable materials was tenuous; for more on the transmission (and loss) of Greek and Latin literary culture in this period, see the seven essays collected in Bernard Bischoff, *Manuscripts and Libraries in the Age of Charlemagne* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994); see esp. 56-75, “The Court Library of Charlemagne.”

²² Eusebius, as in P. Schaff and H. Wace, eds., *A Select Library of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* (Grand Rapids: Wm. E. Erdmans, 1961: 15 vs.), v. I, 527.

Here Eusebius is referring to the “Aelia Capitolina,” a ceremonial complex erected within the newly incorporated part of Jerusalem (since 42), and which included the pagan Temple of Venus. The latter was built directly upon the site of the Holy Sepulcher by the Emperor Hadrian, and most likely in direct response to the Second Jewish War (AD 131-5).

Then Eusebius proceeds to describe (*Vita*, III, 27, 28) “How Constantine commanded the material of the idol temple, and the soil itself, to be removed at a distance,” with this excavation then directly leading to the “Discovery of the Most Holy Sepulcher.” Unfortunately, the historian does not tell us by what specific means Constantine was led to identify this site—as opposed to any *other* site—as being the correct location of the holy tomb. However the identification may have been arrived at (and there is, significantly, no mention made by Constantine’s biographer of any inscription certifying the identification of *this* spot), once the land fill had been removed, states Eusebius, “immediately, and contrary to all expectation, the venerable and hallowed monument [*martyrion*, literally ‘proof, testimony’] of our Savior’s Resurrection was discovered.”²³

This momentous event is usually dated to the year 326. However, according to another historian writing some seventy-five years later, Rufinus of Aquilaea, the real credit for the momentous discovery should be instead given to Constantine’s mother, the Empress Helena (ca. 248-328). Born in Italy around 345, Rufinus was a monk and scholar who was later to spend some twenty years in a monastery on the Mount of Olives devoting himself to pious study (including his standard Latin translation of Eusebius’ *Church History*). In his own *Historia Ecclesiastica* (ca. 402), Rufinus affirms that that there *was*, in fact, an inscription identifying the sacred spot. This account is somewhat at variance with what Eusebius had stated. As Rufinus explained,

²³ Ibid.

At about the same time [326], Helena, the mother of Constantine, a woman of outstanding faith and deep piety, and also of exceptional munificence, whose offspring indeed one would expect to be such a man as Constantine, was advised by divinely-sent visions to go to Jerusalem. There she was to make an enquiry among the inhabitants in order to find the place where the sacred body of Christ had hung upon the Cross. The spot was difficult to find, and this was because the persecutors of old had set a statue [and a temple] of Venus over it; if any Christian wanted to worship Christ in that place, he seemed to be worshipping Venus. For this reason, the place was not much frequented, and had been all but forgotten.

But when, as we related above, the pious lady hastened to the spot that had been pointed out to her by a heavenly sign, she then tore down all that was profane and polluted there. Deep beneath the rubble [of the pagan temple] she found three crosses lying in disorder. But the joy of finding this treasure was marred by the difficulty of distinguishing to whom each cross belongs. The board was found there [lying in the disorder], it is true, upon which Pilate had placed and inscriptions written in Greek, Latin and Hebrew characters [with said inscription, a *titulus*, identifying “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS”: John 19: 19].

But not even this [inscription] provided sufficient evidence to identify the Lord’s Cross [among the three available crosses]. In such an ambiguous case, uncertainly requires divine proof. It happened that in the same city, a certain prominent lady of that place lay mortally ill with a serious disease. Macarius was at that time bishop of the Church there [in Jerusalem]. When he saw the doubts of the queen and all present, he said: “Bring all three crosses which have been found, and God will now reveal to us which is the cross which bore Christ.”

Bishop Macarius then said a prayer, and the afflicted woman was miraculously cured, that is, once the healing “wood of salvation” had been brought next to her. As Rufinus concludes his tale of a miraculous discovery and a divine intervention,

When the queen saw that her wish had been answered by such a clear sign, she had built a marvelous church of royal magnificence over the place [at Golgotha] where she had discovered the Cross. The nails, too, which had attached the Lord's body to the Cross [but, supposedly, there were only three or four of these], she sent to her son [Constantine]. From some of these, he had a horse's bridle made, for use in battle, while he used the others to add strength to a helmet, equally with a view to using it in battle. Part of the redeeming wood [from the Cross] she also sent to her son, but she also left part of it there to be preserved in silver chests. This part [of the True Cross] is commemorated by regular veneration to this very day.²⁴

In this case, it is of interest to note that Eusebius makes no mention whatsoever of the vision-induced finding of the True Cross recounted by Rufinus; furthermore, Eusebius does not even deign to discuss Helena's purported role in the momentous finding of the burial site of Christ. To the contrary, states Eusebius (*Vita Constantini*, III, 33), to the west of Jerusalem, it was specifically "the emperor [Constantine who] now began to rear a monument to the Savior's victory over death with rich and lavish magnificence. And it may be that this was that second and new Jerusalem spoken of in the predictions of the prophets," that is, as described in Revelation 21. To fulfill these commemorative ends, Eusebius explains (III, 29) that Constantine "commanded that a house of prayer worthy of the worship of God should be erected near [or alongside] the Savior's tomb on a scale of rich and royal greatness." The work ordered by Constantine proceeded in three stages (III, 34-40):

²⁴ Rufinus, as in C. P. Thiede and M. d'Ancona, *The Quest for the True Cross* (New York: Palgrave, 2002), 20-22. The explanation given by Rufinus was later to become, rather than the version recounted by Eusebius, the standard account of the *Invenio Crucis*. It was, for instance, repeated in the most widely-read medieval manual of hagiography, the *Legenda Aurea* by Jacobus de Voragine (ca. 1230-1298); see *The Golden Legend of Jacobus de Voragine*, tr. G. Ryan and H. Ripperger (New York: Arno Press, 1969), 269-76, "The Invention of the Holy Cross (May 3)."

First of all, then, he adorned the sacred cave itself, as the chief part of the whole work. . . . This monument [the Edicule], therefore, was first of all [to be built], as the chief part of the whole, [and it was] beautified with rare columns, and was profusely enriched with the most splendid decorations of every kind. The next object of his attention was a space of ground [directly east and adjacent to the tomb] of great extent, and open to the pure air of heaven. This atrium he adorned with a pavement of finely polished stone, and he had it enclosed on three sides with porticos of great length. At the side opposite to the cave [and the intervening atrium], which was located at the eastern side [of the complex], the church itself [the Martyrion] was erected [see **fig. 5**]. This [basilica-church] was a noble work rising to a vast height, and of great extent, both in length and breadth.²⁵

In order to solve the architectural riddle presented by the “temple coin” (**Fig. 1-b**), besides the well-known fact of Charlemagne’s identification with Constantine, there also needs to be entered into the (art-) historical record the fact of a considerable body of contemporary writings attesting to a direct relationship between Charlemagne and the Holy Land.²⁶ For example, around the year 968, the monk Benedict of Mount Soracte wrote an imaginative chronicle in which he pictured Charlemagne mounting an expedition to liberate Jerusalem from the Saracens (*les Croisades, mais avant la lettre*), and the humbled Moslem leader then makes the Frankish emperor the protector of the Holy Sepulcher at the very moment when he visits the tomb of Christ to

²⁵ Eusebius, as in Schaff and Wace, *A Select Library*, 528-29.

²⁶ For specific details on the known contacts of Charlemagne with Jerusalem, see S. Runciman, “Charlemagne and Palestine,” *The English Historical Review*, 50 (1935), 606-619; K. Schmid, “Aachen und Jerusalem: ein Beitrag zur historischen Personenforschung der Karolingerzeit,” in K. Hauck, ed., *Das Einhardkreuz: Vorträge und Studien der Münsteraner Diskussion zum arcus Einhardi* (Göttingen: Universität, 1974), 122-142; M. Borgolte, “Der Gesandtenaustausch der Karolinger mit den Abbasiden und mit den Patriarchen von Jerusalem,” *Münchener Beiträge zur Mediävistik und Renaissance-Forschung*, 25 (1976), 15-40.

pay homage.²⁷ According to another, earlier (ca. 884) and even more widely broadcast, account given by Notker Balbulus (in his *De Carolo Magno*, II, 9), Harun al-Rashid, the Abbasid Caliph (786-809), had voluntarily given Charlemagne jurisdiction over the entire Holy Land in 802, hence also dominion over the Tomb of Christ discovered by Constantine.²⁸ Appropriately, four years after his physical acquisition of the Holy Sites in Jerusalem, Charlemagne then issued coinage showing a miniature temple representing “Christian Religion” (**Fig. 1-b**), that is, the Holy Sepulcher itself (see **Figs. 4-6**).

Writing even earlier (between 829 and 836), Einhard, the Frankish Emperor’s first biographer, was more explicit regarding Charlemagne’s direct sovereignty over the *Anastasis*-Holy Sepulcher architectural-complex in Jerusalem inaugurated by Constantine (see **Fig. 5**). As Einhard explained (*Vita Karoli Magni*, II, 16),

With Harun-al-Rashid, King of the Persians, who held almost the whole of the East in fee (always excepting India), Charlemagne was on such friendly terms that Harun valued his goodwill more than the approval of all the other kings and princes in the entire world, and [Harun] considered that he [Charlemagne] alone was worthy of being honored and propitiated with gifts. When Charlemagne’s messengers, whom he had sent with offerings to the most Holy Sepulcher of our Lord and Savior and to the place of His resurrection, came to Harun and told him of their master’s intention, he not only granted all that was asked of him but he even went so far as to agree that this sacred scene of our redemption [the *Anastasis*] should be placed under Charlemagne’s own jurisdiction.

Immediately after (II, 17), Einhard then sets about to describe Charlemagne’s own architectural projects, and “outstanding among these, one might claim, is the great church of the Holy Mother of

²⁷ Benedict, as cited in S. G. Nichols, *Romanesque Signs: Early Medieval Narrative and Iconography* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983), 72.

²⁸ Notker, in *Einhard and Notker the Stammerer: Two Lives of Charlemagne*, tr. L. Thorpe (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1981), 148.

God at Aachen, which is a really remarkable construction.”²⁹ This central-plan building, a Palatine Chapel (the *Pfalzkapelle*), was itself typologically modeled upon the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem.

Given this abundant contemporary documentation, Stephen Nichols is led to conclude that, “by the later tenth century, then, to mention the Holy Sepulcher (**Figs. 4-6**) no longer automatically called up the sole image of Constantine, but also, and perhaps even rather, Charlemagne.” Hence, “Charlemagne could be seen less as a successor to Constantine than as a *renovatio* of him, a representation of what he was perceived to have stood for.” And this linkage is due to the well-known fact that “Charlemagne and his advisors had consciously emulated the Constantinian model from 800 onward.” Moreover, in specific regard to the place of Charlemagne’s eventual interment in Aachen, the *Pfalzkapelle*, Nichols concludes that “its use of the two-story rotunda format, with galleries and its dedications to Christ, the Palatine Chapel may be said to conform to the typology of the [commonplace medieval] copies of the Holy Sepulcher [and] as the archetype of the Anastasis become more prevalent in Europe, the Rotunda at Aix [Aachen], itself a martyrium dedicated to Christ, would assume a clear typological association with the Holy Sepulcher.”³⁰

One example among those plentiful medieval architectural replications of the Holy Sepulcher (among many others cited by Richard Krautheimer) is the Carolingian church of St. Michael at Fulda. Erected between 820 and 822 with an octagonal ground plan, the “*titulus*” inscribed on the main altar expressly linked the modern church to the archetypal Holy Sepulcher: “*Christo cuius hic tumulus nostra sepulcra juvat . . .*”³¹ In the event, the

²⁹ Einhard, pp. 70-71.

³⁰ Nichols, *Romanesque Signs*, 73-74. The odd manner of Charlemagne’s interment at Aachen is analyzed in detail in J. F. Moffitt, *The Enthroned Corpse of Charlemagne; The Lord-in-Majesty Theme in Early Medieval Art and Life* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2007).

³¹ R. Krautheimer, “Introduction to an ‘Iconography of Medieval Architecture’,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 5 (1942), 1-33 (see page 4).

Carolingians would have been familiar with the schematic ground plan of the Holy Sepulcher drawn in 690 by Arculph; here Constantine's Edicule (**Figs. 4-6**) is expressly labeled a *Tegurium rotundum*, a "circular shelter."³² Arculph, a bishop from Gaul, later dictated his eye-witness account, "Of the Holy Places," to Adamnan, the abbot of the Monastery of Iona, and the result was the latter's book, *De Locis Sanctis* (ca. 703). Extracts from Adamnan's composition were, in turn, later quoted by the Venerable Bede in his *Historia Ecclesiastica Gentis Anglorum*, completed in 731. According to what one may now read in Bede's *History of the English Church and People* (V, 16), the magnificent architectural complex built by Constantine from 326 to 335 on "the site of Christ's Passion and Resurrection" was still intact around 690. Bede states that Arculph "writes as follows":

For those entering the city of Jerusalem from the northern side, the lay-out of the streets makes the Church of Constantine, known as the Martyrdom [or *Martyrion*], the first of the Holy Places to be visited. This was erected by the Emperor Constantine in a magnificent regal style, for this is the place where his mother Helena had discovered the Cross of our Lord.

Immediately to the west [of the Martyrion: see **Fig. 5** for what follows], the [tiny] Church of Golgotha [or Calvary] comes into view, where there can be seen the rock upon which there once stood the Cross, with the Body of our Lord [*Corpus Christi*] nailed to it. The rock now supports an enormous silver cross, over which there hangs a great bronze wheel bearing lamps. Beneath the site of our Lord's Cross a crypt has been hewn out of the rock, and the Holy Sacrifice is offered for the honored dead on an altar here, while their bodies remain [interred] outside in the street.

To the west of this there stands the Church of the *Anastasis*, which is the church of our Lord's Resurrection; it [that is, the domed "Rotunda" then covering the Edicule built directly over the Holy Sepulcher] is circular in shape, surrounded by three walls, and is supported upon twelve columns. Between each of the walls there is a broad passage

³² Krautheimer, Plate 2, fig. C, reproducing Arculph's plan of the Holy Sepulcher in 670.

[an ambulatory], where three altars stand at three places facing the central wall, to the north, south, and west. There are eight doors or entrances through the three walls, four facing east, and four facing west.

In the center [and beneath the Rotunda covering the Edicule] is the circular Tomb of our Lord, cut out of the rock, and a man standing inside it can touch the roof with his hand. The entrance [and its porch with two pairs of columns *in antis*] faces eastward, and against it stands the great stone, which still bears the marks of iron tools. The exterior is completely covered with marble to the top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and which bears a great golden cross.

The Sepulcher of our Lord [within the Rotunda] is cut out of the north side of the Tomb [covered by the Edicule]; it is seven feet in length, and is raised three hands' breadth above the pavement. The entrance is on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four inside the Sepulcher itself, and eight above it on the right-hand side.

The stone that once formed the door of the Tomb has since been broken, but the smaller portion now stands as a small square altar placed in front of the Tomb, while the larger portion forms another altar located at the eastern end of the same Church, and it is draped with linen cloth. The color of the Tomb and Sepulcher is mingled white and red.³³

The Arculph-Adamnan-Bede description just quoted now provides us with an excellent idea of how the modest-scaled *Edicula* first raised by Constantine over the Holy Sepulcher (or *Anastasis*: “Ascension, Resurrection”)—and just as it was erected by him directly above the humble, rock-cut tomb of Christ—actually did appear later, and specifically in Charlemagne’s time. This typological-iconographic point really does require clarification, especially since the “Holy Sepulcher” presently visited in Jerusalem by troops of pious pilgrims is a building put up much later, in fact, in the early nineteenth century. The present structure, built 1809-10, is the last in a diverse succession of buildings enclosing the purported tomb of Christ. It does not, however, even remotely resemble its early-fourth-century prototype, the first Edicule as built by Constantine around 326.

³³ Bede, *History of the English Church and People*, tr. L. Sherley-Price (Baltimore: Penguin, 1965), 295-96.

That edifice was later put to the torch by the Persians, in 614; later restored, between 616 and 618, it was again razed to the ground by the Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim in 1009. In the light of the latest archeological findings, it is now recognized that the original structure was a single-storied, central-plan structure with a conical, cross-bearing roof, and one entered into the tomb through an attached and projecting, gabled porch with lattice grills and columns *in antis*; the entire structure only stood about ten meters high (see **Fig. 4-B**). Although covered (and so protected by) by the Rotunda of the Anastasis, it was evidently to maintain this canonic appearance until 1009.

According to the conclusions reached by Martin Biddle in his exhaustive analytical history of *The Tomb of Christ* (2000), the “Edicule” (or *Aedicula*: “little house”) initially erected by Constantine around and over the Holy Sepulcher, for which he had also cut away much of the natural rock formations originally surrounding the tomb, consisted of two parts (**Fig. 4**). As Biddle explains, “In front [and facing to the east] was a porch of four columns with a pediment and a gabled roof. Behind it [and inside the Edicule] was the Tomb Chamber, freed on all sides from the living rock; it was rounded or polygonal outside, covered with marble, decorated by five columns with semi-detached bases and capitals, and surmounted by a conical roof of tapering panels, topped with a cross” (**Fig. 5**).³⁴ A ground-plan of the entire architectural ensemble designed by Constantine (it was formally dedicated in September 335) shows that the Edicule looked eastward across a vast atrium, some twenty meters deep and called the “Court before the Cross”; this courtyard faced the Martyrion, a vast basilica-church erected over Mount Calvary.

This is the architectural complex described in the Arculph-Adamnan-Bede account of around 690. By that time, however, the Edicule had itself become completely covered over and hidden by the towering “Rotunda of the Anastasis,” a domed structure over twenty meters in height. Erected between 348 and 380, the Anastasis Rotunda (**Fig. 5**, no. 2) was designed as a double-shell

³⁴ M. Biddle, *The Tomb of Christ* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Sutton, 2000), 69.

construction, with an outer, polygonal wall and an inner arcade supported on piers and arches. The central space, enclosing the Edicule containing the actual Holy Sepulcher, was thus surrounded by an ambulatory. The outer wall of this circular processional space included three apsidal projections, so providing a subtle allusion to the head and arms of the Cross. Surrounding the Tomb of Christ itself, there was an inner ring of 20 supports in all: 8 piers and 12 columns; the latter were over 23 feet high and arranged in groups of three. These supported a conical, wooden roof with a hole, or oculus, in the center to provide a direct link between the Tomb and Heaven.³⁵

And here at Golgotha there was first set into place the archetypal three-part architectural scheme—the tomb-to-the-atrium-to-the-commemorative church—that was to be faithfully repeated at Aachen half a millennium later.³⁶ However, rather than depicting the gable-roofed, cross-topped Edicule, it was, in fact, typical of post-Carolingian iconography to show the Anastasis as a domed structure, so instead illustrating the bulbous roof of the lofty, twenty-one meters in diameter, Rotunda which had completely enclosed the miniscule Edicule since around 350.³⁷

Given its distinctive features, it may now be argued that the

³⁵ For these details, see R. Stalley, *Early Medieval Architecture* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1999), 65-66.

³⁶ For plans and models of the royal complex at Aachen, see (among many such works) L. Hugot, *Der Dom zu Aachen: Ein Führer* (Aachen: Einhard, 1993). For the placement of Charlemagne's tomb (the *Karlsggrab*) in the atrium placed before the *Pflazkapelle*, see H. Beumann, "Grab und Thron Karl des Grossen in Aachen," in W. Braunsfels, ed., *Karl der Grosse, IV, Das Nachleben* (Düsseldorf: Schwann, 1967-8), 9-38; A. Dierkens, "Autour de la tombe de Charlemagne: Considérations sur les sépultures et les funérailles des souverains carolingiens et des membres de leur famille," *Byzantion*, 61 (1991), 156-80. Formerly, the location of the *Karlgrab* was assumed (erroneously) to have been located within the *Pfalzkapelle* (for more details, see Moffitt, *Enthroned Corpse*, as in note 30).

³⁷ On this later and commonplace iconographic distinction, see again Moffitt, "Anastasis-Templum" (as in note 17).

“temple” shown on Charlemagne’s coin (**Fig. 1-b**) was, in fact, a straightforward representation of the famous “Edicule” (see **Fig. 4-B**) erected by Constantine in 326 over the subterranean Tomb of Christ in Jerusalem. In short, the schematized building shown on Charlemagne’s coinage—one with a central-plan, and so indicated by the conical roof and the placement of the four columns—exactly corresponds to the symbolic structure described by Martin Biddle as having been visually characterized by, besides a Latin cross at its pinnacle (see **Figs. 4-B, 5**), additionally “a porch of four columns with a pediment and a gabled roof.” It is specifically the projecting “porch”—actually a *portico*, for it is “columned and pedimented like a temple front”³⁸—that greeted pilgrims wishing to enter the Tomb of Christ that appears on the Carolingian “temple coin.” The Greek-cross centered within the portico-entrance to the building shown on the Carolingian coin (**Fig. 1-b**) also appears as a standard feature on the other early, surviving representations of the Edicule venerated in Jerusalem--and which also typically show a Latin-cross placed upon the roof (see **Fig. 6**).

The typical appearance of these architectural representations—to cite just one example among several of these representative works, and which would have been acquired by pious pilgrims as tourist souvenirs—is nicely conveyed by a marble plaque now dated to around 600 (**Fig. 6**). This carved panel was originally part of a chancel barrier erected in a Syrian church. Many similar examples are extant.³⁹ Besides paintings, the portable tourist items most commonly acquired bearing representations of the Edicule were *ampullae*, or cast-metal flasks used for carrying holy oil and decorated with bas-reliefs. Moreover, according to historical accounts, early in 800, Charlemagne himself had received in Aachen an embassy sent by

³⁸ On this terminological distinction, see J. Fleming, H. Honour, and N. Pevsner, *The Penguin Dictionary of Architecture* (Harmondsworth: Penguin), s. v. “Porch,” “Portico,” 175-76.

³⁹ For several other pictorial and sculptural representations of the Constantinian Edicule, see Biddle, *Tomb of Christ*, 20-28; see also his figs. 16-26.

the Patriarch of Jerusalem, which also brought him precious relics from the Holy Sepulcher.⁴⁰ Among these prized souvenirs of the Holy Land, there was surely a pictorial representation of the Edicule (and likely looking like **Fig. 6**)—especially since, just six years later, Charlemagne issued the *denarius* (**Fig. 1-b**) with a representation of the very same structure, visually characterized by “a porch of four columns with a pediment and a gabled roof.”

In 806, this stylized edifice (**Fig. 1-b**) is now globally, and quite aptly, verbally declared to stand for “Christian Religion,” and its understood spiritual locus was, of course, “Jerusalem” (and so complementing a contemporaneous representation of “*Roma*” (**Fig. 2-b**). Moreover, the Syrian plaque generically replicating the Edicule (**Fig. 6**), which was itself long since taken to represent the “Christian temple” *par excellence*, also exactly repeats the distinctive arrangement later shown on the Carolingian coin (**Fig. 1-b**). In sum, both the Syrian panel and the Carolingian coin combine the same essential or typological features, that is, a symmetrical composition with a prominent vertical alignment, where a *Latin* cross, placed high upon the peak of the gabled roof, is echoed below, in the porch, by yet another cross with wedge-shaped, nearly equal, arms centrally placed between two sets of paired, free-standing columns, with simplified Corinthian capitals and emphasized bases.

In a broader context, this conclusion reached through close visual analysis complements the written records abundantly attesting to a Carolingian veneration of the Cross, and also, by implication, of devotion to the place of the martyrdom of Christ, with this known to have been located immediately adjacent to His tomb (**Figs. 1-b, 4-6**). According to the *Libri Carolini* commissioned by Charlemagne after 787, the Cross of the Lord (*Dominice crucis*), upon He was martyred nearly eight centuries earlier, emphatically “demands worship; this is the insignia of our realm [*nostri regis insigne*] This is the sign of our emperor

⁴⁰ Becher, *Charlemagne*, 12.

[*Hoc est signum nostri imperatoris*].”⁴¹ A larger context for this pious declaration is now provided by the historical evidence, as previously presented, demonstrating Charlemagne’s keen interest in the Constantinian Edicule at Jerusalem, over which he was granted sovereignty in 802; hence, “*Hoc est signum nostri imperatoris*.” Just like the “*Dominice crucis*,” Charlemagne would have obviously taken this symbolic structure, the Tomb of Christ, and as it was identified by *two* different representations of the “Cross of the Lord” (**Fig. 1-b**), to be a concrete sign of “*XPICTIANA RELIGIO*,” Christian religion itself.

But *which* “Cross” is the one shown centered within the entrance to the Edicule rising above (and symbolizing) the Tomb of Christ as shown on Charlemagne’s *denarius* (**Fig. 1-b**)? As piously inscribed “*Christiana Religio*,” it is, in short (and, I think, obviously so), none other than the famed “True Cross,” the most venerated of all Christian relics. Referring again to the ground-plan of the architectural complex commissioned by Constantine (**Fig. 5**), we see that in the south-west corner of the great atrium (“3”), or “Court before the Cross,” there was a erected a shrine (“4”) which was designated as the “Repository of the True Cross.” Placed just to the left side, or south of the entrance into the Edicule (“1”), this structure was also aligned with, and placed opposite to the Rock of Golgotha (“5”) directly east of it. In short, the *Vera Crux* and the Holy Sepulcher were laterally aligned in an intimate spatial relationship, and just as every pious pilgrim to Jerusalem would have observed with his or her very own eyes.

The devotion paid to the *Vera Crux* immediately after its miraculous discovery in 326 is attested to by the vivid account given by a pious pilgrim. Egeria, a lady from Spain who had visited the holy sites between 382 and 384, later described the rites of Good Friday as celebrated in Jerusalem as follows:

A table covered with a linen cloth is placed before the bishop [of Jerusalem]. The deacons are forming a circle around the table. A small, gold-plated silver box is brought in. It contains the wood of the Cross. It is opened, and the wood of

⁴¹ *Libri Carolini* (II, 28), as quoted in Fallon, “Imperial Symbolism,” 125 (but stating that “our emperor” means Christ, not Charlemagne).

the Cross is placed on the table together with the *Titulus* [with this inscription identifying “JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS”]. The Bishop, still sitting, seizes the ends of the holy wood. The deacons guard it, standing, for now the *Catechumens* and the faithful come up to the table, one by one. And so all the people go past the table; everyone bows and touches the wood and the inscription, first with the forehead, then with the eyes, and, after kissing the Cross, they move on. But no one touches it with their hands.

On one occasion, however—I do not know when—one of them bit off a piece of the Holy Wood and took it away by theft. And, for this reason, the deacons stand round and keep watch so that no one dares to do the same again. . . . It is impressive to see the way all the people are moved by these readings [recounting the sufferings of Christ during the Passion], and how they mourn. You could hardly believe how every single one of them weeps during the three hours, old and young alike, because of the manner in which the Lord suffered for it.⁴²

As we have read, the finding of the True Cross was commonly attributed to St. Helena, the mother of Constantine the Great.⁴³ In any event, until the twelfth century, the official guardians of the *Vera Crux* were the Greek Orthodox monks who tended the Holy Sepulcher, so explaining the *Greek* cross placed at the entrance of the Edicule (**Fig. 1-b**). It remained in their possession for centuries, that is, until the capture of Jerusalem on July 15, 1099, by the Latin, or Frankish, Crusaders. The Catholic Franks, however, continued with established tradition, and the *Vera Crux* remained on display near the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (that is, the Martyrion: see **Fig. 5**). As it turns out, this priceless relic was not the whole Cross, instead simply a part of it, the inscribed *titulus*, which had been set (presumably during the fourth century) within a huge, gem-encrusted crucifix sheathed in

⁴² Egeria, as cited in Thiede and d’Ancona, *The Quest for the True Cross*, 55, 59-60.

⁴³ Besides Rufinus, this claim was also advanced by (among others) St. Ambrose and John Chrysostom; for their statements, see Thiede and d’Ancona, *The Quest for the True Cross*, 20 (Ambrose), 74-75 (Chrysostom).

gold.⁴⁴ On high feast days, it would be taken from its repository-shrine set in the southwest corner of the “Court Before the Cross” (no. 4 in **Fig. 5**) in order to be carried in ceremonial processions through the streets of Jerusalem. It later also accompanied the Crusaders—*les croisés*—“the cross-bearers”—in all their major battles against the Moslems.

In this case, the Crusaders were following yet another talismanic precedent initially set into place by Constantine the Great. As Eusebius (*Vita Constantini*, I, 28-31) explained, on the eve of the battle at the Milvian Bridge in 312, which gave him possession over Rome and the Empire, and as Constantine later told his biographer,

He said that about noon, when the day was already beginning to decline, he saw with his own eyes the trophy of a cross of light in the heavens, appearing above the sun, and bearing this inscription: “CONQUER BY THIS [*EN TOUTO NIKA*].” At this sight, he himself was struck with amazement, and his whole army also, which followed him on this expedition, and witnessed the miracle. . . . And, while he continued to ponder and reason on its meaning, night suddenly came on; then, in his sleep, the Christ of God appeared to him with the same sign [of the Cross] which he had seen in the heavens, and [Christ] commanded him [Constantine] to make a likeness of that sign which and had seen in the heavens, and to use it as a safeguard in all [future] engagements with his enemies. . . .

It [the *labarum*] was made in the following manner. A long spear, overlaid with gold, formed the figure of the Cross by means of a transverse bar. On the top of the whole there was fixed a wreath of gold and precious stones; and within this, the symbol of the Savior’s name, two letters indicating the name of Christ by means of its initial letters, the letter P [*Rho*] being intersected by X [*Chi*] in its center. . . . From the crossbar of the spear, a cloth was suspended [which] bore a golden, half-length portrait of the pious emperor. . . . The emperor constantly made use of this sign of salvation as a safeguard against every adverse and hostile power, and he

⁴⁴ The large, gem-encrusted processional cross used to parade the *Vera Crux* through the streets of the Holy City is likely that one shown in a mosaic (ca. 405) placed in the apse of Santa Pudenziana in Rome and showing Christ enthroned in Jerusalem; see Krautheimer, *Rome*, fig. 36.

commanded that others similar to it should be carried at the head of all his armies.⁴⁵

Another version of the *labarum* episode is given in *De mortibus persecutorum* composed by Lactantius around 320, and this is a work that would have been known to Carolingian scholars. According to Lactantius, on the eve of the battle at the Milvian Bridge,

Constantine was warned in quiet to mark the celestial sign [*caeleste signum*] of God on his shields and thus to engage in battle. He did as he was ordered. He inscribed the name of Christ on the shields, using the initial letter X [that is, the *Chi*], crossed by the letter I with its top portion bent [so forming the *Rho*]. Armed with this sign, the army took the sword. It proceeded against the enemy without any commander and crossed the bridge. . . . When he [Constantine] was seen, the fighting grew more intense, and the hand of God was over the battle line. The Maxentian line was routed. . . . When this most bitter of wars was over, Constantine was received as emperor with the great rejoicing of the Senate.⁴⁶

Now to be entered into the historical record is yet another demonstrated fact. In short, Charlemagne's *denarius* directly alludes to Constantine's heaven-sent "sign" of, equally, "victory" (*Nike*) and "salvation," and such as that "celestial sign," the *labarum*, was specifically described by Eusebius and Lactantius. Since the Latin equivalent of "Christian" is, of course, correctly spelled *christiana*—and not "*XPICTIANA*" (as seen in **Fig. 1-b**)—then the first two letters in this apparently "misspelled" adjective—*XP*—are (instead) a *Chi* and a *Rho*. In *Greek*, these indicate, according to Eusebius, the canonic way to symbolize "the name of Christ by means of its initial letters." This observation complements, indeed confirms, the suggestion made here earlier that the *Greek* (versus Latin) cross placed between the paired columns in the Edicule (again as seen in **Fig. 1-b**) specifically

⁴⁵ Eusebius, as given in Schaff and Wace, *A Select Library*, 490-91.

⁴⁶ Lactantius, *Minor Works*, tr. M. F. McDonald, O.P. (Washington, DC: Catholic UP, 1965), 190-92.

identifies a building erected within the Byzantine Empire founded by Constantine. In this case, now we can definitively identify its geographical location as specifically situated in Jerusalem.

Centuries later, the chief reproach of the Moslems against the Christians was, in fact, that they were worshipers of the Cross, and so they rudely dismissed the infidel Catholic invaders as “the servants of a piece of wood,” that is, the *Vera Crux*. An Arab chronicler, Imad ed-Din (al-Imad)—who was the secretary to Saladin (Salah ed-Din), who finally took back Jerusalem from the Franks on 2 October 1187—explained the typical Moslem perception of the Crusaders’ strange obsession with the True Cross (the emphasis placed in the text is that of al-Imad):

It is before this [True] Cross, whether it is reclining or standing erect, that every Christian prostrates himself in prayer. They claim that it is made of the wood to which was fastened the God [Christ] whom they worship; that is why they venerate it and fall down at the sight of it. They have placed it [the fragment] within a golden reliquary; it is covered with pearls and jewels. They keep it ready for the day of the Passion, which they celebrate with solemn rites. When it is taken out in a procession, then escorted by priests and carried by their leaders, all Christians hasten to crowd around it.

It is permitted to no one to desert it, and the life of anyone who refuses to follow it is forfeit. The capture of this Cross is more important in their eyes than is that of their king; its loss is the greatest disaster which they have suffered in this battle [of Hattin, on July 4, 1187, when the True Cross was captured by the armies of Saladin]. . . .

For them, it is an absolute duty to adore it: *it is their God*; before it they bow their heads in the dust and bless it with their lips. They swoon before its apparition and dare not raise their eyes, and they mortify themselves in its presence, losing their very reason at the mere sight of it; they fall into ecstasy at the very beholding of it, and lament at the sight of it. They would lay down their lives for its sake, and they look to it for their salvation. They make other crosses--*in its image*—and address their homage and their oaths to it in the temples of their cult.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ al-Imad, as quoted in F. Gabrieli, ed., *Chroniques arabes des Croisades* (Paris: Sindbad, 1977), 163-64.

Following this graphic evocation of the equally ecstatic and mournful psychological effects wrought by the *Vera Crux* upon the strange European interlopers, al-Imad next reports the words supposedly spoken in 1187 by the devout and fanatical defenders of the sacred place where it was kept, the Holy Sepulcher:

“It is here,” the Franks said, “that our heads must fall and our souls must go out with our blood; we are going to die here by the sword. Attacked again and again [by the Moslems], although covered with wounds, we shall have the patience to endure, and we will lay down our lives in order to save the home of our faith [Jerusalem]. It is here, in our Holy Sepulcher, where we are to be born again; here, our ghosts will flit and moan with sincere penitence. . . . Here is [the focus of] our burning desire and the place for payment of our debt. Our honor lies in paying homage to this holy place, and our salvation depends upon its salvation. . . . If we abandon it, shame will be upon us, and we shall only merit dishonor. . . . Here are present Our Lord [Jesus] and Our Lady [Mary].” . . .

And they added, “In this place, the Messiah was crucified and the victim was immolated at the sacrifice; here was divinity made incarnate, God made man, and here the mingling [of the two, incarnate and divine, natures] was completed; here the Cross was set up, and light came down and dissipated the darkness, and here humanity was united with the divine hypostasis, and existence with nonexistence.” . . . And [concludes al-Imad] to these lies, which are the object of their [Christian] cult, they had added the illusions which turn men away from truth, and so they cried, “We shall die before the Tomb of Our Lord and, rather than lose it, we shall first lose our very own lives, because we are fighting for Him [Christ] as well as for ourselves. Should we let ourselves become guilty of abandoning this Tomb, of suffering them [the Moslems] to take it [the Holy Sepulcher] away from us, and so allowing them to ravish that which we [first] seized out of their hands [in 1099]?”⁴⁸

In conclusion, for Charlemagne and his devout contemporaries, besides the *Vera Crux*, unquestionably the very meaning of “Christian Religion” was best physically represented

⁴⁸ al-Imad, 174-76.

by the Holy Sepulcher of Christ in Jerusalem, and specifically in the shape of the *Aedicula* that had been initially erected by Charlemagne's designated imperial role-model, the Emperor Constantine the Great. This conclusion also fits the written records abundantly attesting to a Carolingian devotion to the True Cross.⁴⁹ Among these, a notable example is the text for *De laudibus Sancta Crucis*; composed by Hrabanus Maurus around 830, these "Praises of the Holy Cross" also specifically celebrated Louis the Pious (ruled 814-840), the son of Charlemagne and the second Carolingian emperor, as a "New Constantine."⁵⁰ Moreover, the Carolingian chroniclers had also emphasized a complementary veneration of the site of the martyrdom of Christ, with this known by them to have been located immediately adjacent to His tomb (see **Fig. 5**), and just as Alculph's account makes perfectly clear.

Finally, and as Einhard had explicitly stated, Charlemagne had specifically dispatched emissaries bringing pious "offerings to [both] the most Holy Sepulcher of our Lord and Savior and to the place of His resurrection," the Anastasis. Indeed, he further states that this was a holy site, in sum, the holiest site in all of Christendom, that had, in fact, been directly "placed under Charlemagne's own jurisdiction." Hence, Charlemagne would have obviously taken this symbolic structure—his new territorial acquisition: the Tomb of Christ, and as physically identified by two complementary, Greek and Latin, representations of the "True Cross" (and as shown in **Fig. 1-b**)—to be a concrete sign of "*XPICTIANA RELIGIO*," Christian religion itself in all of its universal, meaning both Greek and Latin, connotations.

⁴⁹ For more on the Carolingian cult of the *Vera Crux*, see Celia Chazelle, *The Crucified God in the Carolingian Era: Theology and Art of Christ's Passion* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001).

⁵⁰ This complete text of *De laudibus Sancta Crucis* is given in J-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologia Latina: Cursus completus* (Paris: Garnier, 1844-79), v. 107, columns 139-265.

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Bust reliquary of Charlemagne, ca. 1350
Made to house the head of Charlemagne
Cathedral Treasury, Aachen

William of Auvergne and Popular Demonology

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Theologian and bishop of Paris during St. Louis' early reign, William of Auvergne (d. 1249) aimed in his life and writings to combat the myriad threats he perceived as facing Christianity. The early thirteenth century saw many potential competitors to official doctrines concerning the natural and supernatural worlds—Arabic philosophy imported into the universities, heretical attacks on the institutional church, and persistent folk beliefs and practices. William attributed these challenges to an underlying demonic conspiracy directed against humankind. This paper examines William's treatment of popular beliefs on the Wild Hunt, a mysterious congregation of spirits, and related beliefs about female spirits and night terrors. William applies to these legends his learned conceptions about the natural and supernatural worlds. He argues that although God might cause or encourage the morally salutary visions of the male riders of the Wild Hunt, visions of female spirits such as Lady Abundia represent a demonic ploy to secure the idolatrous worship of human women. William's treatment of phenomena thus depends heavily on his moral evaluation of the groups witnessing and accepting them to the marked detriment of women and their faith.

Introduction

William of Auvergne, theologian and a bishop of Paris from 1228 to d. 1249, was in his day a major political figure and an important theologian. A master of theology from the burgeoning University

of Paris and canon of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, William sought and won papal support to become Bishop of Paris in 1228. Thereafter, he became a pillar of St. Louis' court during the young king's regency and early reign. He strongly supported central royal authority against the regional nobility who sought to dismember recent Capetian gains, and even supported the king against institutions such as the University of Paris, which sought greater independence. During the student revolt of 1229, for example, William acted in defense of the royal provost's violation of student's clerical privilege.¹

During the thirteenth century, the importation of Arabic knowledge, the profusion of heresies, and the development of the universities fundamentally altered Latin European intellectual culture. William read widely and drew heavily on a variety of these new sources of knowledge. William's works, especially his *De universo* (or "On the universe"), hold an important place in history of theology and of science. Because of William's early date in the development of scholastic theology, his views have special importance in understanding the adoption and adaptation of Aristotelian natural philosophy. In questioning, confirming, or condemning the various physical and theological beliefs of his day, William participated in a larger scholastic project to categorize and control the beliefs of the population. He aimed the first part of his comprehensive *De universo* against the Cathars in the only recently, and incompletely subdued territories of Languedoc. He

¹ This paper represents an earlier version of one of the chapters of my book on William's demonology, currently in submission to the Edwin Mellen Press. My thanks to my dissertation advisor, Professor of History Alan E. Bernstein of the University of Arizona, for his extensive assistance and advice throughout the production of this paper, and to Professor Emeritus of English Charles Smith of Colorado State University, for his comments on an earlier draft of the paper given at the 2004 RMMRA conference in Durango, CO. Any errors or omissions are mine.

issued the University of Paris' condemnation of the Talmud in 1248, and he condemned popular beliefs he considered idolatrous.²

In chapter 2.3.24 of his *De universo*, William turns his scrutiny on popular phenomena related to women or to female spirits. The foremost item of discussion is the ghostly army of dead warriors, known variously to historians and folklorists as the Furious Host, or the Wild Hunt. William does not firmly categorize the Wild Hunt as either ghostly or demonic but seems to believe that whatever it is, it serves an edifying moral purpose. The Wild Hunt's apparitions are strongly associated with female spirits, such as the so-called "Diana" of the *canon episcopali*, or with living witches' ecstatic nocturnal flights. William himself mentions such spirits as the Lady Abundia, *lamiae* and *stryges*, or the terrible Ephialtes. William excoriates the popular veneration or propitiation of any of these spirits as idolatry, and blames the practice on old women and their tales. He insists that female spirits in particular are demonic, and that popular legend is nothing but their ruse to secure illicit worship. William dismisses some of their reputed powers as impossible and sharply subordinates others to divine permission. By discussing spirits, William hopes to discourage in his readers from any veneration of demonic forces, and to counter any overestimation of their power to act independently of God's will.

² The standard bibliography of William is Noël Valois, *Guillaume d'Auvergne, évêque de Paris (1228-1249): Sa vie et ses ouvrages* (Paris, 1880; rpt. W. C. Brown Reprint Library: Dubuque, Iowa, 1963). See also Ernest A. Moody, "William of Auvergne and His Treatise *De Anima*," (1933), reprinted in *Studies in Medieval Philosophy, Science and Logic* (Berkeley: University of California Press: 1975); Franco Morenzoni and Jean-Yves Tilliette, eds., *Autour de Guillaume d'Auvergne (+1249): Études réunies*, ed. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); Gilbert Dahan and Élie Nicholas, ed., *Le brûlement du Talmud à Paris: 1242-4* (Paris Les Éditions du Cerf, 1999).

Goddesses, Nightmare, and the Dead

William begins his discussion with the Wild Hunt. Belief in such nocturnal gatherings of spirits, presumably of ancient Germanic origin, is well attested in a variety of sources throughout the Middle Ages, from the ride of the Valkyries, to Hellequin's Wild Hunt. The Wild Hunt consists of two primary elements—the congregation of spirits, and their leader. The identity of the Wild Hunt's leader varies considerably; indeed, the fact that the Wild Hunt has a leader often seems more important than who it is. The leader is sometimes a male, such as Odin, or Arthur, or (perhaps most often) the figure Hellequin, whose name, obscure in origin, also appears as "Herlathing," "Harlequin," and other variants.³ A marginal note in the thirteenth-century Vatican Codex Lat. 848 of *De Universo* identifies the subject of William's discussion as "*de familia hellequini*."⁴ In other legends, however, the leader is a female spirit such as Herodias, Diana, or the Valkyries. Perhaps the most famous source of Hunt lore is the *Canon episcopi*. Originally a tenth-century work of Regino of Prüm, and then

³ See, for example, Claude Lecouteux and Philippe Marcq, eds. and trans., *Les Esprits et Les Morts* (Librairie Honoré Champion: Paris, 1990), 93-100, and Claude Lecouteux, *Chasses Fantastiques et Cohorts de la Nuit* (Imago, Paris: 1999), 103-105.

⁴ *Vaticanus latinus*. 848 CD f. 350v. The folio numbering on the original mss is either illegible or cropped from the CD image. Therefore the number refers to the folios extant in the CD. For more on Harlequin's hunt see Otto Driesen, *Der Ursprung des Harlekin* (Dissertation, Kaiser Wilhelms Universität zu Strassburg, 1903); Alfred Endter, *Die Sage vom wilden Jäger und von der wilden Jagd: Studien über den deutschen Dämonenglauben* (Dissertation Schmalhalden, 1933); H. M. Flashdieck, "Harlekin: Germanischer Mythos in Romanischer Wandlung," in *Anglia* 61 (1937), 225-340; Lecouteux, *Chasses Fantastiques*; Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*, 89-102; Karl Meisen, *Die Sagen vom Wütenden Heer und Wilden Jäger*, *Volkskundliche Quellen* 1 (Munster: Aschendorffsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1935); and Hans Plischke, *Die Sage vom Wilden Heere im Duetchen Volke* (Diss. Leipzig, 1914).

incorporated in Burchard of Worm's *Corrector*, this canon (which would become so important for the history of witchcraft) decried women who believed that they flew through the air with "Diana." In this case women form the body of the Wild Hunt; the name of the leader, "Diana," probably masks some other, non-Latin, deity.⁵

By the eleventh century, evidence for the belief in many sorts of ghostly troops abounds.⁶ The same central motifs recur with various explanations and elaborations: ghostly riders equipped with military apparatus, who may wish the living well or ill, but who are always mysterious and terrifying. In some of the tales, the Wild Hunt's nature remains unexplained. Giraldus Cambriensis (d. 1223) recounts how a ghostly army attacked a living one under the command of Robert Fitz-Stephens.⁷ In Rodulfus Glaber's *Five Books of History* (c. 980-1046), a ghostly army serves as an omen of the impending death of their only witness.⁸ The authors of other tales variously depict the Wild Hunt as purgatorial souls seeking release, as the damned playing out

⁵ Burchard of Worms, *Decretorum libri viginti* 11:1, in *Patrologiae cursus completus, Series latina*, ed J. P. Migne (Paris, 1844-55, reprinted at <http://pld.chadwyck.com>), 140: col. 831-833C. See also, for example, Carlo Ginzburg, *Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches' Sabbath*, trans. Raymond Rosenthal (New York: Penguin, 1991), 89-90, Lecouteux, *Chasses Fantastiques*, 13-14, 115; and Jean-Claude Schmitt, *Ghosts in the Middle Ages: The Living and the Dead in Medieval Society*, trans. Teresa Lavender Fagan (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 26.

⁶ Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 93-121. Many of these stories appear in translation in Andrew Joynes, *Medieval Ghost Stories: An Anthology of Miracles, Marvels and Prodigies* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2001), and Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*.

⁷ Giraldus Cambriensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: The Conquest of Ireland* 1.4, ed. and trans. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1978), 38-9.

⁸ Rodulfus Glaber, *Historiarum libri quinque* 5:6, ed. and trans. John France (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 222-3.

their punishment and warning others of their fate, as terrifying demons, or even as troops of the saved and blessed dead. Otloh of St. Emmeram tells of two brothers who encounter their father in a ghostly procession. He laments the plundering of monasteries that led to his posthumous punishment and orders them to make repayment. When they retort that he doesn't look so badly off, he tells them that his armor and equipment are burning hot and offers one of them his spear as proof. It proves so hot that the son cannot hold it. When they have a change of heart, their father is immediately freed from torment.⁹

Orderic Vitalis tells an even more elaborate story in which a priest encounters an enormous army, which he recognizes from other accounts as belonging to "Herlequin." Not only does it include tormented souls but also monsters and demons of many descriptions. When he tries to steal some of the procession's horses, four dead knights threaten him, and his own dead brother, a member of the procession, rescues him. Orderic's brother explains his own torment and his expected release.¹⁰ In a story recorded by Walter Map, the Briton King Herla travels to the otherworld to fulfill a vow, and, upon returning, he and his retinue find they have been gone for two hundred years. They cannot dismount without turning to dust, and so they ride for centuries waiting for the lapdog the king of the otherworld has given them to jump down. Map later equates Herla with "Herlathingus" or Hellequin.¹¹

William himself seems to envision a traditionally martial Wild Hunt. He describes the phenomenon as "substances

⁹ Otloh of St. Emmeram, *Liber visionem* 7, ed. Paul Gerhard Schmidt (Weimar: Herman Böhaus Nachfolger, 1989), 67-69.

¹⁰ Orderic Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica* 8.17, ed. and trans. Marjorie Chibnall (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 4:226-51.

¹¹ Walter Map, *De Nugis Curialium* 11, ed. and trans. M. R. James, revised by C. N. L. Brooke and R. A. B. Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1983), 26-31. The Hunt is also mentioned in 4.13, 370-1.

appearing in the likeness of horsemen and warriors.”¹² The number of figures involved range in quantity but sometimes are so numerous that they seem to “cover mountains and valleys.”¹³ As William describes it, the Wild Hunt’s participants engage principally fighting amongst themselves or against other similar armies, and William prominently and frequently mentions their *hastiludia* (spear games) or jousting.¹⁴

Although William does not mention a leader of the Wild Hunt directly, I suspect that the connection to female spirits and female followers is the most important one, as the rest of the same chapter is filled with examples of female spirits and their powers. Soon after he introduces the problem of the Wild Hunt, William describes spirits who “appear in the likeness of girls or of matrons in white womanly garments in woods, and dark places, and the hoary trees”¹⁵ and in houses. These other female spirits about whom William writes are perhaps not so divorced from the question of the Wild Hunt as might at first appear. Among them are the Ladies Abundia and Satia and their retainers, a wandering troop that enters human habitations to receive offerings of food and drink,¹⁶ but in other sources they also patronize witches and night-

¹² “*de substantiis apparentibus in similitudine equitantium & bellatorum.*” William of Auvergne, *De Universo* 2.3.24, *Opera omnia* (Paris, 1674, reprinted Frankfurt am Main, 1963), 1:1065bB.

¹³ “*Dico, quod in aliis locis etiam fiunt, cum videantur exercitus ibi nocturni multitudine sua operire montes, & valles.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aA.

¹⁴ For more on this unusual word, see “*Hastiludum*,” in Du Cange, *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis* (Paris, 1688, reprinted Graz: Akademische Druck-Verlagsanstalt, 1954), 4:174.

¹⁵ “*quas faciunt interdum in nemoris, & locis amoenis, & frondoris arboribus, ubi apparent in similitudine puellarum, aut matronarum ornatu muliebri, & candido.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aG.

¹⁶ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aG-aH.

riders. For example, Jean de Meun's continuation of the *Romance of the Rose* mocks those people, especially "foolish old women"¹⁷ who imagine "that they become sorcerers at night and go roaming with Lady Abundance." The poet derides their claim that they leave their bodies behind and travel in the spirit so that doors and locks cannot hinder them. Do they die and return to life regularly, in defiance of the unique and single resurrection at the last judgment?¹⁸ Abundia's name, perhaps that of a Roman goddess, has sometimes been connected with Herodias. Herodias in this case is probably not the Herodias who engineered the death of John the Baptist's death through her daughter Salome's dance, but some goddess similar or identical to the Germanic "Holde" to whom the name of the Biblical figure became attached.¹⁹

William also mentions other spirits associated with the night, with death, and with women, such as *lamiae* and *stryges* believed to kill infants, or the Ephialtes, a form of night-hag believed to injure sleepers. All three creatures have similar attributes. The Latin words *lamiae* and *stryges* originally referred to creatures from ancient Roman folklore. Both seem to have been cannibalistic women or female spirits, believed to eat the flesh and blood of young children. "*Lamia*" designated a sorceress or witch in general, but in particular one that sucked the blood of children. A "*strix*" (or "*striga*") seems to have been a similar sort of

¹⁷ "*foles vieilles*" Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meun, *Le Roman de la Rose*, ed. Félix Lecoy (Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1966-70), ll. 18457-18468. Trans. Francis Horgan, *Romance of the Rose* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 285.

¹⁸ "*Don maintes genz par leur folies/Cuident estre par nuit estries,/Erranz aveques dame Abonde.*" De Lorris and de Meun, *Roman*, ll. 18395-18440. Horgan, trans., *Romance*, 284.

¹⁹ See Ginzburg, *Ecstacies*, 89-92; Jacob Grimm, *Teutonic Mythology*, trans. James Steven Stallybrass (George Bell and Sons, 1883, reprinted Dover: New York, 1966), 1:283-88; Lecouteux, *Chasses fantastiques*, 13-25.

vampiric creature that preyed on infants, and was sometimes associated with owls.²⁰

Some Medieval sources depict *lamiae* and *stryges* as evil spirits, other sources speak of them as human magicians magically enabled to perform evil deeds. For example, Gervase of Tilbury hesitates between classifying *lamiae* as spirits, following St Augustine, or as witches, following his popular sources. According to the latter, Gervase reports that:

It is the wretched lot of some men and women to cover great distances in a swift nocturnal flight; they enter houses, torment people in their sleep, and inflict distressing dreams on them, so causing them to cry out. Apparently they also eat, and light lamps, take people's bones apart, put them back together again in the wrong order, and move babies from place to place.²¹

Lecouteux and Marcq argue that *stryges* became less demonic and more human with the passage of time,²² a part of the greater trend towards anthropomorphism in the Middle Ages.

²⁰ See Richard Gordon, "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic," 192-3, 216-7, in Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, eds., *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999), and Georg Luck, "Witches and Sorcerers in Classical Literature," in Ankarloo and Clark, *Witchcraft: Greece and Rome*, 130-1.

²¹ "[H]ec esse feminarum ac virorum quorundam infortunia, quod de nocte celerrimo uolatu regiones transcurrant, domos intrant, dormientes opprimunt, ingerunt sompnia graua, quibus planctus excitant. Sed et comedere videntur et lucernas accendere, Ossa hominum dissoluere, dissolutaque nonnumquam cum ordinis turbatione compaginare, sanguinem humanum bibere, et infants de loco ad locum mutare." Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia imperialia: Recreation for an Emperor* 3.86, ed. and trans. S. E. Banks and J. W. Binns (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 722-25. Gervase also mentions *lamiae* in connection with the water spirits *draci*. See *Otia*, 3.85, 716-22, and the analysis in Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*, 19-24.

²² Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*, 29.

The Ephialtes, bearing the same name as the Greek Titan in charge of sleep, was a variety of demon believed to sit on the chest, causing sleep, paralysis, or death.²³ In folklore today such spirits are usually female—for example, such figures as night-hags and night-mares, and I can only presume the same for William's time. Attacks of Ephialtes, like the *lamiae*, were by the thirteenth century often attributed to medical causes rather than demons.²⁴

I surmise that William includes *lamiae*, *stryges* and Ephialtes in his discussion because they are female, and hence associated with the Wild Hunt and with Abundia. Many of the activities *lamiae* undertake in Gervase of Tilbury's account, particularly the lighting of lamps and eating of food, greatly resemble those of Abundia and Satia in William's.

The Nature of the Wild Hunt

The entities in the Wild Hunt present William with several thorny problems. First, what exactly are these creatures? If, on the one hand, they are dead humans, certainly they are not saints, but then why are they not in hell, or at least purgatory? If, on the other hand, they are angels or demons, what can their appearance in this manner represent?

William's position is not entirely clear, for he voices many possible theories, as he seems to proceed haphazardly from argument to argument. He alternately suggests that Wild Hunt's manifestations are (a) hallucinations, (b) demonic deceptions (c) illusions that seem to present the punishments of dead, (d) dead

²³ See, for example, Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, revised ed. (New York, Penguin, 1960) 35.3. The giant Ephialtes in the *Divine Comedy*, noteworthy for having rebelled against Jupiter, presumably reflects Dante's classical interest in the Titans. See *The Inferno* 31.91-96.

²⁴ See Gervase of Tilbury, *Otia* 3.86, 722-5; Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*, 28-9; John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, trans. and ed. by Clemens C. J. Web (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1909; reprinted New York: Arno Press, 1979) 2.15, 429B-C; and *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069aC.

souls undergoing purgatorial punishment on earth, or (e) visions of dead souls in purgatory. The only alternative he seems to completely reject is (f) bodily return—that the Wild Hunt consists of dead people returned bodily to life. Ultimately, William seems to imply that most Wild Hunt sightings are either (c) illusions or (e) visions of souls in purgatory, but he does not state this conclusively and leaves open the possibility of explanations (a) hallucinations, (b) demonic deceptions, and (d) dead souls undergoing purgatorial punishment on earth. Such confusion resembles other medieval accounts of ghosts, which seem caught somewhere between the purgatorial, the damned, and the demonic.²⁵

Explanation (a), hallucinations, is a comparatively minor affair, not integrated into the main text. In its favor William notes in passing that all sorts of “visions and fantastic apparitions . . . are caused by melancholic sickness in many people, especially women,”²⁶ and suggests that people dream of recent events or of things important to them “without any participation of evil spirits.” Men, for example, are especially inclined to dream of warfare.²⁷ William does not long consider this theory, devoting most of his space to other explanations.

At various points in chapter 2.3.24, William seems to categorize the Wild Hunt as some form of demonic illusion—explanation (b), demonic deceptions. Discussing the jousting of the Wild Hunt, and their inability to render real wounds to each other, he concludes that “they are not prohibited by impossibility from presenting such illusions and tricks [*ludificationes*] to men,”

²⁵ See Schmitt, *Ghosts*, 93-121, esp. 119-121 where he discusses William of Auvergne.

²⁶ “*quia multae de visionibus istis, & apparitionibus fantasticis, ex morbo melancholico in multis fiunt, sed in mulieribus maxime.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bH.

²⁷ “*absque ulla operatione malignorum spiritum.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bH.

and notes that among other manifestations, “the tricks of demons sometimes appear in the likeness of dead men, only truly terrible in size, and bearing weapons and horses.”²⁸ Indeed, the very enormity of the figures might indicate a demonic origin. Thus, demons could account for some, or all, of the Wild Hunt’s appearances.

William notes that “evil spirits” appear more frequently at crossroads than in other places. Crossroads are traditionally a haunt of ghosts and evil spirits of all sorts. For example, William’s approximate contemporary, Caesarius of Heisterbach, describes how a knight witnesses the summoning of a devil at a crossroads.²⁹ William’s explanation in this instance seems to echo popular belief, for he holds that:

Truly, crossroads have less spiritual and bodily cleanliness on account of the crowds of people there. Fields, by contrast, are very pure in comparison with public roads and crossroads, as was earlier said. Indeed, in them (that is in public roads and crossroads) robbers and brigands and all manner of evil-doers gather by night.³⁰

²⁸ “*Dico igitur in his, quia non sunt prohibiti impossibilitate, quin tales illusiones, & ludificationes faciant hominibus, & modos effectionis earum iam feci te scire in praecedentibus, & hic est unus modus apparitionum istarum, videlicet quia ludificationes daemonum interdum non solummodo sunt in hac manerie, ut apparent, in similitudine hominum mortuorum, sed apparent terribiles magnitudine, armis, & equis, apparent etiam cum facibus, seu faculis, seu aliis ignibus.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aG.

²⁹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus miraculorum* 5.2, ed. by Joseph Strange (Cologne/Bonn/Brussels, 1851), 1:267-78.

³⁰ “*Compita vero propter frequentiam hominum minus habent munditiae & spiritualis, & corporalis. Agri namque mundissimi, ut ita dicatur, comparatione viarum publicarum & compitiorum. In his enim, hoc est in viis publicis, & compitis, de nocte conveniunt latrones & raptores, omniaque genera maleficorum.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aA.

William notes that the Wild Hunt's warriors cannot touch people who seek refuge in fields. He recounts that once a man encountering such an army fled into a field, whereupon it passed him by, and left him in peace.³¹ William explains this by saying:

in the opinion of the many, fields rejoice in the protection of the creator because of their utility to men. Thus, evil spirits cannot enter them and likewise do not have the power to harm people therein.³²

The motif of the protective field recalls the miracles attributed to female saints associated with the harvest. In these tales, the saint, fleeing a hostile force, often a male rider, takes refuge in a newly sown field, whose miraculous growth tricks her pursuer into abandoning the hunt. Pamela Berger in *The Goddess Obscured* speculates that these tales reflect a tradition of pre-Christian goddess worship, whose aspect and stories the saints have assumed.³³

Thus, it is perhaps significant that William also notes (and rejects) another explanation for the Wild Hunt's inability to enter fields—that the popular veneration of “Ceres” (the Roman grain goddess) protects the fields.³⁴ Whether the goddess in question was actually Ceres or some other deity whom William calls by a Roman name, his characterization of her worship as “idolatry” suggests that not only is the Wild Hunt demonic, but also so is the

³¹ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aA.

³² “propter quod inolevit opinio apud multos, agros gaudere protectione creatoris propter utilitatem hominum & hac de causa non esse accessum malignis spiritibus ad eos, neque potestatem nocendi propter hanc causam hominibus existentibus in eis.” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aA-aB.

³³ See Pamela Berger, *The Goddess Obscured: Transformation of the Grain Protectress from Goddess to Saint*, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), esp. 49-76.

³⁴ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aB-C. See also Nancy Caciola, “Wraiths Revenants and Ritual in Medieval Culture,” *Past and Present* 156 (August, 1996), 3-45, esp. 17, 26-7.

power that “protects” people from it. It also reinforces the link between female spirits and the Wild Hunt in the underlying folklore. Not only does a goddess sometimes lead the Wild Hunt, but another one also protects travelers from it.

As for explanation (f), that of bodily return, William discusses the possible resurrection or return of the dead near the end of the chapter. He refers to tales of the dead attacking the living. Such deeds, he says, are most often attributed to bodies that were buried mostly or wholly intact, or at least those that have not yet rotted away.³⁵ William denies that such bodily revenants can exist. Blessed souls would not wish to return from heaven, and those suffering hellish or purgatorial punishment would not be free to do so, even with the assistance of evil spirits. There will be no individual resurrections before the general one.³⁶ William attributes the murders supposedly done by these revenants to demonic power and artifice. According to William, spirits can “paint” any sort of illusion into human minds; therefore, they can create the illusion of a dead man’s weaponry attacking people. Nevertheless, they cannot kill people at “the whim and desire of their evil” but only when, and if, God permits them.³⁷ Therefore, even the wounds they seem to make with physical weaponry could be illusory.

William considers two examples from scripture and Christian literature that seem to contradict his point: one of a knight (or soldier) whom Jesus raised from the dead at Mary’s request, the other the prophet Samuel, revived by the “Pythoness” at King Saul’s command. In the former case, William argues that Jesus could not refuse his mother. In the second, he denies that the dead man returned bodily, since only God could perform a true

³⁵ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069bB-C.

³⁶ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069bB-C.

³⁷ “*pro voto, & libito malignitatis suae*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069bD-1070aE.

resurrection. In this latter case, a demon must have assumed the form of the prophet,³⁸ and here William's interpretation seems entirely traditional. Most medieval commentators presumed the ghost of Samuel to be a demon in disguise.³⁹

William considers favorably the idea that the Wild Hunt might be composed of ghosts who have not yet left the world of the living, and that those who have died untimely and violently might return as ghosts. His account of such beliefs strangely conflates Platonic doctrines and Christian beliefs about Purgatory. He mentions that Plato spoke of people, who having died violently before completing their natural lifespan, wander about their tombs.⁴⁰ When their time is fulfilled, they return to the appropriate star. William connects this to appearances of the Wild Hunt:

The vulgar call them the "sword-slain" (*disgladiatos*), because those who were killed by arms appear either alone or especially in the same army, and they are also believed to do their penitence in arms since they sinned under arms.⁴¹

These dead men often return to their friends to "reveal these things, such as the punishments that they suffer, and the causes of their punishment."⁴² William connects this observation to his theory of

³⁸ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1: 1069bC.

³⁹ See Kieckhefer, *Magic in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 33.

⁴⁰ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aC.

⁴¹ "*qui armis interempti sunt, disgladiatos eos vulgus vocat, creduntur autem poenitentiam agere in armis quoniam in armis peccaverunt.*" *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aC.

⁴² "*Ipsi etiam, qui sic apparent prout fama est, ista saepe revelaverunt, videlicet & poena, quas patiuntur, & poenarum causus.*" *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aD.

Purgatory, in which the place of punishment is “earthly,” and the souls expiate unfinished penance.⁴³ William speculates that although the dead are usually confined to places of punishment or reward, the likeness of those in purgatorial places of punishment may appear for the edification of sinners. Not only will those who see visions of punished souls refrain from violence, but so too will those who only hear of such visions.⁴⁴

But after giving this argument in favor of (d), dead people undergoing earthly purgatorial punishment, William goes on to state that not all of these spectacles need be of the souls themselves. He argues that normally it would be impossible for purgatorial souls to manipulate the spears and other physical objects associated with their punishment. Once again, it could be only their likeness that appears. William compares the situation to dreams, in which symbols demonstrate real truths.⁴⁵ He does not deny the moral lesson to be derived from the Wild Hunt’s appearances, only its physical presence. Thus he seems to be arguing here for explanation (c) illusions—that sometimes the Wild Hunt appears as a “fantastic illusion” for the edification of sinners, without involving actual dead souls.

Yet William also claims that in visions of this kind God sometimes suspends the normal laws governing spirits. As evidence William cites a famous examples of purgatorial punishment—the two similar accounts of bathhouse ghosts from Gregory the Great’s *Dialogues*. In the first, Gregory recounts how

⁴³“*In eis quoque, quae praecesserunt, didicisti, quia locus purgaorii, hoc est, purgationi animarum congruus, & etiam deputatus, terrena habitatio est.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aD-bA. Jacques Le Goff describes William’s as one of the first fully-elaborated theories of purgatory. See Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, translated by Arthur Goldhammer (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 241-245.

⁴⁴ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067aD-1068aF.

⁴⁵ *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1067bB.

the ghost of Paschasius the deacon appeared in the Roman baths. When questioned by a bishop, Paschasius replied that he was being punished for obstinately supporting the losing candidate in an ecclesiastical election. After the bishop prayed for him, Paschasius was released from his punishment. In the second account, a priest encounters a man in the bath who offers to serve as his attendant. When the priest attempts to give his benefactor an Eucharistic loaf, the attendant protests that he cannot eat it, for he is dead. God has condemned him to serve in the bath on account of his sins. He asks for the priest to intercede with God for him, and when it is done, he vanishes.⁴⁶ William's reference seems to be to the second story, as he clearly conceives of the ghost as performing menial physical tasks and discusses how they could be undertaken.

William argues that ordinarily the bathhouse ghost would be unable to gather wood or manipulate the bathhouse fire, and that God would not punish a soul by ordering it to do the impossible. Yet Gregory, clearly a great man, believed that the occurrence was a true vision, and his word should not be lightly doubted. William concludes that only God's power (*nisi virtute creatoris*) made the ghost able to manipulate the wood and fire.⁴⁷ Here William seems to be arguing in favor of (e), a vision of a soul undergoing punishment in purgatory.

Given the number of explanations that William presents, it is impossible to determine exactly how he would divide the proportion of the Wild Hunt's appearances between various explanations, or if he instead would attribute them to a single cause. Yet judging from the placement of his arguments, and their general development, William seems to favor explanations in which the Wild Hunt serves an edifying moral purpose—that is,

⁴⁶ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067bH-1068aE. See also Gregory the Great, *Dialogi* 4.42 and 4.57, in *Dialogues*, ed. Adalbert de Vogüé, trans. Paul Antin (Paris: Editions du cerf, 1978-1980), 3:150-157, 184-195.

⁴⁷ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1067bC-1068aE.

explanations (c), illusions, and (e), visions of souls in purgatory. Although (c), “*illusiones fantasticae*,” present a false picture and (e), “*visiones*,” a true one, they seem to have a similar moral effect on the viewer. Presumably, this is because both occur by divine permission and as part of the same design. Even explanation (b), demonic deception, would fit loosely into this framework, since the demons performing the illusions would be acting with divine permission and for divine purposes.

Idolatry and the Obvious Wickedness of Female Spirits

Demons and idolatry go together inseparably in William’s thought; he rarely mentions the one without some reference to the other. William argues elsewhere that in the pre-Christian past demons instituted pagan worship, just as in his own time they misdirect sorcerers into venerating them by falsely exaggerating their power and scope of action, and encourage among the unlearned all manner of contemporary superstition.⁴⁸ Church leaders during the antique, late-antique and early medieval periods often argued for the identity of demons and pagan gods; perhaps the most famous example being in Martin of Braga’s advice on converting pagans.⁴⁹ William simply takes this argument and applies it to the popular veneration of his own time, which he sees as a type of latter-day idolatry.

In his discussion of the Wild Hunt, William levels the charge that old women are especially likely to preserve and spread idolatry. He despairs, it seems, of educating the populace out of false beliefs that “foolishness [*desipientia*] . . . nearly ineradicably

⁴⁸ See especially William’s discussion of idolatry in *De universo* 2.3.8, 1: 1033bD–1034aE, and *De legibus* 28, *Opera omnia*, 1:67aC–77aB.

⁴⁹ Martin of Braga, *De Correctione Rusticorum* 7, ed. and trans Mario Naldini in *Contro Le Superstizioni: Catachesi al Popolo* (Florence: Nardini Editori, 1991), 48–51.

fix in women's minds"⁵⁰ and laments " . . . such foolishness of old women has held fast to almost all vestiges of idolatry, has retained them, and continues ceaselessly to promote them."⁵¹

William fears that, unlike the Wild Hunt, whose appearance often has a salutary effect, female spirits in particular will lead people into idolatry. He reports that people frequently leave their doors unlocked and food and drink exposed in their homes as an offering to the Lady Abundia and other wandering spirits, and do not lock or bar their homes at such locations.⁵² In return, Abundia "is thought to cause an abundance of good times in those houses which she frequents."⁵³ William insists that the spirits do not actually eat or drink the offerings left for them, but they encourage the practice, because it draws worship towards them and away from God. Knowingly or not, Abundia's devotees worship demons. William condemns such practices, saying:

it is manifest that the crime of idolatry is committed when food and drink are willingly offered to evil spirits because they are thought to come to a place and eat there.⁵⁴

William also reports that people placate

other evil spirits which the vulgar call *stryges* and *lamias*, that appear during the night in houses in which infants are being

⁵⁰ "*vetularum autem nostrarum desipientia opinionem istam mirabiliter disseminavit, & provexit, atque animis mulierum aliarum pene irradicabiliter infixit.*" *De universo*, *Opera omnia*, 2.3.24, 1:1066bG-H.

⁵¹ "*pene omnes reliquias idolatriae retinuit, & reservavit, & adhuc promoveri non cessat anilis ista fatuitas.*" *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1066bG.

⁵² *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aH.

⁵³ "*quod domibus, quas frequentant abundantiam bonorum temporalium praestare putantur.*" *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aH.

⁵⁴ "*Ubi manifestum est, scelus idolatriae committi, cum cibi, & potus malignis spiritibus sint expositi eo intentione, qua ad locum venturi, & inde sumpturi creduntur.*" *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bF.

nourished and seem to snatch babies from their cradles and tear them to pieces or roast them in fires.⁵⁵

He argues that although such spirits appear as old women, they are actually demons in disguise. (Because William does not supply the vernacular words for such creatures, it is impossible to know how closely local perception of these spirits matches his own.) In this example, the victims make some sort of propitiatory act, not so much out of hope of receiving a blessing but “out of the hope that the spirits might spare infants”—that is, not “tear them apart or roast them in the fire.”⁵⁶ By means of these threatening, indeed, extortionate visions, William comments, “evil spirits have acquired for themselves fear and honor and idol-worship.”⁵⁷ Any attempt to prevent the demons’ depredations by making offerings to them or by worshipping them is sinful. William is not especially sympathetic to ordinary people’s fears or fantasies about the potential death of themselves or their children, as he values their orthodoxy (and thus their salvation) over their bodily health or mental composure.

Unlike the Wild Hunt, whose ambiguous status William does not fully resolve, William clearly argues that female spirits must be demons. They cannot be angels. He puts forward several arguments to this effect, directing his attacks against foolish “old women” and their intractable beliefs. First, angels would never ask for food or drink and would only accept food offerings out of

⁵⁵ “[E]t eodem modo sentiendum est tibi de aliis malignis spiritibus, quas vulgus stryges, & lamias vocant, & apparent de nocte in domibus in quibus parvuli nutriuntur, eosque de cunabulis raptos laniare, vel igne assare videntur.” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bF-G.

⁵⁶ “ut parvulis parcerent, hoc est, ut illos nec laniarent, neque igni assarent.” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bG.

⁵⁷ “ut spiritus maligni sub nomine, & specie vetularum, in quibus apparere credebantur, timorem, & honorem, ac culturum idolatriae sibi acquisiverint.” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066bG.

deference to the pious, and for God's glory, not their own. Nor do they appear in holy places, lest their presence encourage humans to worship them instead of God. Moreover, angels bring God's commands to humans, or counsel them, or encourage them to do good deeds.⁵⁸

William asserts that spirits who appear as women do none of these things. He writes, "good angels only appear in the form of men, and never in the form of women, which evil spirits take."⁵⁹ To defend this statement, which appears to impart gender to spirits, William replies that:

If someone should say similarly that the male sex has no place among sublime and blessed spirits, I respond that it is true, but, still, virtue and fortitude and the active power have a place in men and they are well-matched to spiritual substances. Truly, passive power, infirmity, debility and womanly dispositions are in all ways incompatible with spirits of this kind. For this reason therefore the form of men is convenient to them and not because of its sex which is nothing but the active power in the function of generation, and from which their own [spiritual] natures are prohibited and very removed by their nobility.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1066bG.

⁵⁹ "*quod boni Angeli in specie virorum solummodo apparent, & nunquam in specie muliebri, quod maligni spiritus faciunt.*" *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1068aH.

⁶⁰ "*Quod si dixerit quis, quia similiter virilis sexus non habet locum apud sublimes, ac beatos spiritus. Respondeo quia verum est, verumtamen virtus, & fortitudo & vis activa locum habet in viris & congruunt ista bene substantiis spiritibus; vis vero passiva, & infirmitas, atque debilitas dispositiones muliebres sunt omni modo incongruentes huiusmodi spiritibus. Ob causam igitur hanc species virilis conveniens est eis, non propter sexum, qui non est aliud nisi vis activa in operatione generationis, a qua naturae suae nobilitate prohibiti sunt; ac remotissimi.*" *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1068aH-bE.

Thus, although spirits no more have a male sex than a female one, they find that the spiritual qualities associated with the male sex more akin to their nature than those associated with the female sex, because the latter are in William's view, flawed and defective. Therefore, it seems, angels appear as men; demons as women.

Finally, William argues that, if the spirits were in fact women, they would be able to reproduce. If female spirits cannot reproduce, then they must be sterile, either because they have become old, which is impossible for a spirit, or because God has punished them. If punished in such a fashion they must indeed be wicked spirits, not angelic ones. If female spirits could reproduce, their offspring, being immortal, would eventually populate the whole earth. Moreover, spirits would eat the humans out of house and home. (William rejects the idea that spirits eat only the essence of food, as is the case in certain modern fairy beliefs.)⁶¹

William's argument could be considered inconsistent by many standards—an essentially sexless spirit could appear female without having the capacity to give birth. After all, the sexless spirits appearing as males do not have the ability to beget children.⁶² But, for William, it seems that physical reproduction is the defining feature of being female, even for a spirit, but masculinity consists essentially of the possession of certain virile traits that are exclusively spiritual. Thus, in criticizing women's opinions and their veneration of female spirits, William reveals a misogyny that extends from the human world into the spiritual.

⁶¹ *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1068bE-bH. See also Nancy Caciola, *Discerning Spirits: Divine and Demonic Possession in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003), 161-62.

⁶² See the extensive discussion of this issue in *De universo* 2.3.25, 1:1070aG-1073aC.

Limits

Despite the threat that demonic encouragement of idolatry poses, William nevertheless believes that demonic power is subject to several limits. First, as has already been seen, he stresses that demons act only with the permission of the Creator. The importance of this subordination cannot be overstated, for in William's thought, demons lead idolaters and magicians to venerate them by claiming more power than they actually have. The possible independence of demons seems to be a common concern for Christian theologians, as it is one of the principal themes that Greenfield identifies as distinguishing orthodox from "alternate" demonology in his *Traditions of Belief in Late Medieval Byzantine Demonology*.⁶³

Second, William also holds that demons are subject to physical law, and he takes care to define exactly they can and cannot do according to the physical understanding of his day. In his *Thinking with Demons*, Stuart Clark argues that early modern demonology helped demarcate the boundaries of the possible in Aristotelian science, and demons seem to perform a similar function in William's thought.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, William seems reluctant to reject traditional stories or explanations altogether. Thus, he rarely if ever denies that a recorded phenomenon took place—only that its witnesses mistook illusion for truth. Even in cases that would be truly impossible under his science, he concedes that God temporarily might permit demons to supercede their ordinary physical limits.

William's treatment of the Hunts' warriors' weapons and armor provides an example of this double reasoning. William

⁶³ Richard P. H. Greenfield, *Traditions of Belief in Late Medieval Byzantine Demonology* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1998).

⁶⁴ Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

denies that spirits have physical bodies, although they can manipulate physical objects. Thus, physical weapons cannot harm members of the Wild Hunt.⁶⁵ He considers for the sake of argument that demons might have bodies of a subtler or different type than humanity. Theories attributing to demons bodies of air or fire had wide circulation in classical and medieval thought. Even in a work such as Dante's *Comedy*, departed souls, like other spirits, project themselves into a concentration of the air.⁶⁶ Yet William denies that spirits have bodies at all. His justifications are scientific and Aristotelian, considering each possible element in turn. I find William's refutation of airy bodies particularly interesting.

... if their bodies were airy, they would be the most mortal of all animals, and greatly liable to all wounds and hurts because of the vulnerability of their bodies, which you can clearly observe in air. I also said to you, that such an apparition could neither have this kind of body nor such a fixed magnitude, because as you learned from Aristotle that anything wet, especially air, is badly suited to that end.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ *De universo*, 2.3.24, 1:1065bC.

⁶⁶ See *Purgatorio*, 25.91-108. See also Greenfield, *Traditions*, 199-211; Walter Stephens, *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex and the Crisis of Belief* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), 58-124, and Teske's introduction to *De universo*, in William of Auvergne, *The Universe of Creatures*, ed. and trans. Roland J. Teske (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1998), 28-29.

⁶⁷ "Quod si corpora essent eis aerea, essent omnium animalium mortalissima, omnique vulneri, & laesioni maxime obnoxia propter passibilitatem corporum suorum, quod evidenter vides in aere. Dixi etiam tibi, quia neque figura posset esse huiusmodi corporibus, quia neque magnitudo determinata, cum secundum Aristotelem didiceris humidum, qualis maxime est aer, male terminabile est proprio termino." *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1065bC-D.

However, William does not draw from this the conclusion that the Hunt's warriors are a mere fancy of the imagination, or that witnesses were mistaken when they reported battles and wounds. Instead, he argues that their arms and armor are a form of illusion, painted by demons into the human intellect.⁶⁸ Likewise, examples of eating or drinking were merely feigned for the comfort and honor of the humans with whom they associated. No real ingestion was involved.⁶⁹ Thus William reconciles the nature of spirits, as he understands them, to their behavior as recorded in unimpeachable sources.

Mere illusion cannot explain every recorded action of spirits. Sometimes, demons perform undeniably physical actions. Recounting a tale of female spirits who appear in stables at night, casting light with their candles and leaving behind drippings of wax, William affirms that the wax is real, although perhaps the candles are not. Elsewhere in *De universo*, William asserts that demons, despite being incorporeal, can and do manipulate physical objects. Just as the human soul can move its own body, higher souls can move even objects to which they are unconnected.⁷⁰ William applies this principle to the wax in question: although demons cannot make wax themselves, they can certainly use their immense speed and power to obtain some, if it is necessary for their deceptions.⁷¹

William's view of nature never excludes the possibility that divine intervention might permit to demons actions otherwise impossible. Although William articulates and even favors natural explanations for the *mirabilia* that he recounts, he nevertheless

⁶⁸ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1066aE-G. See also *De universo* 2.3.23, 1061bD-1062aE for a discussion of this "painting."

⁶⁹ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069aA.

⁷⁰ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1062aE-1063bC.

⁷¹ *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1066aG.

hedges by retaining traditional explanations that attribute such phenomena directly to supernatural powers. For example, when William discusses the various spirits believed to cause harm to children, he does not deny that such a thing is possible. He states although that the “*stryges* and *lamiae*” cannot actually eat the infants, they do indeed occasionally murder them:

Sometimes, in order to punish the parents, demons are permitted to kill infants, because sometimes parents love their children so much that they do not love God. Therefore he deals with these parents usefully and beneficially because their offence subtracts from the creator.⁷²

Thus, William reconciles the demons’ inability to eat with numerous stories in which they consume infants.

William similarly dances a fine line between natural and demonic explanations when discussing Ephialtes. By the thirteenth century, most physicians thought that Ephialtes was a digestive disease, as John of Salisbury reports.⁷³ William for the most part agrees with John, arguing that most if not all accounts of Ephialtes are really accounts of digestive problems:

many skilled doctors deny that Ephialtes is a demon, and they say that the oppression, which the reclining demon seems to make to men, comes from the compression of the heart.⁷⁴

⁷² “*Interdum autem permittitur eis parvulos occidere in poenam parentum, propter hoc, quia parentes eousque interdum diligunt parvulos suos, ut Deum non diligant: utiliter igitur, atque salubriter cum ipsis parentibus agitur, cum causa offensa creatoris subtrahitur.*” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069aD.

⁷³ John of Salisbury, *Policraticus* 2.15, 429B-C.

⁷⁴ “[M]ulti ex peritioribus medicorum Ephialtem daemonem esse negant, et oppressionem illam, quam eos incumbens daemon facere videtur, hominibus, ex compressione cordis esse dicunt.” *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069aB-C.

William provides a detailed summary of the medical theory, but rather than concluding that Ephialtes constitutes a completely natural phenomenon, he suddenly declares that:

Nevertheless, you ought not to doubt that sometimes the providence of the creator lets malignant spirits kill men with compressions, oppressions, suffocations, and other methods.⁷⁵

Thus, for William, divine permission and divine punishment might at any time violate the natural order of things, confounding skepticism, and producing morally useful events. Such a view retains the traditional reports of demonic activity while advancing a scientifically more precise understanding of the possible.

Conclusion

William is principally concerned that his readers, and the population at large, should hold what he considers to be orthodox beliefs about spirits. Popular beliefs in the Wild Hunt, the Lady Abundia, and the other spirits he treats in the same chapter raised his fears about idolatry among the populace, especially among women. These popular beliefs also challenged what William perceived as correct views of the physically possible. For by appearing more powerful than they were, demons encouraged worship of themselves based on an inflated view of their capacities. They hid their essential subordination to God's will, which in William's mind explained and turned to useful purpose even such frightening and violent apparitions as the Wild Hunt. Nevertheless, William retained an expansive view of demonic power, and, despite his preference for natural explanations of

⁷⁵ "*Verumtamen dubitare non debes, quin malignis spiritibus interdum providentia creatoris permittat compressiones, & oppressiones facere, necnon & suffocationes, & alterius modi extinctiones hominum.*" *De universo* 2.3.24, 1:1069aD. See also Lecouteux and Marcq, *Esprits*, 28-9, for a discussion of digestive diseases and night terrors.

phenomena, he does not deny the potential truth of even the most fantastic and implausible demonic activities.

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Rendering Shakespearean Rhetoric Visible in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery

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Traditionally, the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery is considered an important moment in England's art history narrative. In this essay, I argue that the Boydell collection also reflects a new preference for reading Shakespeare's plays in the eighteenth century via its editorial illustration of parts of the plays that would not normally be emphasized in theatrical productions.

On an evening in November of 1786, at a dinner party of eight gentlemen at the Hampstead home of Josiah Boydell, a spirited debate arose over the veritable absence of an English School of Historical Painting. After the dinner was over, Alderman John Boydell, his nephew, Josiah Boydell, and the bookseller George Nichol drafted a proposal that would outline the details of a new business arrangement. By pooling their investment capital, the group planned to commission the finest English artists of the day to produce oil paintings and prints of Shakespeare's plays. The resulting works would be shown in a specially built exhibition space at no. 52 Pall Mall and further marketed through a subscription print service.

On May 14, 1789, the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery opened its doors to much anticipation. Despite the fact that the shop held a

mere thirty-four paintings, the guests poured in. Yet many initial reviews were tempered by concerns about the gallery's relationship to concurrent theatre productions. In a May 6, 1789 issue of *The Public Advertiser*, one critic admitted:

There was some reason to fear that our painters would have sought for and gathered their ideas from the theatre, and given us portraits of the well-dressed Ladies and Gentlemen [of the stage] . . . There was some reason to fear a representation of all that extravaganza of attitude and start [sic] which is tolerated, nay in a degree demanded, at the playhouse. But this has been avoided; the pictures in general give a mirror of the poet¹

From the gallery's inception, then, many critics worried about the effect contemporary stage spectacle might have on the collection's rendering of Shakespearean imagery.²

Despite the persistence of these concerns, from 1786-1804 the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery was quite literally the talk, and the toast, of London's elite. At the Academy Dinner of 1789, Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, and the Prince of Wales all honored "an English tradesman who patronizes art better than the Grand Monarque" That tradesman was Alderman Boydell.³ Hereafter, the press frequently referred to John Boydell as the "Commercial Maecenas" of London, and for a time the civic respect and commercial success just kept on coming.⁴

On December 12, 1803, however, the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery closed its doors due to financial ruin. The brilliant prospects of the project had failed, partially due to poor business administration. To satisfy the demands of his creditors, John

¹ Quoted in Winifred H. Friedman, *Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1976), 75.

² *Ibid.*, 75.

³ Quoted in W. Moelwyn Merchant, *Shakespeare and the Artist* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 69.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

Boydell proposed a lottery plan to liquidate what remained of the firm's assets. Unfortunately, on December 10, 1804, he passed away, leaving his nephew, Josiah, with the burden of overseeing the raffle. A total of 22,000 three-guinea tickets were sold to the lottery, but only one grand winner emerged. Mr. Tassie, a medallion maker, walked away with the bulk of the collection and, to some extent, the defunct dream that the collection represented.⁵

Today, no more than forty of the original two hundred paintings remain.⁶ What happened in the fourteen years between the gallery's opening and its closing is essentially the story of John Boydell's failed effort to establish an English School of Historical Painting. However, the gallery's demise also illustrates how public taste had shifted in a decade and a half, when, for the first time in history, a preference emerged for reading Shakespeare's plays. In this essay, I will revisit the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery in order to examine the motives behind this eighteenth-century phenomenon, and I will consider how the gallery's holdings reflect the era's new privileging of reading, rather than seeing, the plays. As the critic from *The Public Advertiser* duly testifies, while some of Boydell's artists took their cues from London's theatre culture, many also took pains to distinguish themselves by illustrating parts of the plays that would never have appeared on stage and that could only be found in the language of the text.

At the end of the eighteenth century Shakespeare had come to occupy a point of pride in English cultural identity, and the Boydell Gallery sought to exploit this standing in order to bolster the international reputation of English painting, which had often been deemed inferior in comparison to other European Schools. Robin Hamlyn, in "The Shakespeare Galleries of John Boydell and James Woodmason," describes the optimism that surrounded the

⁵ For more information on the lottery scheme, see Winifred Friedman, "Some Commercial Aspects of the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 36 (1973), 399-400.

⁶ A. E. Santaniello, "Introduction," in *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), 5.

early years: “For artists generally there was all the air of a historic moment in British art having at last arrived, together with all the promise for future glory.”⁷ If the excitement surrounding the gallery’s implicit nationalism seems offset by a certain naiveté, it is important to remember that the aim of establishing an English School of Historical Painting originated from the project’s financiers.

In the original catalogue that accompanied the premier exhibition, John Boydell famously described his intentions:

I hope, upon inception of what has been done, and is now doing, the Subscribers will be satisfied with the exertions that have been made, and will think that their confidence has not been misplaced; especially when they consider the difficulties that a great undertaking, like the present, has to encounter, in a country where Historical Painting is still but in its infancy—To advance that art towards maturity, and establish an *English School of Historical Painting*, was the great object of the present design.⁸

Boydell’s bold proclamation that his aim in founding the gallery was to “advance [English] art towards maturity” thus formed the cornerstone of the venture. However, there was a major crux in all of this earnest planning. Since, as Boydell admits, the economic success of the endeavor depended on the subscription sales of the prints of the paintings, it became clear that trouble was brewing when the gallery focused on founding a national painting movement rather than fashioning itself as a commercial distributor of art.

Prints were the heart of how the gallery would actually make its money, so the development of a subscription service that would market and sell copies of famous paintings at a modest price

⁷ Robin Hamlyn, “The Shakespeare Galleries of John Boydell and James Woodmason,” in *Shakespeare In Art*, ed. Jane Martineau et al., 97-114 (New York: Merrell Publishers, 2003), 99.

⁸ John Boydell, “Preface to the Original Catalogue,” in *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), i.

became the basis for any successful return on the monies that were invested. Winifred H. Friedman asserts that, as the development of the gallery's patronage of the arts evolved, some apparent neglect occurred in the overseeing of the subscription service.⁹ Many customers became disenchanted with the casualness of the firm's records as well as the ever-changing nature of its business relations to the artists, engravers, and printers. At its height, the gallery served 1,384 subscribers on the firm's invoices, but vagueness associated with the financial details of the print service coupled with the poor quality of the engravings contributed to its demise.¹⁰

While differing degrees of attention—some positive, others not—have been allotted to the value of the Boydell collection as a contribution to England's art history, it is also interesting to consider what the collection's holdings suggest about the paradigm shift associated with the new enthusiasm for reading the plays in the eighteenth century. One way of viewing the Boydell collection, then, is as a *pictorial expression* of the era's relentless adaptation and editorial practice.

Of course, the eighteenth century is famous for its textual adaptations of Shakespeare. In *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Authorship, 1660-1769*, Michael Dobson observes that it is the eighteenth century that gave us

the first conflation of two Shakespeare plays into one (*The Law Against Lovers*, created by Sir William Davenant from *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado About Nothing* in 1662); the first *Troilus and Cressida* in which Cressida commits suicide to prove her innocence (John Dryden's *Troilus and Cressida, or Truth Found Too Late*, first acted in 1679); the first *Henry V* in which the protagonist is pursued to France by his scorned ex-mistress Harriet, disguised as a page (Aaron Hill's *King Henry the Fifth, or, The Conquest of France by the English*, 1723); the first *As You Like It* to betroth Celia to Jacques and include *Pyramus and Thisbe* (Charles Johnson's *Love in a Forest*, performed in the same year); and the first

⁹ Friedman, "Some Commercial Aspects," 396-401.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 399.

Cymbeline to observe the unities of time and place (prepared by William Hawkins in 1759).¹¹

Obviously, many of these adaptations were made possible, in part, by the inter-textuality that the rampant publishing of the plays encouraged between the beginning of the eighteenth century and its end. Indeed, it is impossible to separate the construction of Shakespeare as Britain's National Bard from his installation on the reading page for its millions of citizens. Thus as Shakespeare rose in prominence among the academic elite, he simultaneously became an important component of secondary and post-secondary curriculums and a topic of sustained scholarly attention in the works of Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Hammer, Warburton, Steevens, Copell, Malone, and, of course, Johnson.

Such scholarly attention, in turn, produced a renewed interest in the popular editing of his plays, exemplified by some of the more famous stage adaptations cited above by Michael Dobson. However, W. Moelwyn Merchant notes that a new practice of illustrating Shakespeare also accompanied this initial editing phenomenon.¹² In the course of the eighteenth century, then, the public appetite for Shakespearean imagery formerly supplied by the theatre did not go away; it evolved as textual illustration became the new medium for seeing Shakespeare.

Publisher after publisher took up the trend of including illustrations alongside the plays, beginning with Tonson's 1714 edition and extending to the Bellamy and Robarts text of 1791.¹³ As a result, scholars like T. S. R. Boase assert that in the eighteenth century the preferred edition of Shakespeare was most certainly an illustrated one.¹⁴ Given the attention that has been

¹¹ Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 4.

¹² Merchant, *Shakespeare and the Artist*, 70.

¹³ Santaniello, "Introduction," 6.

¹⁴ Santaniello, "Introduction," 7.

paid to the variety of ways in which Shakespeare's plays were edited and adapted in this period, it is also interesting to consider ways in which the Boydell Gallery reflects, in its way, a similar form of editorial practice exemplified in its illustration choices.

In the course of researching the collection, I noted that some of the Boydell artists choose to depict scenes that are not staged in the production of the plays; immediately, I wondered if this trend might be representative of a subtler form of adaptation than the radical textual revision of the plays usually associated with eighteenth-century productions. No doubt, the Boydell images influenced the public's conception of the how the plays should look; yet some of the artists distinguished their work from late eighteenth-century theatre culture by illustrating scenes that do not appear on stage. It is interesting to consider, then, the ways in which the Boydell Gallery attends either to those parts of the plays that could not be staged or, even more interestingly, to those parts of the plays that occur off-stage and are only retold or implied in on-stage dialogue. By privileging the parts of the plays that a playgoer could only experience as a result of reading or hearing the plays read rather than seeing them, many of the Boydell paintings render "invisible" portions of the text visually manifest and, in doing so, emphasize their significance to the play's design in new and innovative ways. The evident intent of these works to realize rhetorical snippets of the plays that occur off-stage, along with their "invisible" imagery, reminds us that for the first time in history many of the artists, like many of the eighteenth century's citizens, were coming to the plays by reading them.

The kinds of prints in the Boydell Gallery that render what I am referring to as off-stage action can be divided into three subcategories. The first is comprised of "indirect stories," or paintings that illustrate a subplot in the play that is never explicitly staged but is rather retold, or alluded to, by a character on the stage. The second category includes examples of "difficult staging," or paintings that render scenes that might be avoided in dramatic productions due to their technical challenge. Finally, the third category consists of paintings that render important national

moments that are highlighted in the plays' subplots in order to enhance the prominence of the Boydell collection by linking its work to the construction of a popular English monarchal history. Since I am interested in examining the paintings that were intended for gallery exhibition as well as subscription service, rather than those that were commissioned solely for the printed edition of the plays, I am concentrating on the large plates from the Boydell's Imperial Folio. This folio represents about one hundred prints that hung in the gallery in addition to the hundred or so engravings intended for the nine-volume edition of the plays. Because the gallery was ultimately dispersed by the lottery, it is important to remember that the engraved plates are what remain of the actual collection. Since many of the paintings have been lost or destroyed, the points that I am making here are curious observations, rather than exhaustive generalizations, about the gallery's holdings.

The first plate that I would like to consider is an example of an illustration of an "indirect story," or a painting that alludes to a subplot in the play that is never explicitly staged.¹⁵ The example is taken from *As You Like It*—a popular play in the eighteenth century for reading, staging, and adapting. Plate number 23, painted by Raphael West, depicts Act IV, Scene iii, in which Oliver relates Orlando's rescue of him from the lion. Clearly, this is a crucial point in the play because it resolves the strained relationship between the brothers. It comes as little surprise, then, that this particular "indirect story" would be chosen for illustration, especially since it is a scene that is emphasized in the hearing or reading of the play rather than in its staging. It is interesting to note that West does not illustrate the injury to Orlando's arm, and

¹⁵ All of the illustrations for this article are taken from *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery: A Series of Ninety-Six Photographs, with Selections from the Text* (London: W. Mansell, 1879) and are used by permission of the Department of Special Collections, Kelvin Smith Library, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio. All further references to the photographs of the Boydell Collection cited here will occur in the text and will use the illustration's plate number as its reference.

that, by omitting the injury, he succeeds in editorially stressing the importance of Oliver's ethical transformation rather than merely reinforcing Orlando's selflessness.



Plate 23

Another example of an “indirect story” (or scene that appears in the text but that would not be staged) in the Boydell collection is from *Richard III*. In Act IV, Scene iii, Tyrrell describes the murder of the two young princes. In Plate 78, James Northcote renders Dighton and Forest leaning over the princes before their untimely deaths.

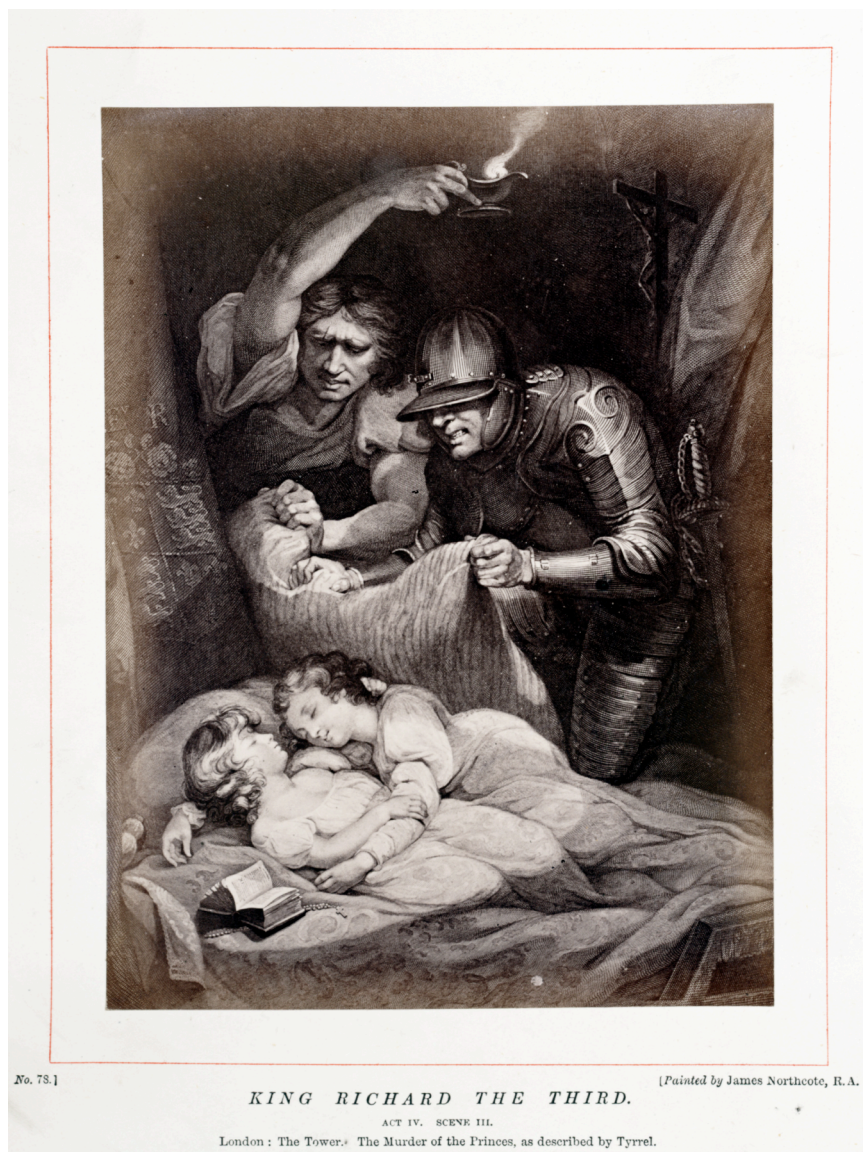


Plate 78

In Plate 79, Northcote depicts the latter part of these off-stage murders, which includes the disposal of the boys' bodies down the tower stairs.



Plate 79

The killing of the young princes is one of Richard's most insidious acts, and it signifies his utter greed for power at any cost. In the paintings, Northcote deliberately amplifies the innocence of

Prince Edward and the Duke of York via the complacency on their faces. Here, the fact that the dirty work of Richard's reign is dependent upon his henchman is also highlighted in the depiction of the soldiers' gnarled expressions as they lean over the deceased bodies.

The second kind of off-stage action that the Boydell Gallery renders visible for its viewers is a scene that occurs in the play, but that would be difficult to stage and, as a result, might be overshadowed by other dramatic action or omitted altogether in a theatrical production. In Act III, Scene iii, of *A Winter's Tale*, Plate 86, J. Wright takes his cue from one of the play's most striking and technically challenging stage directions: "*Exit [Antigonus] pursued by a bear.*" While the death of Antigonus would seem to introduce a tragic and serious note to the play, in performance it is difficult to simulate a live bear on stage without seeming farcical. Here, though, the bear is subordinated to the sea cost, and the individual is literally eclipsed by his environment. Thus Wright negotiates this technical challenge by introducing a sublime landscape (e.g., his dark skies and breaking waves), which allows the viewer to follow the servant's tale from court to coast in his execution of Perdita's abandonment, while it also foreshadows the pastoral portion of the play that follows.



Plate 86

Probably the most famous commissioned artist in the Boydell group was Henry Fuseli. In all, Fuseli produced seven drawings for the exhibition. In 1770, while still in his twenties, Fuseli left London for Rome and studied painting there for nine years. Upon his return to England, he won his first commission with Boydell, and, by 1786, he was an artistic force in his own right. In Plate 17, Act IV, Scene i, Fuseli illustrates *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by portraying its whimsical cast of characters. Here Fuseli also makes manifest the literal transformation that is occurring in the play by depicting a tiny man gazing up in Bottom's hand. Additionally, there is a mischievous Peaseblossom (pulling on Bottom's hair) and a majestic Titania overseeing the assembly. Using the phantasmagoric atmosphere of *A Midsummer Night's* dream-like state, Fuseli suspends the play's psycho-

dramatic characterization with a simultaneity that could not be held for any time on the stage, and he reminds the gallery's visitors of the ways in which the play's most important thematic elements can be consolidated for the gallery visitor's viewing pleasure in a single, still image.



Plate 17

The last kind of painting from the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery that emphasizes a plot point derived from reading rather than seeing the plays is exemplified in the gallery's illustration of important historical or national moments in the plays. In Plate 58, "The Entrance of King Richard and Bolingbroke into London, as described by the Duke of York in Act V, Scene ii, of *Richard II*," James Northcote renders the poignancy of the public's affection for the man who will become Henry IV. Northcote's print is a

great example of an illustration of an “indirect story” that occurs off-stage, as well as an example of the Boydell Gallery’s intention to link Shakespeare’s canon to the construction of a popular British history recorded in painting. In fact, the print’s portrayal of Henry as a man of action might be especially suggestive to an eighteenth-century audience who were still reeling from questions about the appropriate extension of monarchical power that had so characterized the Stuart and Hanover reigns.



Plate 58

The final image from the Boydell Gallery that I would like to offer imagines the baptism of Queen Elizabeth in Plate 35 at the end of *Henry VIII*, Act V, Scene iv. Surely, Elizabeth’s baptism is a vital part of the Boydell’s Imperial Folio collection based on the

historical scene that it depicts and the eighteenth century's adoration of her as queen of England's Golden Age.



Plate 35

I want to end my discussion of the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery with this particular image because, on one hand, the print conveys the gallery's aim to establish an English School of Historical Painting and, on the other hand, it shows the manner in which the Boydell artists are in a sense selectively editing the plots of the history plays with their emphasis on different subplots in their gallery presentations of Shakespearean imagery. The question becomes then, where does the latter impulse for editing the plays in a visual context derive?

One part of the answer results from the sheer enthusiasm for print that eighteenth-century reading culture held. In "Writing

is a Technology that Restructures Thought,” Walter Ong argues that as primary oral cultures become primary literate ones, a paradigm shift occurs in which sound or aural dominance is replaced by visual prominence. To describe this transformation, Ong remarks:

Writing distances the word from sound, reducing oral-aural evanescence to the seeming quiescence of visual space. But this distancing is not total or permanent, for every reading of a text consists of restoring it, directly or indirectly, to sound, vocally or in the imagination.¹⁶

For Ong, the act of reading is essentially a visual and an aural restoration that transcends its original medium. Ong’s point is useful here, too, for considering the Boydell Gallery. For the eighteenth century’s citizens, this really is the first time in history when the plays would have been available on a mass scale not only to see, but also to read.

The immediacy of having the text before the reader creates a unique intimacy with the Shakespeare plays that was not formerly available and an interest, as Ong asserts, in visually restoring the printed language to the imagination, by altering either the language or its printed space. Both of these gestures have already been well documented in the eighteenth century’s unique editorial treatment of Shakespeare’s plays, but the Boydell Gallery represents another subtler form of this practice via its use of illustrations. If eighteenth-century theatrical adaptations restored visual associations to the language of the plays, the Boydell Gallery (along with the host of illustrated Shakespeare editions that accompanied it) restored prominence to the textual passages that most needed visual association, precisely because they were omitted, for whatever reason, from many Shakespeare productions. As a result, one way in which all of the above-mentioned imagery from the Boydell Gallery can be read is as a reflection of the

¹⁶ Walter Ong, “Writing is a Technology that Restructures Thought,” in *The Linguistics of Literacy*, ed. Pamela Downing, Susan D. Lima, and Michael Noonan, 293-319 (Philadelphia: John Benjamins Co., 1992), 308.

paradigm shift from seeing the plays to reading them, and as evidence of the impulse to return to seeing them again. Now, though, the imaginative frame is an illustrated print rather than a stage setting, but the basic gesture that Ong and others note still remains the same. In this way, the gallery's rendering of off-stage action mimics to some extent the reading as well as the editing of the plays that occurred in the eighteenth century.

This is not to say that the Boydell Gallery does not also reflect many of the stage conventions that Frederick Burwick and others point to in its depictions of costumes, actors, and set designs.¹⁷ However, by including in the Boydell Gallery's collection some paintings which can be attributed to visualizing a scene derived from primarily reading the plays, or to visualizing a scene that either does not appear on stage or resists emphasis in production (one that would usually be rendered by *reading* rather than by *seeing*), the Boydell Gallery also reflects the pedagogical shift in approaching Shakespeare that occurred in the course of the eighteenth century. By demonstrating a new interest in how the silent text translates when it is "staged"—either in a scholarly edition's illustrations or on a hung canvas—the Boydell Gallery remains a persistent indicator of the tremendous enjoyment inherent in hearing and seeing, and now reading and seeing, the Shakespeare plays in all their transcendent and adaptable glory.

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¹⁷ See Frederick Burwick, "John Boydell's *Shakespeare Gallery* and the Stage," *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* 133 (1997): 54-76.

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Twentieth-Century Illustrators' Interpretations of the Works of Rabelais

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Gustave Doré's mid-nineteenth-century illustrations of François Rabelais's oeuvre have become as well-known as the text itself: their fanciful details capture the literally larger-than-life personality of the French sixteenth-century humanist's protagonist-giants, Pantagruel and Gargantua. Equally intrigued by the thematic complexity and imaginative narrative of this Renaissance masterpiece, subsequent artists and illustrators of Rabelais continue to create new and unexpected artistic representations. This paper presents the illustrations of a lesser-known twentieth-century French wood engraver, Jean Chièze. His notable contributions to a 1935 commemorative edition of Pantagruel simultaneously highlight the medieval woodcut, emphasize the playful tone of Rabelais's narrative and allude to contemporary twentieth-century events. Chièze's creative uses of compositional design as well as his unique selection of illustrated scenes reveal him to be an accomplished reader of Rabelais. His resultant illustrations help us to be better readers, as well.

The imaginative narrative works of the French sixteenth-century humanist François Rabelais have lent themselves to multiple illustrated complete editions since the seventeenth century. The exhaustive, and arguably definitive, series of detailed and fanciful illustrations created by Gustave Doré in the mid-nineteenth century for all five of Rabelais's chronicles seems only to have inspired subsequent artists and illustrators (**Fig. 1**).

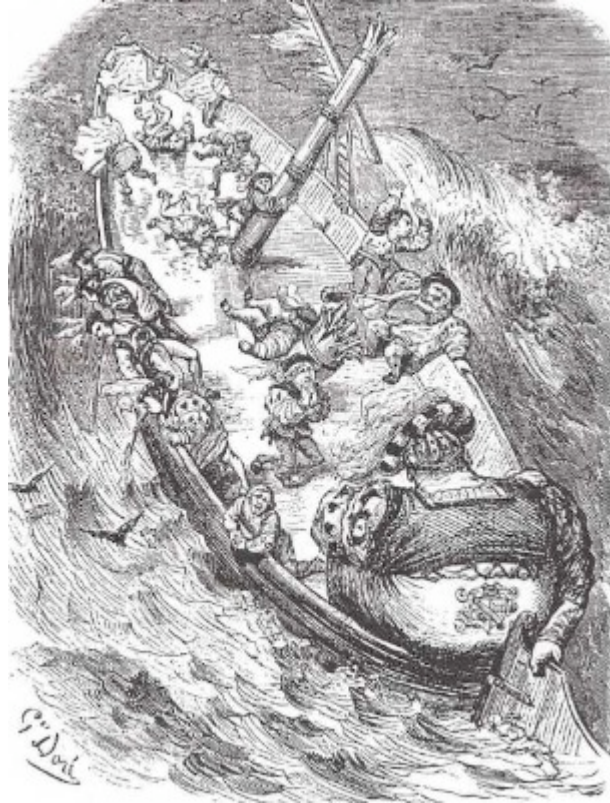


Fig. 1

Early twentieth-century illustrated editions of Rabelais offer a variety of lithographs, etchings and woodblock prints. Some of these illustrations adhere closely to Doré's own compositional and thematic aesthetics while others, in their spare graphics and dark tones, reflect their artists' embrace of the cubist and non-representational aesthetics of the time.

Here I am highlighting a celebrated 1935 edition of *Pantagruel*, the first of Rabelais's four complete volumes recounting the adventures of the enlightened, albeit ribald, father and son royal giants. Illustrated with primitive-style woodblock prints designed by Jean Chièze (1898-1975), the volume is a

republication of the *édition princeps* or, first edition, of *Pantagruel*, published in 1532 by Claude Nourry in Lyon (**Fig. 2**).

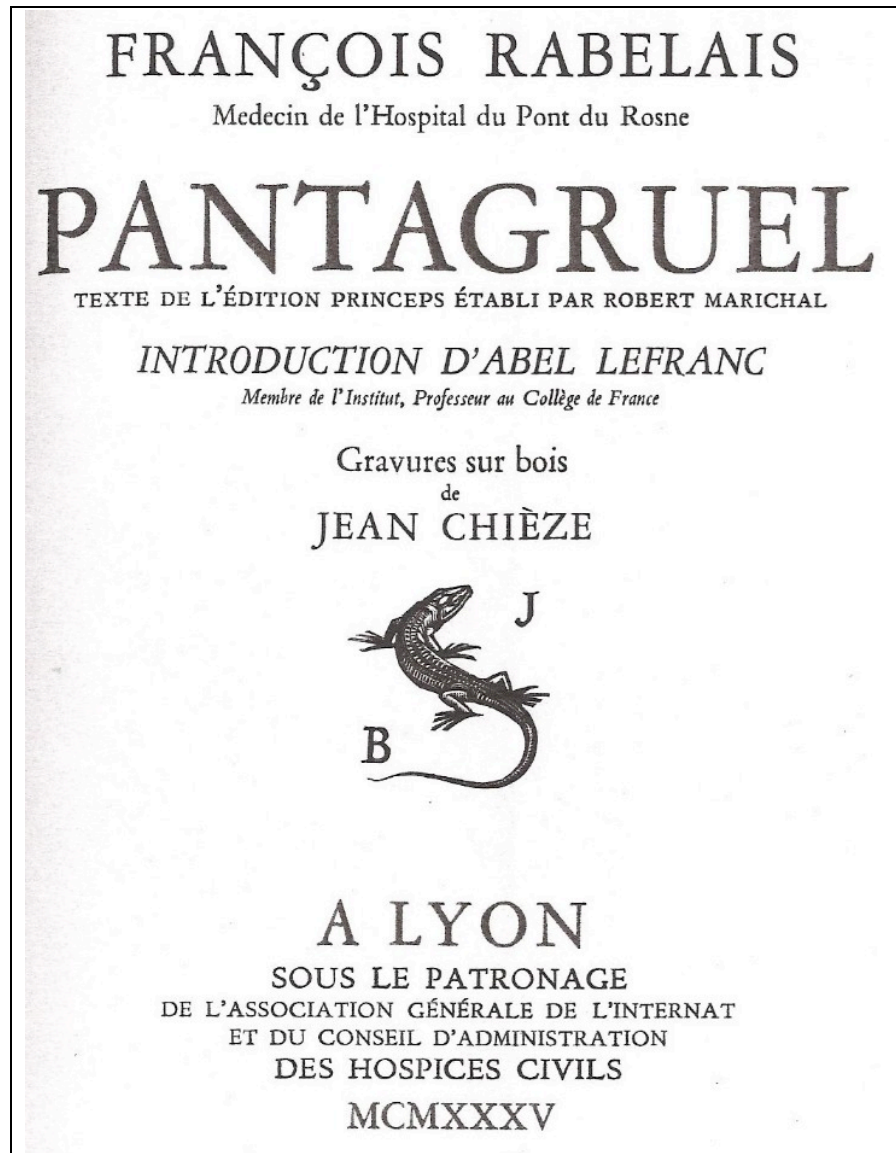


Fig. 2

Throughout his lifetime Chièze was the sole illustrator of 130 classical and modern, principally French, masterpieces. He collaborated on 100 others. Woodblock prints, the original illustrative medium of the Middle Ages, were his specialty and he created over 2000 of them. His first prints were published in 1926 and so this 1935 volume appeared relatively early in his career. Like all good illustrators, Chièze was an astute reader of his author, and one who could reflect simultaneously his own era's sensibilities. This republication, in recognition of the four hundredth anniversary of the book was, in its time, a most scholarly volume. The French language was not modernized to facilitate reading, and its archaic grammar and spelling appears in the original typeface chosen by Nourry. Two of the more eminent Rabelaisian scholars of the twentieth century collaborated in its creation: Robert Marichal annotated the text while Abel Lefranc provided a comprehensive introduction.

It is apparent that this 1935 edition, published in Lyon under the auspices of the civil hospital,¹ is honoring not only Rabelais, but also the city of Lyon itself. The title page specifies the author, François Rabelais as "*Médecin de l'Hospital du Pont du Rosne*." Twentieth-century readers needed no introduction of Rabelais as humanist or writer. They might, however, have forgotten Rabelais's education in Lyon and his subsequent medical reknown, and this is the connection the publishers wanted to establish. The original 1532 title page makes no reference to Rabelais (**Fig. 3**). While Lyon's intellectual climate allowed for controversial writings, Rabelais, first a Franciscan, then a Benedictine monk, would have faced condemnation had he acknowledged publicly his authorship of this outlandish narrative, written in the vernacular, emphasized that of the narrator, the late M. Alcofribas Nasier—an anagram of François Rabelais—and described as an *Abstracteur de Quinte Essence*.

¹ Rabelais, François Rabelais, *Pantagruel*, ed. Robert Marichal, intro. Abel Lefranc, and ill. Jean Chièze (Lyon: Association générale de l'internat et conseil d'administration des hospices civils, 1935).



Fig. 3

The 1935 edition highlights Rabelais in both title pages (Fig. 2 above and Fig. 4).



Fig. 4

Rabelais has become one of Lyon's most celebrated citizens, gaining prominence for his medical breakthroughs, particularly his study of autopsies, as well as for his writing. Chièze's frontispiece portrait highlights the humanist's medical expertise (**Fig. 5**).



Fig. 5

It shows Rabelais carefully measuring a skull with calipers, his left arm resting on a pile of papers. Here, he has the scholarly bearing seen in most early editions, indifferent to the spectacular view of Lyon before him. He is no longer Doré's man of the people or hearty *bonvivant* but first and foremost a scholar, seemingly separated from the society, aspects of which his chronicle vividly exaggerates. Chièze's frontispiece is, to my knowledge, the last original portrait of Rabelais made for a twentieth-century edition of his works. Lefranc, too, presents Lyon as leitmotif in his introduction with his overview highlighting the importance of the

city to the composition of *Pantagruel*, Lyonnaise life in 1532 and the publisher Nourry. Chièze, himself from the Lyon region of France, has given the volume a marked Lyonnais character, given the edition's provenance. Chièze conducted considerable research into extant sculptures, tympanums, and capitals found throughout Lyon in order to have models for small, decorative, non-narrative illustrations (Chièze 203). These twenty-two images represent architectural features dating from Rabelais's time. More significantly, each underscores an aspect of the narrative in which they appear. For instance, the bear image (**Fig. 6**), based on an engraved stone found in Lyon's central Place Saint-Paul, reinforces the Noah's Ark motif of multiple animals discussed at the end of the introductory chapter. This passage gives Pantagruel's lineage all the way back to the giant Hurtaly, who, because he was too large to fit into Noah's ark, instead steadied the ark with his foot and thus saved the human race.

du tresrenommé Pantagruel Roy des Dipsodes. Chapitre .i. 15
monde perit fors Noé & sept personnes avecques luy dedans
l'Arche, au nombre desquelz n'est point mys ledict Hurtaly? La
demande est bien faicte sans doubte & bien apparente; mais la
responce vous contentera. Et par ce que n'estoys pas de ce temps
la pour vous en dire a mon plaisir, je vous allegueray l'auctorité
des Massoretz, interpretes des saintes lettres hebraïques, lesquelz
disent que sans point de faulte ledict Hurtaly n'estoit point dedans
l'Arche de Noé; aussi n'y eust il peu entrer, car il estoit trop
grand, mais il estoit dessus l'Arche a cheval, jambe deça jambe
dela, comme les petitz enfans sus des chevaulx de boys. Et en ceste
façon sauva ladicte Arche de periller: car il luy bailloit le bransle
avecques les jambes, & du pied la tournoit ou il vouloit comme
on faict du gouvernail d'une navire. Et ceulx du dedans luy en-
voyoient des vivres par une cheminee a suffisance, comme gens
bien recongnoissans le bien qu'il leur faisoit. Et quelque foys par-
lentoient ensemble, comme faisoit Icaromenippus a Jupiter,
selon le raport de Lucian.



Fig. 6

Chièze created 23 rectangular illustrations, usually as chapter introductions, and then 14 full-page illustrations. They are dark in tone but certainly not in mood. In general, they show

either laughing or humorous characters, and this but reflects the overall theme of *Pantagruel*: a series of alternately silly and witty jokes based on popular puns, physical humor and, most significantly, intentionally misrepresented erudite and biblical allusions. Unlike Rabelais's chronicle *Gargantua* which appeared two years later, *Pantagruel* is less pointedly satirical—it was composed when humanist verbal play and experimentation were in full swing in Lyon, if not Paris, before the inevitable restrictions brought about by the royal censors. Chièze's full-page portrait of Pantagruel (**Fig. 7**) shows a smiling but not jocular prince.



Fig. 7

He has a reflective and noble expression while raising a glass of wine, right in the vineyard. Unlike any other illustrator's portrait of Pantagruel, Chièze features a salt-cellar, an evocation of the

original medieval goblin, Pantagruel, who inspired thirst in unsuspecting victims by sprinkling salt on them. Simultaneously and on a more subtle level, the salt underscores the inherently Christian nature of Rabelais's principal character; Pantagruel incarnates the "salt of the earth" as Jesus called his faithful listeners in his Sermon on the Mount. He is far from the "savorless salt" that is "good for nothing but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men (Matthew 5:13). Throughout the narrative Pantagruel functions much as salt: by his forthright speech and actions he purifies, heals and seasons the myriad collection of buffoons, hypocrites and jokesters whom he encounters.

Chièze favors rectangular-shaped illustrations to open each chapter. As exemplified in figure 8, these illustrations, without exception, are rich in imagery given their small page surface. Literarily, chapter 8 is particularly celebrated because of its humanist manifesto. Chièze's illustration not only depicts the principal action of the chapter but also captures the psychological drama between the two protagonists—the father Gargantua writes a letter to his son Pantagruel, urging him to take full advantage of his studies in Paris. He is to become an "abyss of knowledge" so that he might one day be a wise and just ruler. Gargantua warns, however, that no amount of knowledge will help if Pantagruel does not put all his love, thoughts and hopes toward God.



*Comment Pantagruel estant a Paris receupt lettres
de son pere Gargantua, et la copie d'icelles.*

Fig. 8

With the illustration's double image, Chièze has depicted the reader's torn attention between Gargantua's ambitious pedagogical outline and the fun-loving Pantagruel's reaction to it. After all, Gargantua expects, among other things, that Pantagruel know perfectly Greek, Hebrew and Latin while recognizing all plants, animals and geographical features. Pantagruel does not appear alarmed at the pedagogical regime. Like his father, Pantagruel has a noble air although he appears to have a faint smile. Rather than a quill, he fingers a tankard and appears to be nowhere near books, tutors or a writing desk. One could argue that this composition offers a cubist refusal of temporality. The reader views simultaneously the letter written by its sender and read by its recipient. More importantly, this extra-temporal design hearkens back to medieval triptychs that show multiple facets of an action.

While idealistic and elevated in tone and language, chapter 8 is ambiguous on a narrative level and Chièze captures that ambiguity with his juxtaposed images of the father and son. Rabelais concludes the chapter with a description of Pantagruel

being so touched and inspired by his father that his subsequent enthusiastic and rigorous studies revealed “a soul afire.”

However, Gargantua’s last admonishment is that Pantagruel avoid the company of all those whom he does not want to resemble. Two paragraphs later, at the beginning of Chapter 9, Pantagruel does just the opposite—we still have the concrete image of Pantagruel with tankard in hand rather than with his head in the books. He encounters a bedraggled vagrant and immediately decides that despite appearances, this young man is of noble stature and will be a true friend for life. The friend turns out to be Panurge and as his name’s meaning—multiple urges—suggests, is more subject to his emotions than his reason. Chièze’s version of Pantagruel’s first view of Panurge (**Fig. 9**) shows the unremarkable Panurge at a distance, further underscoring Pantagruel’s inexplicable attraction to him. In contrast, the perspective also emphasizes Pantagruel’s gigantic stature.



Comment Pantagruel trouva Panurge, lequel il ayma toute sa vie.

Fig. 9

Throughout Rabelais’s chronicles Panurge proves himself to be the quintessential trickster, blackguard, coward, drunk and

liar. Chièze's full-page portrait (**Fig. 10**) portrays him with a literal bag of tricks.



Fig 10

About all Gargantua could possibly approve of is Panurge's quick-wittedness. Figure 11, placed at the beginning of Chapter 14, depicts Panurge battling wits—and gestures—with a pompous English cleric. Pantagruel appears in the distant background, a sort of mediator between the two fools. In placing Panurge rather than Pantagruel in the foreground Chièze offers a parallel to Rabelais's narrative. Nine sequential chapters tell of Panurge's often unsavory escapades while Pantagruel observes but never participates.



■ *Comment ung grand clerc de Angleterre vouloit arguer
contre Pantagruel, Et fut vaincu par Panurge.*

Fig. 11

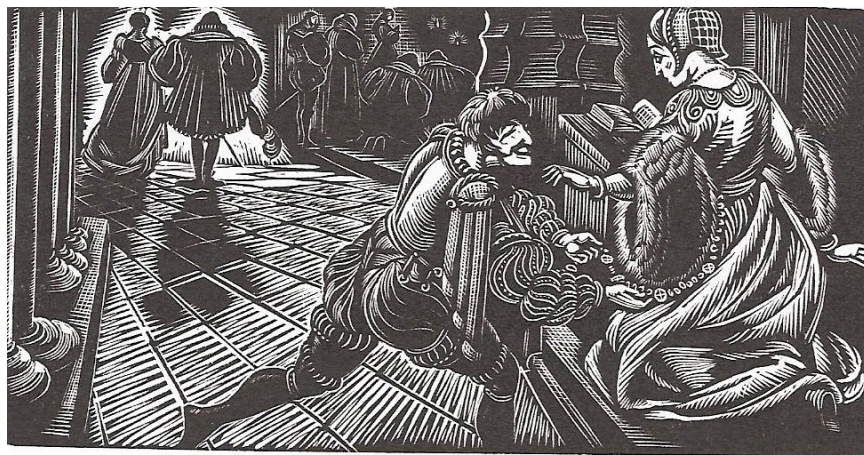
On the narrative level, numerous Chièze compositions are remarkable. He is the first illustrator of Rabelais to choose to depict an admittedly obscene passage described in the middle of the book, Chapter 15 (**Fig. 12**). During a stroll through Paris, Panurge notes that the city's original military ramparts, dating from the time of King Philip II, are shamefully dilapidated given the stature of the city. Pantagruel, in true humanist fashion, counters that the strength of the city lies in its citizens and that, regardless, the cost of a wall surrounding the city would be prohibitive. Panurge, announcing that women come cheaper than stones, speculates that a virtually impenetrable wall would be made of women's genitalia. It is possible that all previous illustrators pointedly avoided this clearly vulgar imagery. An equally likely reason, however, is that Panurge's imagery is but conjectural, occurring in a dizzily fast repartee between the pun-loving giant and the reprobate. Nonetheless, Chièze chose to depict Panurge's fanciful architecture.



*Comment Panurge enseigne une maniere bien nouvelle
de bastir les murailles de Paris.*

Fig. 12

And yet the illustration itself is not overtly obscene. It is found on the chapter's opening page when the reader is still unaware of Panurge's joke, it is quite difficult to discern the wall's construction. What we focus on instead, as it is likely Rabelais intended for the reader of the corresponding text, is Panurge himself as a jokester, front and center who smugly presents his "wall" to the delighted and laughing Pantagruel. Chièze does not intend to shock readers of this anniversary edition with graphic scenes. Indeed, if anything, he downplays other vulgar scenes that Doré highlights. For instance, after a snooty Parisian lady rejects his amorous advances, Panurge incites an enormous pack of dogs to surround her and mark her, leaving her foul-smelling and in tatters. Chièze chooses to emphasize the prelude to this frankly troubling and misogynist scene. Here Panurge woos the anonymous lady as she reads her prayer book. (**Fig. 13**) Panurge's leering smile aside, the print could just as easily represent one of Chrétien de Troyes' courtly romances.



Comment Panurge fut amoureux d'une baulte dame de Paris
Et du tour qu'il luy fist.

Fig. 13

Why then, did Chièze choose to depict the organic wall but not the pack of dogs? A partial response lies in the fact that he wanted his illustrations to go beyond the mere episodic. And, much like the emblematics of the previously discussed salt cellar image, the “living wall” recalls a biblical call to arms. Peter’s admonishes his fellow apostles and followers to “Be you yourselves as living stones, built thereon into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood . . .” (1 Peter 2:5). This allusion is admittedly tenuous and yet it typifies Rabelais’s preoccupation with layered and conflicting themes in multiple passages.

Pantagruel has often been considered a mock epic and, as such, features the young giant facing a first time battle with the ominous Dipsodes led by the King Anarche. This ruthless and brutish enemy had invaded Pantagruel’s kingdom and he is obliged to defend it. Here Pantagruel faces his monster-like enemy, who for audiences of the 1930s would immediately recognize the Kaiser’s World War I army helmet (**Fig 14**).



Fig. 14

For contemporary European readers, this episode's battle scenes would have projected marked relevance, given the growing albeit nascent threat of war from the Third Reich in 1935 (**Fig. 15**).

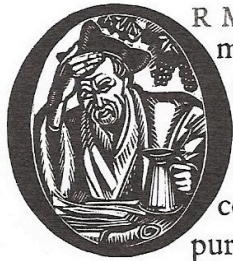


Comment Panurge, Carpalim, Eusthenes et Epistemon, compagnons
de Pantagruel, desconfirent six cens soixante chevaliers
bien subtilement.

Fig. 15

Chièze is also unique among illustrators in his manner of presenting Rabelais's narrator, Alcofribas. As the chronicle continues, Rabelais uses his first-person narration more prominently as Alcofribas becomes a fellow companion to Pantagruel. And so, Chièze features him as well. On the final page, Alcofribas is literally inserted in the text, suffering from a throbbing headache after having had too much of "September's puree" as he calls the wine in his tankard. (**Fig. 16**) In short, it is but a hangover that puts an end to the chronicle as Pantagruel's countless adventures could easily keep him writing perpetually.

Pantagruel. Les horribles et espoventables faictz & prouesses. 179



R MESSIEURS VOUS AVEZ OUY UNG commencement de l'histoire horricque de mon maistre & seigneur Pantagruel. Icy je feray fin a ce premier livre : car la teste me faict ung peu de mal, & sens bien que les registres de mon cerveau sont quelque peu brouislez de ceste puree de Septembre.

Vous aurez le reste de l'histoire a ces foires de Francfort prochainement venantes; & la vous verrez comment il trouva la pierre philosophalle, comment il passa les monts Caspies, comment il naviga par la mer Athlanticque & desfit les Caniballes & conquesta les isles de Perlas, comment il espousa la fille du roy de Inde, dit Prestre Jehan, comment il combatit contre les diables & feist brusler cinq chambres d'enfer et rompit .iiii. dentz a Lucifer & une corne au cul, comment il visita les regions de la lune pour sçavoir si a la verité la lune n'estoit pas entiere, mais que les femmes en avoient .iii. cartiers en la teste; et mille aultres petites joyeusettez toutes veritables : ce sont beaux textes d'evangilles en françoys. Bon soir messieurs, pardonnate my, & ne pensez pas tant a mes faultes que vous ne pensez bien es vostres.

 FINIS.

Figure 16

While underscoring the profound humor of the work, Chièze is among the best illustrators to capture the sheer whimsy ever present in the Pantagruel chronicle. For example, the previously mentioned humorous shapes and figures representative of architectural features found in Lyon establish a medieval

presence in the text. Frequently found at the end of a chapter, they conclude fittingly the light-hearted episodes.

Interestingly, another remarkable illustrated edition of *Pantagruel* appeared not long after Chièze's. Commissioned by the Swiss publishing house Skira in the late nineteen-thirties, it is a *livre d'art*, or artistic and non-critical, edition.² Skira chose as its illustrator the well-known artist André Dérain, a landscape and portrait painter, in the expressionist and cubist tradition. Like Chièze, Dérain was a frequent literary illustrator and tellingly, his first illustration was for *Le Rire* and *Le Sourire* in 1902, a time when he, along with Henri Matisse, were just beginning to demonstrate their fauvist aesthetics. Throughout his career Dérain illustrated multiple important and diverse literary works including those of Ovid, Oscar Wilde, Saint-Exupéry and La Fontaine, as well as stage designs for plays by Claudel and operas by Rossini.³

The resultant 150 colored woodblock prints, published in 1943, capture the "spontaneity and whimsicality" shared by both author and illustrator.⁴ Their bright colors are reminiscent of those used at the beginning of his career in his works displayed in the famous 1905 Fauve Paris exhibition. Dérain's view of the Parisian lady victimized by Panurge in chapter 21 is, like that of Chièze, unexpected (**Fig. 17**). As in most of the other prints, the characters fill up the entire plate and are devoid of any narrative context or backdrop. She is happy and almost clown-like, just as the beginning of the episode suggests. Yet, her wide-eyed look evokes the surprise and horror awaiting her and which is the focal point of the episode. These bright prints belie the extremely hostile conditions under which they were made. Dérain began the illustrations at a time when his house was requisitioned by the

² Rabelais, François Rabelais, *Pantagruel*, ed. Georges Girard, and ill. André Dérain (Paris: Skira, 1943)

³ Denys Sutton, *André Derain*. (London: Phaidon Press, 1959), 139-41.

⁴ Sutton, 47.

Nazis. Because of his association with certain Jewish artists, he received daily visits from Gestapo officers.⁵ The cartoon-like episode in which Pantagruel dispatches handily the buffoonish General Loup Garou and his army of Dipsodes would be both a satisfying caricature of the contemporary war but also an absurd understatement of its brutality.



Fig. 17

Illustrations are intended to supplement, not replace or subvert its companion text. So where do these two selective and at times minimalist illustrative approaches lead to readings of Rabelais in the past century? If anything, modern literary criticism has become more exhaustive of the works of Rabelais, revealing the complexities and ambiguities of his work. While Doré's illustrations were documentary and episodic in nature, those of Chièze and Dérain were, by and large, accurately emphasizing the archetypal personalities of the principal characters. Rather than

⁵ Jane Lee, *Dérain* (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1990), 84-5.

trying to represent all of Rabelais's writings, the illustrators preferred to focus on individual books and, at times, to underscore their continuing moral and thematic relevance. I would argue that Chièze, in both his choice of subject matter and his medieval-style medium, best captures both the humor and the wisdom of this literary masterpiece. The styles of Doré, Chièze and Dérain alike enrich readers' comprehension of a profound *oeuvre* and, when viewed together, parallel the contrasting literary interpretations it continues to provoke.

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Notes

Old Icelandic *gaglvíðr*

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This essay discusses a debated word form gaglvíðr occurring in stanza 42 of the Old Icelandic poem Vǫluspá 'The Prophecy of the Seeress'. The noun gaglvíðr is problematic both from the semantic point of view (Old Icelandic gagl 'gosling', víðr 'tree; forest' 'gosling forest?'), and because it possesses a variant spelling galgvíðr ('gallows' tree; 'gallows' forest') which occurs in another manuscript containing the same poem. In the present paper, the form gaglvíðr is considered to be the correct and the original form of this word, whereas the form galgvíðr is interpreted as a scribal error. Various existing semantic analyses of the noun gaglvíðr are discussed, and a new alternative analysis is offered. According to the new analysis, gaglvíðr is interpreted as a compound place-name meaning 'the Woods of Giantess(es)' or as a poetic word (heiti) for mountains.

The medieval collection of Old Icelandic mythological poems about the ancient Germanic gods and heroes, in the world of literary and Scandinavian studies known as the “Poetic Edda” or the “Elder Edda” (in Old Icelandic, *Eddukvæði*) has been translated into multiple languages and has been the target of numerous philological studies. One would probably not be far from truth maintaining that today we know more about the “Poetic Edda” than we do not know. However, the discipline of Eddic studies is not completely free of problems. In the process of re-copying the “Poetic Edda,” (a major literary work in medieval Iceland¹)

¹ The precise number of the copies that once existed is unknown. The main preserved manuscript of the “Poetic Edda,” known as Codex Regius (or *Konunsgbók Eddukvæða*, GKS 2365, 4to; late 13th century) happens to be a copy

multiple inaccuracies made their way into the copies, creating a fairly large amount of textual variation as well as many unclear passages. The interpretation of textual variants exhibited in different manuscripts of the same text continues being a complicated issue in the present day, and in the course of time, many interpretations of the multiple problematic passages in the Poetic Edda—sometimes entirely different from each other—have been put forward. A prime example of such textual variation in the “Poetic Edda,” occurs in the first poem of the collection, known as *Vǫluspá* or “The Prophesy of the Seeress.” In stanza 42 there occurs a noun *gaglvíðr*. The meaning of this noun is not entirely clear, and over the years scholars have proposed various theories regarding the meaning of this word. This essay discusses the existing theories about this noun and proposes an alternative interpretation of its meaning.

I

Before starting the investigation of the existing interpretations for the noun *gaglvíðr*, it would be useful to look at the actual stanza in which this noun occurs. In *Codex Regius* (GKS Nr. 2365 4to), the main manuscript of *Vǫluspá* and the other Old Icelandic mythological poems, the stanza containing the word-form *gaglvíðr* looks as follows:

... Sat þar ahǫg
oc fló hǫrpo gygiar hırþır glað e“þer. gol vm hanom ıgagl
vıþı fagr rǫð hǫnı fa er fıalað heitur.²

of some even older manuscript (now lost). Little fragments of the entire collection are scattered around numerous other medieval Icelandic manuscripts.

² See L. F. A. Wimmer and Finnur Jónsson, *Håndskriftet Nr. 2365 4to gl. kgl. Samling på det store kgl. bibliotek i København. Codex regius af den ældre Edda i fototypisk og diplomatisk gengivelse* (København: S. L. Møllers Bogtrykkeri, 1891), 322-3.

[Normalized Old Icelandic]

*Sat þar á haugi
ok sló hárpu
gýgjar hirðir,
glæðr Eggþér;
gól um hánom
í gaglviði
fagrrauðr hani,
sá er Fjalarr heitir.*

[Translation]

Sat there on a hill
and played the harp
the herdsman of a giantess,
merry E.;
sang above him
in (. . .)
a fair-red rooster
that is called Fjalarr

II

The word *gaglviðr* is a compound noun consisting of the noun *gagl* usually interpreted as “goose” or “gosling,” and the noun *viðr*, which in Old Icelandic meant “tree,” “forest,” “woods,” or simply “wood”.³ If one puts the two words together to form an English version of the compound, one gets something like “gosling-forest” or “goose-forest.”

A noun with such a meaning looks semantically suspicious since geese generally do not normally live in forests. Geese are waterbirds and prefer open spaces to forests, a well known fact for biologists, hunters, or any people interested in the living habits of birds.⁴ However, despite this problem the interpretation of the phrase *í gaglviði* as “goose-forest” does occur, compare “*i gagle-skogen*” (i.e. “in the goose-forest”) in I. Mortenson-Egnund’s Norwegian translation of the Poetic Edda.⁵ It seems likely that Mortenson-Egnund was trying to stay as close to the Old Icelandic original as possible (due to the great similarity between Norwegian

³ In the Modern Icelandic language the meaning “forest” has been preserved in certain idiomatic expressions, e.g. *sólin gengur til viðar* “the sun is setting” (lit.: “the sun is going to the forest”).

⁴ For further references see S. Cramp, *Handbook of the Birds of Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. The Birds of the Western Palearctic*. v. I. *Ostrich to Ducks* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1978), 414-5 *et passim*.

⁵ I. Mortensson-Egnund, *Edda-kvede* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1974), 13.

and Icelandic this is often fairly easy), but such a translation does not make much sense for the reasons just mentioned.

Another interpretation is presented in G. Vigfusson and Y. F. Powell's English translation of the Poetic Edda. Vigfusson and Powell translated the phrase *í gaglviði* as "Gaggle-brake", i.e. "geese-brake, brush-wood of geese."⁶ Such a translation contains two problems, the first one being that Old Iceland *viðr* does not mean "brush-wood" (see above). The second problem that the translation of *gaglviðr* as "brush-wood of geese" raises is that geese do not live in brush-wood either. As mentioned previously, geese prefer open spaces where they feel safe from predators.

Other scholars have tried to find a more appealing explanation of this compound. As early as the middle of the nineteenth century H. Lüning translated this word as "*Vogelwald*,"⁷ i.e. "bird-forest." Lüning did not comment on such a translation, but this explanation has become the most popular in the world of medieval Scandinavian studies. It is clear that Lüning interpreted the word *gagl* "goose, gosling" as a *heiti* (poetic synonym)⁸ for a bird in general. This interpretation has been adopted by a number

⁶ G. Vigfusson and Y. A. Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale. The Poetry of the Old Northern Tongue, from the Earliest Times to the Thirteenth Century*. Vol. I (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1883), 198.

⁷ H. Lüning, *Die Edda. Eine Sammlung altnordischer Götter- und Heldenlieder. Urschrift mit erklärenden Anmerkungen, Glossar und Einleitung, altnordischer Mythologie und Grammatik* (Zürich: Verlag von Meyer & Zeller, 1859), 561.

⁸ *Heiti* is an Old Norse term (roughly) meaning "poetic synonym." *Heiti* normally consist of a single word which may be non-compound or compound, cf. the various *heiti* for "ship" in Old Icelandic: *laukr* (lit. "onion"), *ugla* (lit. "owl"), *kerling* (lit. "old woman, she-troll"), *ára-kló* (lit. "oar-claw"), *far-tíðr* (lit. "traveling frequently"), etc. For a more detailed discussion see M. Clunies Ross, "Heiti," in *Medieval Scandinavia. An Encyclopedia*, ed. Phillip Pulsiano (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1993), 279-80.

of translators and editors of the Poetic Edda.⁹ Some scholars, for example Gísli Sigurðsson, have even shortened “bird-forest” to simply “forest”, since “bird-forest” and “forest” are close enough in their meanings. In a somewhat similar fashion A. I. Korsun translated the phrase *í gaglviði* as ‘на деревьях лесных’ (lit. “on the trees of the woods”),¹⁰ whereas F. Genzmer translated it as “*im Kiefernbusch*” (lit. “in the bushes of pine trees” [sic]).¹¹ Related to this interpretation is Ólafur Briem’s proposal, according to which the noun *gaglviðr* is to be understood as “towering, high trees” (Icelandic “*gnæfandi tré*”).¹²

III

There also exists another old interpretation, originally suggested by Vigfusson and presented in his Old Icelandic-English dictionary. According to this theory, *gaglviðr* means “the forest of gale or bog myrtle.”¹³ Vigfusson proposed that the noun *gagl* in

⁹ W. H. Auden and P. B. Taylor, *Norse Poems* (Boston and London: Faber and Faber 1983) 250; H. A. Bellows, *The Poetic Edda* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1936), 18; J. Simpson, *The Northmen Talk; A Choice of Tales from Iceland* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), 18; Gísli Sigurðsson, *Eddukvæði* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1998), 13; Gísli Sigurðsson, *Eddukvæði* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1999), 15; P. Terry, *Poems of the Vikings. The Elder Edda* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing, 1980), 8.

¹⁰ А. И. Корсун, А. И. 1963. *Старшая Эдда. Древнеисландские песни о богах и героях*. Редакция, вступительная статья и комментарии М. И. Стеблин-Каменского (Москва – Ленинград: Издательство Академии Наук СССР, 1963), 13.

¹¹ F. Genzmer, *Edda. Götterdichtung und Sprachdichtung. Zweiter Band. Einleitung und Anmerkungen von A. Heusler* (Jena: Eugen Diederichs, 1920), 40.

¹² Ólafur Briem, *Eddukvæði* (Reykjavík: Skálholt, 1968), 85.

¹³ G. Vigfusson, *An Icelandic-English Dictionary*. Based on the ms. collections of the late Richard Cleasby, enlarged and completed by Gudbrand Vigfusson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1874), 187. This interpretation is also

this compound meant not “gosling,” but rather “gale,” and was related to the noun *gagel* “gale” attested in the ancient and medieval West Germanic languages—Old English, Middle High German and Middle Dutch. Theoretically, the two words can be related, since both could be regular reflexes of an early Proto-Germanic noun which could be reconstructed as “*gagla*” i.e. “gale.” As far as the meaning of this compound is concerned, “gale forest” would be semantically plausible too, since gale was known to the ancient Scandinavians, and it indeed grows in forests.¹⁴ Thus, according to Vigfusson’s suggestion, in this particular stanza, the compound noun *gaglviðr* “gale forest” could be interpreted as a *heiti* (poetic synonym) for a forest in general, and would be comparable with the explanation described in the preceding section. However, this theory is problematic as well.

There is no evidence that gale (*Myrica gale*) has ever been called *gagl* in Old, Middle or Modern Icelandic, or in the other Scandinavian languages. The name of this plant in Icelandic is *mjaðarlyng* (lit. “mead/beer heath”) or *pors*, whereas in the continental Scandinavian languages gale also is called *pors*.¹⁵ The meaning of the word *gagl* in continental Scandinavian, Old Norse and Middle Icelandic always has to do with birds (e.g., young swans, geese or even hens) or with women (this usage must be secondary).¹⁶ I have not been able to find a single instance where

mentioned by Beatrice La Farge and John Tucker, *Glossary to the Poetic Edda. Skandinavistische Arbeiten 15* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1992), 77. However, see p. 78 in the same book.

¹⁴ A. B. Rendle, *The Classification of Flowering Plants*, v. II, *Dicotyledons*. Cambridge Biological Series Cambridge: UP, 1925), 13-4.

¹⁵ The etymology of this word is somewhat unclear; for the discussion and references see J. de Vries, *Altnordisches etymologisches Wörterbuch* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1962) 427; J. Fritzner, *Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog*. Omarbejdet, forøget og forbedret udgave. Annet bind HI–P. 4. udgave (Oslo, Bergen, Tromsø: Universitetsforlaget, 1973), 944.

¹⁶ Cf. several examples adduced from the database of Orðabók Háskólans in Reykjavík (Iceland): . . . i Alfta Vere heita ungar alfter, sem fyrst

the noun *gagl* would have the meaning “gale.” One could assume that in early Scandinavian there existed a noun “*gagla*” “gale,” which at some point ceased to be used as a word for “gale” and started to be used in the meaning “gosling, goose,” etc. due to a semantic change. However, this raises further problems. First of all, one should answer why this noun should have been lost while gale has always been common in Scandinavia, and has constantly been in use. The second problem would be posited by the previously mentioned nouns *pors* and *mjaðarlyng*. One might ask why one word would have been dropped and new words introduced instead. The third problem is the reasoning of the semantic shift from a plant name to a word for a bird, since such a

fara að verpa *Gagl* . . . “in Álfaver, young swans that lay eggs for the first time, are called “*gagl*”; . . . a Síðu kallast og *gagl* ungar hænur sem fyrst verpa “in Síða, also young hens that lay eggs for the first time are called “*gagl*”; . . . en *gögl* verða að gásum . . . “and goslings become geese”; . . . *Gagl* Mulier nauci et nihili . . . “*Gagl*” [means] a worthless woman”; . . . *Gagl* dicuntur ineptæ fæminæ qvæ rerum omnium imperitæ sunt . . . “*Gagl*” are called worthless women that are unskilled in all matters”; . . . vær köllum amlodalegar kvensviptir *gagl*... “we call lazy women *gagl*” (for references and more examples see <http://www.ordabok.hi.is/>). In the meaning “goose,” “gosling” or “swan” the word *gagl* also occurs in the sagas and in the Poetic Edda, e.g. . . . en at fyrsta sali galt hann *gagl* fyrir gás, grís fyrir gamalt svín, en fyrir mÄrk gulls brennds reiddi hann hálfu mÄrk gulls, en aðra hálfu mÄrk af leiri ok móðu . . . “but during the first sale he gave a gosling instead of a goose, a piglet instead of an old pig, and instead of a mark of pure gold he paid half of a mark, and the other half [he paid] in clay and mud” (*Óláfs saga ins helga*, chapter 94, see Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, *Snorri Sturluson. Heimskringla*. II. [Reykjavík: Hið íslenska fornritafélag, 1945]); . . . gulli seri in *gaglbjarta* . . . “sowed gold the swan/goose-white one” (i.e. “the one which is as white as a swan/goose”; *Atlakviða in grónlenzka*, st. 39, see H. Kuhn, *Edda. Die Lieder der Codex Regius nebst verwandten Denkmälern*, [Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1962]); . . . hvar hefir þú, hilmir, hildi vakða, eða *gÄgl* um alin Gunnar systra? . . . “where did you, o prince, raise the battle, or [where did you] feed the goslings of the sisters of Gunnr” (i.e. the goslings of valkyries, which is a *kenning* [i.e. a compound poetic phrase] for ravens; *Helgakviða Hundingsbana* II, st. 7, see Kuhn).

shift in meaning is rather unexpected. Thus, this seemingly attractive theory in fact is quite problematic as well.

IV

There exists a still different explanation of this word. According to the opinion of several other scholars, the word in question is to be read not *gaglviðr*, but rather *galgviðr*, the meaning being “gallows’ tree” or “gallows’ woods”.¹⁷ Such a reading is based on the testimony of another medieval Icelandic manuscript in which the poem *Vǫluspá* has been preserved as well. This manuscript is called *Hauksbók* (catalogue Nr. AM 544 4to). It happens to be the case that the consonant cluster *gl* in the *Codex Regius* form *gaglviði*, looks as if “metathesised” in the *Hauksbók* form, cf. *galgviði*. The actual passage from *Hauksbók* follows:¹⁸

[<i>Hauksbók</i>]	[Translation]
Sat þar á haugi	Sat there on a hill
ok sló hǺrpu	and played the harp
gýgjar hirðir,	the herdsman of a giantess,
glaðr Egðir;	merry E.;
gól yfir	sang above
í galgviði	in/on (. . .)
fagrrauðr hani,	a fair-red rooster,
en sá Fjalarr heitir	and he is called Fjalarr.

The form *galgviði* can be easily interpreted as the dative singular form of some noun *galgviðr*. The semantics of this word, *galgviðr*, would seem to be rather clear, as both the word *galgi* (morphologically: *galg-i*) “gallows” and *viðr* “forest” are well known in Old Icelandic. A compound noun consisting of the two above-mentioned nouns was interpreted by scholars as “gallows” or “gallows forest” (i.e. a sacred forest where people were hanged

¹⁷ This interpretation is favoured by Ólafur Briem, cf. fn. 11 above; L. M. Hollander, *The Poetic Edda* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988), 8; Kuhn, 69; C. Larrington, *The Poetic Edda* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1996) 9.

¹⁸ The language has been standardized.

as an offering to the gods.¹⁹ This interpretation could find some support in the ancient tradition of human sacrifice, which seems to have been practiced in early Scandinavia.²⁰ However, the interpretation of the word *galgviðr* as “gallows’ woods or tree” is problematic as well, because when one looks at the context it appears that “gallows” simply does not fit in (see the quoted passage above).

The site described in this stanza is apparently *Jätunheimr*, i.e. the Land of the Giants (in Old Icelandic called *jättnar*, *tráll* or *pursar*, pl.). This is implied by the words *gýgjar hirðir* “herdsman of a giantess.” Giants lived neither in the world of people (*Miðgarðr*) nor in the world of the gods (*Ásgarðr*), and thus *Jätunheimr* remains the only possibility. However, if the location described in this stanza is *Jätunheimr*, the function of the gallows becomes obscure, since there is no evidence in literature that giants would have practiced hanging. Therefore the interpretation of the word *galgviðr* as “gallows tree” or “gallows forest” also becomes less attractive than before, however awe-inspiring the image of a gallows’ forest standing in *Jätunheimr* may be. But if *galgviðr* cannot mean “gallows’ forest”, then it can hardly mean anything else, as ‘gallows’ is the only attested meaning of the noun *galgi*.

V

To my mind, the word-form *galgviði* must be a scribal error for *gaglviði*, which, I think, was the original word misunderstood by the scribe of Hauksbók (as shown above, the semantics of this compound is not very clear). Yet the meaning of the original word *gaglviðr* can perhaps be explained not only as ‘goose forest’ or ‘bird forest’ (as was suggested by Lüning and

¹⁹ See Ólafur Briem, *Eddukvæði* (Reykjavík: Skálholt, 1968), 85.

²⁰ Cf. some allusions to human sacrifice in the Eddic poem *Hávamál*, st. 138; also P. V. Glob, *The Bog People. Iron Age Man Preserved* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1971), 9-11 *et passim*.

others). An alternative interpretation is possible, and I will describe it in the following sections.

The Icelandic philologist Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon claimed in his etymological dictionary of Icelandic (*Íslensk orðsifjabók*, 1989) that besides the meaning “goose, gosling” the noun *gagl* could also be used with the meaning “she-troll, giantess,”²¹ and has been used in Icelandic as a synonym of the words *grýla* and *skessa*, both meaning “giantess, she-troll.” Also in the Icelandic dictionary edited by Árni Böðvarðsson, the noun *gagl* has been assigned a meaning “*tröllskessa*” (“she-troll”) beside “*villigæs, gæsarungi, ungi, álft, fugl yfirleitt*” (“wild goose, gosling [bird’s] young, swan; a bird in general”) and “*blaðurskjóða, fifl*” (“rattle-brain, fool”).²²

Unfortunately, neither Ásgeir B. Magnússon nor Árni Böðvarðsson provided any examples of such a usage or provided references in order to support their claims. The only thing Ásgeir B. Magnússon tells the reader is that the noun *gagl* with the meaning “giantess” is attested in written sources in the seventeenth century (which is relatively late, compared with the age of the poem *Váluþpá*). However, even though no examples were adduced by these two authors, their claim that *gagl* could have been used in the sense of “troll” in Icelandic probably should not be dismissed. As the medieval Icelandic poet and historian Snorri Sturluson tells us in his *Prose Edda*, the names of birds occasionally were used as *heiti* (poetic synonyms) for trolls in poetry, compare the bird names *kráka* “crow” and *skrikja* “snow-bunting,” both of which could be used in the meaning “giantess” in poetry.²³ Therefore, there is at least a theoretical possibility that

²¹ Cf. Ásgeir Blöndal Magnússon, *Íslensk orðsifjabók* (Reykjavík: Orðabók Háskólans, 1989), 224.

²² Árni Böðvarðsson, *Íslensk orðabók fyrir skóla og skrifstofur* (Reykjavík: Mál og menning, 1994), 261.

²³ See Guðni Jónsson, *Edda Snorra Sturlusonar með skáldatali* (Reykjavík, 1945), 246.

gagl could have been used in this way, too. In addition to this, it is also known that the word *gagl* “goose, gosling” and various words for giantess could be used as pejorative *heiti* for women in Icelandic. Besides the examples cited in footnote 15 above, one could also adduce the excerpt from the Icelandic ethnologist Jón Árnason’s collection of Icelandic folk-tales: “. . . þykir skass, skessa eða flagð og önnur slík orð lastmæli um konur.”²⁴

One could certainly argue that the pejorative usage of *gagl* and *skessa* etc. for women on the one hand and the usage of the bird names *kráka* and *skríkja* to refer to giantesses on the other hand cannot warrant that also the word *gagl* was used to refer to giantesses in Icelandic; however, such the usage of *gagl* as a *heiti* for a giantess seems entirely thinkable to me, and in the following section I would like to discuss the possible ways in which the original meaning of the noun *gagl* could have switched from ‘gosling’ to ‘giantess’. In addition to this, I will also propose a yet different interpretation for the compound *gaglvíðr*, assuming that the noun *gagl* means ‘giantess’.

VI

There is a fairly easy way to account for the semantic switch from “goose, gosling” to “giantess.” The latter meaning would in this case be secondary, and from the functional point of view the new noun *gagl* meaning “giantess” would be a *heiti* (poetic synonym). Such semantic shifts from a common noun to a *heiti* for a troll are not rare in ancient Icelandic poetry, as can be seen from the following list of selected *heiti* for both male and female trolls and giants: *herkir* and *eldr* (lit. “fire” masc.), *skrýmir* (lit. “sword” masc.), *káttir* (lit. “cat, little lamb” masc.), *vindr* (lit. “wind” masc.), *hvalr* (lit. “whale” masc.),²⁵ *gríðr* (lit. “greed”

²⁴ Translation: “[the words] *skass*, *skessa* and *flagð* [all three mean “giantess”–AV] and other such words are considered to be obscenities about women” (source: <http://www.ordabok.hi.is/> [Orðabók Háskólans]).

²⁵ Besides “whale” and “troll,” the noun *hvalr* also had the meaning “devil, the wicked one” in Icelandic. The meaning “whale” is definitely the

fem.), *rýgr* (lit. “noble woman” fem.), *gjalp/gjǽlp* (lit. “wave” fem.), *fála* (lit. “loose woman, timorous sheep” fem.), *simul* (lit. “female reindeer” fem.), *skrikja* (lit. “snow-bunting” fem.), *kráka* (lit. “crow” fem.).²⁶ For our purposes the most significant *heiti* are *skrikja* and *kráka*, both of which, besides being *heiti* for she-trolls, are also names for birds. Beside these two *heiti*, the noun *gagl* with the meaning “giantess, she-troll” on the one hand and “gosling” on the other hand perhaps is not so striking any more. Thus, it seems quite possible that the noun *gagl*, whose primary (and original) meaning was “gosling, goose” came also to be used as a *heiti* for a troll.

The semantic change from “gosling” to “she-troll, giantess” may have also involved a more complex development. Before coming to mean “she-troll, giantess” the noun *gagl* would have first acquired the meaning “lazy/worthless woman” (compare the examples in note 15 above). Then, the semantic change from “worthless woman” to “she-troll, giantess” would be quite simple. It is impossible to tell now, whether *gagl* began to be used as a *heiti* for a giantess with, or without, the intermediate stage “worthless woman.” However, theoretically both semantic developments are possible.

The compound noun *gagl-viðr* can now be explained in two ways. If one interpreted the noun *gagl* as a proper noun, i.e. *Gagl*, one might think that *gaglvíðr* was a place name, i.e. the name of a particular forest in *Játtunheimr*. This is quite plausible, since forests existed in the World of Giants, cf. *Myrkviðr* “The Dark Woods,” *Járnviðr* “The Iron Woods.” The name *gaglvíðr*, “The Woods of Giantess(es),” would seem nothing but a very proper name for a forest in *Játtunheimr*.

original meaning, but it is unclear which of the two secondary meanings, “devil” or “troll” is older.

²⁶ The *heiti* adduced here are taken from *Snorra Edda*’s *Skáldskaparmál*, see Guðni Jónsson, 245-6.

Yet there is another possibility, which does not seem less attractive than the one described in the preceding paragraph. It was believed that mountains were a common dwelling-place of trolls (cf. also another *heiti* (poetic synonym) for a troll, viz. *bergrisi* “mountain-giant,” originating from the belief that giants lived in the mountains). If one interpreted the noun *gaglviðr* not as a place name but rather as a common determinative compound with the meaning “she-troll’s forest; forest of a giantess,” one could explain it as a *heiti* (poetic synonym) for mountains, or more precisely, “mountain range, mountainous area.” Such a *heiti*, even though it seems to be the only *heiti* for mountains in the whole Poetic Edda, is semantically plausible, and its single attestation does not have to be considered problematic. A paucity of *heiti* for mountains in the ancient poetry is not unexpected at all, as *heiti* (as well as *kennings*) are usually created for objects that were considered important, e.g. weapons (shield, sword, spear, helmet, axe), ships, domestic animals (oxen, horses), warriors, etc. It may also be mentioned that *heiti* in general are not very common in the Poetic Edda. Among the very few examples, one could mention *hveralundr* “a hot spring area” (*Völuspá* 35; lit. “forest of hot springs”),²⁷ *moldþinurr* “the serpent *Miðgarðsormr*” (*Völuspá* 61; lit. “earth-string”),²⁸ *myrkriða* “witch” (*Hárbarðsljóð* 20; lit. “darkness rider or rider in the dark” fem.), *ilkvistir* “toes” (*Atlamál*

²⁷ In *Codex Regius*, the two words are written separately, viz. *hveralunãð* (see Wimmer and F. Jónsson, 3), but generally they are interpreted as a single compound noun, *hveralundi* (dat. sg.). It is not quite clear whether it has to be interpreted as a common noun “a grove of hot springs” (> “a hot spring area”?) or as a place name, “The Grove of Hot Springs.” Hollander translates it either as “a kettle-grove” or “the grove about the hot springs” (L. M. Hollander, *The Poetic Edda* [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1988], 7; whereas Korsun’s translation is ‘роща горячих источников’ (i.e. “grove of hot springs, Korsun, 218). In a way that is similar to Korsun’s “grove of hot springs.” Mortenson-Egnund translated the noun *hveralundr* as “kjeldelunden” i.e. “hot spring grove.” See I. Mortenson-Egnund, *Eddakvede* (Oslo: Det Norske Samlaget, 1974), 13.

²⁸ The actual form in the manuscript is *moldþinur*, acc. sg.

in grónlenzku 66; lit. “sole-twigs”), *lind* “shield” (*HLǼðskviða* 11; lit. “linden-tree”), *muntún* “breast, chest” (*Hervararkviða* 16; lit. “mind meadow”), and a few others.

VII

To summarize, I would like to evaluate the ideas and hypotheses described in the preceding sections. From the various proposals about the reading and the meaning of the prepositional phrase *í gaglviði* or *í galgviði*, some explanations are hard to accept on semantic grounds. Among these are the hypotheses according to which the noun *gaglviðr* is to be understood as “bog myrtle forest” or “gosling forest” (see section III) and, most probably, the reading *í galgviði* that follows the spelling of *Hauksbók*. As mentioned above, the idea of gallows trees in *Jätunheimr* is rather implausible. On the contrary, a theory according to which *gaglviðr* is to be understood as a *heiti* for “a forest” (as per Lüning) in general makes much more sense, and it is quite possible that this is the real meaning of this compound. In addition to the last-mentioned theory, I have proposed two additional explanations based on the assumption that the noun *gagl* could also mean “giantess” (as a *heiti*). If this be the case, the noun *gaglviðr* could be explained either as a place name *gaglviðr* “The Woods of Giantess(es)” or an *heiti* for mountains.

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**Heloise and Abelard Today:
A Student Response Approach**

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The story of Heloise and Abelard has aged remarkably well. We teach their "Personal Letters" and Abelard's Historia calamitatum in two undergraduate courses. This article discusses an informal writing assignment, in which our students adopt the persona of Astralabe, the son of Heloise and Abelard, and write a letter to Heloise concerning his parents' lives and loves. Often students read the correspondence through the filter of contemporary experience. They consider Abelard's behavior as patriarchal and boorish, and object to what they see as Heloise's extreme humility and acceptance of the anti-feminist palaver of her day. However, when students remember and respect the beliefs and institutions that informed medieval culture and shaped this remarkable story, their letters engage the assignment more imaginatively, thoughtfully and critically. On occasion these letters have astonished us with the clarity and power of their insight. Here we present excerpts from our students' letters that show how this assignment takes them from a superficial grasp of the texts to a deeper understanding and appreciation of Heloise and Abelard.

Two courses at Gwynedd-Mercy College (one an interdisciplinary, seminar-style, honors course and the other a general education, philosophy offering) focus students' attention on medieval thought

and engage them in dialogue over a variety of texts.¹ The average population per class is between ten and fifteen students, ranging from second semester freshman to graduating seniors. At the center of both courses is what has become a rather provocative text for our students: *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise* translated by Betty Radice,² which includes Abelard's *Historia calamitatum* and what the editor labels the "Personal Letters," exchanged between Abelard and Heloise. Controversy emerges in discussions, when students often come into the classroom "loaded for bear." Most often, Abelard is the target. Less often, Heloise is attacked. Students' reactions are very much shaped by their experiences as men and women of the twenty-first century. Their present determines their view of the past, and it takes work to get them to remember and respect the beliefs and institutions that informed medieval culture and influenced the reactions of these two very strong personalities.

The controversy carries over into our students' writing. Both courses are writing intensive. In addition to the standard research essay and exams, we also require less formal writing assignments—specifically, letter writing. In the honors course, students write letters every ten days. In them students engage the readings, either responding to a prompt or developing an original insight. Instructors respond to the letters, and return them for editing and re-submission at term's end, when the compilation is graded for quality and originality of insight, creativity and written expression. The philosophy course has required a portfolio of letters and more formal essays; but the portfolio was discontinued

¹ An early version of this essay was presented at the 34th Annual Meeting of the Rocky Mountain Medieval and Renaissance Association at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, May 23-25, 2002.

² *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise*, trs. with an Introduction and Notes by Betty Radice, revised by Michael Clanchy (London: Penguin, 2003; 1st ed., 1974). Clanchy re-numbers the Letters, beginning with the *Historia calamitatum* as Letter 1; Heloise's initial letter, which Radice had listed as Personal Letter 1, thus becomes Letter 2.

when classes became so large (30 plus) that the number of essays and letters was overwhelming.

The letter writing has proven especially suitable to our honors course where several other texts in addition to the *Letters of Abelard and Heloise* incorporate letters. It also serves our goal of highlighting the writing of medieval women who so often employ the epistolary form. Here we shall discuss just one of these assignments, a letter responding to Heloise and Abelard's correspondence. We have often given the same writing prompt to our classes for this letter:

The year is 1148. You are Astralabe, the 30-year-old son of Heloise and Abelard, and have just found Abelard's Historia and their personal letters. Write a letter to Heloise commenting on and asking about your parents' lives and loves.

This prompt was inspired by one of our Honors students, Joan Weber Ziegler, who, in fulfilling her letter-writing assignment in an early administration of the course, creatively decided to adopt the *persona* of Astralabe in a letter to his mother, and to create a return letter in the voice of Heloise. In the honors course the prompt has been used every spring for the past ten years, and has often produced fine writing, along with facilitating discussion and insight building. We plan to continue its use in the future.

As in class discussions, the relationship and actions of Abelard and Heloise also tend to evoke very strong responses in our students' letters. Most often students read Abelard's and Heloise's correspondence through the filter of contemporary experience. They tend to criticize Abelard and Heloise severely, and there are several reasons for their seeming hostility. First, their background in medieval culture is exceedingly spare. Second, most of them are women with just enough exposure to feminism to make them see Abelard's behavior as patriarchal and boorish, and to object to what they see as Heloise's extreme humility and acceptance of the anti-feminist palaver of her day. However, some students engage the assignment more imaginatively, thoughtfully, and critically. On occasion these

letters have astonished us with the clarity and power of their insight. Excerpts from our students' letters—both common and decidedly uncommon—appear below. With the exception of Ms Ziegler, excerpts from students' letters will be identified only by first names and initial of last names for reasons of privacy.

Common Responses

Students often express Astralabe's confusion and anger at being abandoned by his parents. For example, Bela T's Astralabe refuses Heloise the right to be called 'mother' "because I never knew my parents as my guardians when I was a little child. I feel that my parents abandoned me." Fran G's Astralabe expresses a deeper resentment as Astralabe comments on Heloise's vocabulary: "You fought between the words 'wife' and 'whore,' so I guess you can understand how a child can fight the words 'son' and 'bastard' Did you ever stop to think that your son wanted the slightest touch or smile from the mother he never had?" Tiffany C. states an assumption expressed by many students when her Astralabe says, "I don't understand why you couldn't just get married and raise me like any other normal family."

For these students, the severest blame goes to Abelard. Several letter writers, for example, agree with Abelard's self-assessment in Letter 5 where he characterizes his love for Heloise as lust. Joan Ziegler, in the eloquent voice of Astralabe, tells Heloise that she was misled by his father Abelard: "I have read his writings and can see that he only lusted after you and wanted to conquer you as he believed men should." Ms Ziegler soundly trounces Abelard for his anti-feminist views: "I am so ashamed not only for being the offspring of so vile a man but also for being of a sex that so overpowers yours."

Others who give voice to Astralabe see Abelard as selfish, putting Heloise into the convent as a way of keeping her for himself. Poignantly, Rachel K as Astralabe inquires: "Why, with all his fine ideas and brilliant mind, did he not stand against the chains of the world to be with you?" In more extreme and visceral statements, Abelard gets exactly what he deserves, including his

castration. Ashlee B's Astralabe writes, "I hate to say this about my own father, but I am glad that my uncle Fulbert did what he did to him. Abelard should not be procreating and does not deserve the pleasures of life. He was never a father to me anyway." Similarly, Linette G notes that Abelard deserved castration for his "callous treatment" of Heloise; not only did he impregnate, abduct and marry her secretly, but he "further disgraced her by shutting her away" in a convent—which provoked Fulbert's revenge. Linette goes on to describe Heloise as "an abused woman" who

stays with her abuser and continues to receive abuse for fear of losing him.... Heloise was blinded by her love and didn't see that he never really loved her. And so she threw away her life and allowed herself to be locked away in hopes that that would make him love her. The lesson to be learned is an age-old lesson: 'Don't be blinded by love.' She was, and therefore she lost.

Bill B's Astralabe takes a gentler tack in terms of a supposed sexual harassment policy at the Cathedral school of Paris, when he writes: "What happened to Abelard is what he deserved, except for the surgery Abelard should not have lusted towards a student; it is unprofessional. He should not be allowed to teach after what he did, whether or not he intended to marry you."

Although these letters reveal a great deal of sympathy for Heloise, a few writers criticize her, again taking a distinctly modern tone. Such comments range from a characterization of Heloise as the modern trophy wife who makes Abelard, the learned philosopher, look good, to the view—advanced by a few—that Heloise clearly suffers from depression.

Sometimes Astralabe sounds like a marriage counselor advising his mother to accept the fact that the love she once shared with Abelard has changed: "I know deep down you both love me, but I do not think that you love each other in the same way. I really hope that you can see this and . . . change your views . . . so you do not continue to get hurt" (Michelle McC). Other times Astralabe's advice is purely romantic, flouting the moral and social codes of his day: "I would rather have lived an entire life in sin

with the one I desired than never express my feelings and live without him in the hereafter. I think that the Lord would have respected this pronouncement” (Kim F). Perhaps the unkindest cut of all comes from Ashley R:

I am appalled by your behavior, as well as the denial of your guilt. You were just as much to blame as was my father for your unruly behavior.... My father always remained loyal to you, and therefore you should have been willing to sacrifice for him. You should have done everything in your power to prevent your lover from suffering. By the end of the fourth letter, I began to sense tremendous hostility that was initiated on your part. You should have accepted my father, for he proved his love to you on many occasions.

These students interpret the past as present; they judge Heloise and Abelard in terms of today’s assumptions and categories. They express clear, strong expectations about family life and the responsibility of parents toward their children. Although the very definition of family remains a much-disputed question, our students know what a “normal family” requires, and they emphatically do not find it in the relationship between Heloise and Abelard. The categories of abuse and sexual harassment similarly frame the relationship in contemporary terms, but with more obvious anachronism. However alien these assumptions and categories are to twelfth-century realities, they retain their critical force, since our historical judgments inevitably fuse past and present. But these common judgments fuse them uncritically by failing to note the limits of today’s standards and the challenges that a twelfth-century story can pose to our self-understanding.

Imagining Astralabe

There are, however, some letter writers who attempt to understand the situation of Abelard and Heloise within medieval culture, taking into account the complexities and distinct character of that culture and time. Such writers, recognizing that good history and literature are more sensitive to historical distance and the difference it makes, produce rather sophisticated analyses of

the behavior and motivations of this couple. By doing so, they sketch out the past for those of us in the present.

As a first example from this group, let's return to the work of Joan Ziegler, with whom this impersonation of Astralabe began. In Joan's letter, Astralabe insists that he hates his father, telling Heloise, "He deserved not your love!" It is in the letter she composed as Heloise's return letter that Joan reveals her fine sense of Heloise's mind and the texts and beliefs that might have shaped and informed it:

Abelard suffered so much and fully blamed himself for his lustful ways that caused our ruin, as I fully blame myself. He truly did love me, though he could never write so in his letters, for that would have caused but more misfortune. He chastised me well for writing so freely in my own. I was like Boethius in his *Consolation*,³ depressed for all that I had lost due to misfortune. But your father, like Lady Philosophy, reminded me to be thankful for God's mercy upon us both and to seek God, not material things or earthly love, to find happiness.

I am happy that Abelard placed me here [in the convent], for now I realize the method of his madness. It is through my works as Abbess that I will enter into salvation and be purged of the adulterous sins I have committed. He knew I entered against my will, but he also knew that the love we shared was but a flicker compared to the flame that God so gives.

Another student, Jeanne R, speaks in her own voice when she summarizes the story of Abelard and Heloise. She concludes, as so many do, that although Heloise gives herself "totally to Abelard in true and unselfish love," Abelard was not able "to totally commit himself to anyone." Why not? Because, says Jeanne, he wanted something more—"divine happiness." This insight leads Jeanne to a way of understanding and explaining Abelard's acceptance of his castration and his seemingly callous behavior toward Heloise. She writes:

³ Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* has also been required reading in both our courses. We have used two translations: Victor Watts (London: Penguin, 1999 revised ed.) and Richard Green (New York: Dover, 2002 reprint ed.)

Abelard came to realize quickly that the wounds were inflicted for punishment for the sins committed, removing the organ of lust and pleasure to bring contrition and renew his soul for the mission of salvation. He accepted his suffering and humiliation and committed himself wholeheartedly to serving God In caring for his personal future, his loss of prestige, his wounds and his humiliations, [he remained preoccupied with his own selfish concerns]. He did not come to care for the privations of . . . his beloved. His love . . . [became] a voyage of self-discovery, while that of Heloise was a love in which she lost her 'self' in him. She reached greater heights of love because she was a woman capable in the art of giving. Heloise was more advanced on the path of human love, whereas Abelard was far ahead on the road to divine love.⁴

He [Abelard] felt his castration was an act of God punishing him for his infidelity to Him. His actions and attitudes, while at first glance seem callous and cruel, actually put him on a plane that transcends normal human existence and brings him in closer communion with God. He has not matured in the human sense; he is not responsive to human needs and actions.

Kareem L creates a dramatic portrait of an Astralabe in a letter depicting how he followed his father's early career path and traces his uneasy relationship to Abelard. "In youth," he writes, "comparisons to my father would be met with a quick lashing of tongue and fist. As the years progressed and word of my reputation grew, I found it more tolerable to hear mention of his name." As Kareem's Astralabe reads the *Historia calamitatum*, his criticisms become stronger. He learns that Abelard "was not only one of the greatest philosophers of all time, but also one of the greatest opportunists of all time." In addition to "keeping his name flowing from the mouths of France," the *Historia* "serves as a re-seduction on my father's part, to hold your thoughts and feelings captive once again." Astralabe criticizes the secret marriage as "an oxymoron," and notes that Abelard admits

⁴ For a similar judgment, see Etienne Gilson, *Heloise and Abelard*, trans. L. K. Shook (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), p. 70: Abelard "was now to outstrip Heloise in the way of divine love as she had once excelled him in the perfection of human love."

that he wanted to keep you for himself alone. Where is his respect for you, Mother? Does he not know of the sacrifices you made by entering monastic life at such an early age? . . . It's apparent . . . that your love for Abelard was even stronger than your love for God at that time.

Kareem's Astralabe then shrewdly notes:

I remain forever indebted to father for remaining resolute . . . [in turning away from] all aspects of the relationship you both shared before entering monastic life. If not for his perseverance, you would have remained weak and easily persuaded by him. This was necessary so that you were able to free yourself from matters of the heart, and fill your mind with more concrete thoughts.

Obviously, not all is good regarding Abelard, but these writers do attempt to analyze his behavior as it might have made sense in the medieval world. Let us turn again to Heloise and two writers who seek to understand how she might have fared as prioress once she accepted her life as a vowed religious. Both remind their readers that she was tormented by thoughts of the life she had given up, but conclude that she must have been able to "walk the talk." To Alene G, "It is obvious that Heloise never pretended to herself that love of God had supplanted her love of Abelard. To Heloise's credit she must have been able to behave correctly and hide her thoughts from others or she would never have been chosen to be prioress." For Tina M,

Heloise turned to the monastic life for refuge I believe she turned to God as a way of making sense of her tragic love affair Heloise spent her last days serving God. She became the ruling abbess and made many contributions to the church I think in the end, Heloise did make a true conversion to the monastic life.

How this conversion and adjustment might have been achieved is suggested in two letters from Astralabe. Heloise's guilt is the focus in Joseph M's letter. In this case, Astralabe insists that Heloise's guilt is not real, but only a desire on her part to achieve equality with, and justice *vis-à-vis*, Abelard by

experiencing pain herself. In a knowing way—Astralabe here assumes the role of a soon-to-be member of a religious community—he tells Heloise that desire is not the same as sin, despite her belief to the contrary. Thus, she should not become obsessed with guilt but be confident that her resilience through her trials is a sign of her faith in God. Offering encouragement and hope, Joseph's Astralabe writes:

You believe yourself a failure, and obsess, agonize, over your thoughts, your unchaste desires....Your resilience to such trial shows not only faith in the Lord whom you curse, but also your faith in yourself and your resolve. Once you are able to realize the resilience you hold, and still your obsessive thoughts, you will awaken once more [as] bride of Christ, abbess of your order, and lover, not blasphemer, of the Lord.

This Astralabe directly and thoughtfully engages the religious themes and energies that drive Heloise's criticism of herself as a hypocrite caught between her continuing passion for Abelard and her role as abbess of the Paraclete.

In what may be our most elegant and theologically innovative letter, Lisa K creates an Astralabe who, with touching sincerity, seeks to understand his father's motivations and choices:

My father in his writings seems a man striving for perfection. In his pride, he seemed to see perfection as always being the outstanding one in the eyes of others, first as the great scholar and, later, as the great reformer. He neglected to put the greatest and true perfection first: to be the great lover of God and all God's creation. Are we not taught by Christ to 'love the Lord our God with all our hearts, with all our souls, with all our strengths, and with all our minds and to love our neighbors as we love ourselves'? Creation is our neighbor, and in it we see God. In loving creation, we love God. Had my father seen this fully, he would have loved us before his worldly honor always. Loving us would have become the greater honor. Still, at times, I think he could not put his worldly honor first. If he had put his worldly honor first, he would never have entered into a relationship with you, for reputation for chastity was far more valued in a philosopher. If he had put his worldly honor first, perhaps I would have

been abandoned rather than entrusted to those who would care for me, for having no illegitimate child who would haunt his reputation would have been more honorable than having one who might later bring him to shame. If he had put his worldly honor first, he would never have associated with you again after leaving you at your convent, for to do this was to risk his reputation as a reformer. He was in no way perfect, but in his flawed way, he could sometimes catch small glimpses of true perfection.

Believing that Heloise's guilt keeps her from appreciating God's creation, including herself, this same Astralabe offers these healing words to his mother:

And what of you, my mother? Have you not known great love for my father? Was he not part of God's revelation in Nature? In some way, though you did not know it, you have loved God all these years and done your great works not only for my father, but for what you have seen of God in him. I pray you always to treasure what you have learnt of God from the goodness you saw in my father and that you never close your eyes to the beauty of God in all his creation. Remain always with your eyes on God. Accept God's love and accept mine.

Conclusion

As Peter Dronke⁵ and Constant Mews⁶ have documented, Abelard and Heloise's letters initiated a long tradition of commentary and adaptation. Jean de Meun, Petrarch, Rousseau, Alexander Pope, Etienne Gilson, John Benton, D.W. Robertson and Michael Clanchy have all engaged the correspondence, as have many less familiar readers, editors, translators, scholars and critics. In addition, Mews' controversial identification of *The Lost Love*

⁵ Peter Dronke, *Abelard and Heloise in Medieval Testimonies* (Glasgow: University of Glasgow Press, 1976); reprinted in Dronke, *Intellectuals and Poets in Medieval Europe* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1992), pp. 247-294.

⁶ Constant J. Mews, *The Lost Love Letters of Heloise and Abelard* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 29-55.

Letters of Heloise and Abelard has sparked renewed interest in the entire correspondence.⁷ Similarly, the letters and their lovers' story continue to flourish in popular culture. Witness, for example, Marion Meade's romantic novel *Stealing Heaven* (1979) and its splendid film version (1988); the hilarious parody with puppets in the movie *Being John Malkovich* (1999); and websites featuring "scandalous lovers."⁸ Clearly the letters have provoked responses as wildly different as a Rorschach inkblot.

We and our students at Gwynedd-Mercy College are simply among the latest in this rich, diffuse tradition of commentary and adaptation. As we have shown, we too respond to the letters with intense feeling and sometimes reflective, probing scrutiny. In our students' "common responses," the inkblot may still tell us more about ourselves than about Abelard and Heloise. Yet even these readings have the virtue of bringing the correspondence into the present, albeit more naively than we would like. But our more engaged and thoughtful students take into account the culture, environment, and beliefs of the Middle Ages as the background against which to examine the actions and decisions of Abelard and Heloise. These writers do not rush to judgment out of their modern beliefs, but allow the characters to speak and act out of their cultural milieu.

⁷ Mews, *Lost Love Letters*. See also William Levitan's new translation of Abelard and Heloise's *Letters and Other Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2007), which includes excerpts from Abelard's poem, "To Astralabe, My Son" (pp. 294-301). Concerning Abelard's wider correspondence and later poetry, see Jan Ziliokowski's new translation, *Letters of Peter Abelard, Beyond the Personal* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2007), and the forthcoming study of his *Planctus* composed for Heloise and *Carmen ad Astralabium* by Juanita Feros Ruys and John O. Ward, *The Repentant Abelard* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, to appear 2009).

⁸ See, for example, Elizabeth Kerri Mahon, "Scandalous Lovers: Abelard and Heloise," posted on Oct. 3, 2007, *Scandalous Women*; <http://scandalouswoman.blogspot.com/2007/10/scandalous-lovers-abelard-and-heloise.html> (accessed Oct. 11, 2007).

The letter-writing assignment allows students of varying abilities to enter a creative enterprise in which they must engage head-on the dilemmas and the emotional “ups and downs” of this famous couple and their mysterious son. At the very least, it requires that they read the text carefully, develop insights, and make judgments regarding how the characters might act, speak, and react. They must create a credible voice for the letter writer and attempt to get at important issues of medieval life and thought. Such an assignment takes them from a superficial grasp of the texts to a much deeper understanding and appreciation of an unique relationship that continues to provoke the intellect and stir the soul.

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Books

Review Essay

Some Thoughts on the Greater Integration of Islamic Sources into the Wider Framework of Medieval History

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Introduction

The study of Islam has been attracting greater interest in recent years, due to high-profile political and economic events. In addition, the rise of world history programs has generated a need for resources by which both students and faculty alike can strengthen their knowledge in this field. Still, general knowledge on the field is limited. This disparity has occurred, in part, because the field of Islamic history, especially in its formative and medieval periods, has been oriented toward specialists rather than a general audience. Often, world history sourcebooks are content to give only short selections from religious sources such as the Qur'an, the Traditions of the Prophet Muhammad and his Companions (*hadith*), and perhaps a scattering of political or cultural documents. Moreover, these documents frequently lack adequate contextualization when they are included.

To give but one example, in a source book¹ that I use for teaching a course entitled “World History from Origins to 1500,” the section on the Islamic world is comprised of only three sources: a section of the fourth chapter of the Qur’an, a collection of Prophetic traditions randomly selected (and thereby doing violence to the structure of the work as the traditionist envisioned it) from the compendium of Abu ‘Abdallah Muhammad b. Isma‘il al-Bukhari (d. 870), and a text on the political role of the ‘Abbasid caliph by Abu’l-Hasan al-Mawardi (d. 1057). All are drawn from translations generated over three decades ago. In particular, the gloss on the al-Mawardi text neglects to mention that it reflects the thinking of a Sunni Muslim living under a Shi‘ite-leaning political authority, thereby inadvertently fooling students into thinking that al-Mawardi’s political thought was actually an institutional structure that could be implemented!² While regions like northern and western Africa or Central Asia may receive tangential attention via the intermediary of Muslim primary sources (Ibn Battuta’s cross-cultural journeys throughout the Muslim communities of the Islamic world and beyond comes to mind)³, there are often few materials for the non-specialist when integrating the history of this region into a general curriculum.

New developments have been rapidly emerging in the field

¹ Peter N. Stearns et al., *Documents in World History Volume 1: The Great Traditions from Ancient Times to 1500*, 4th ed. (New York: Pearson/Longman, 2006); for the section on medieval Islam, see 189-207.

² For more on the problems with presenting al-Mawardi and other Sunni political thinkers, who are often commonly featured in many teaching texts, see Patricia Crone, *God’s Rule: Government and Islam* (New York: Columbia UP, 2004), 219-255.

³ The fourteenth-century traveler Ibn Battuta’s record of multiple Muslim societies throughout the Islamic world from West Africa to as far as southeast Asia has been popularized by Ross E. Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta: A Muslim Traveler of the 14th Century*, rev. ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004). While an outstanding achievement for the field, it should be noted that Dunn mostly puts the narrative into his own words, only periodically citing Ibn Battuta himself.

of Islamic history that could prove useful in assisting those seeking resources to complement their current curricular offerings. While hardly exhaustive, this essay offers a modest contribution aimed at simplifying the process by which non-specialists can explore key aspects of Islamic history, and it introduces ways historians can extend the use of these materials beyond the boundaries of Islamic studies itself. All are aware that the Crusades are a classic example of a topic that has long since transcended the boundaries imposed by area studies; yet even in this field, more recent developments in the field continue to be underappreciated—and probably should not. In sum, even tentative steps toward a greater focus on global developments and their impact on medieval history in various parts of the world can be as rewarding for the non-specialist as it is for the Islamic historian.

Thus, the ambition here, succinctly stated, is to open a dialogue that can transcend the provincial boundaries that too often constrain scholars into sub-fields of medievalist scholarship. Yet I am also all too aware of the constraints on time and resources that challenge the average participant's capability to engage in this dialogue. Therefore, I have opted to frame this article in the form of several sections that outline key resources by which the non-specialist can efficiently identify several illuminating contexts. In the first section, I outline some recent publications that offer provocative interpretations or helpful summaries that allow non-specialists easier access to the basic historical narratives of the Islamic medieval period. The following section tackles the thornier problem of gaining access to primary source materials in English translation; a task rendered more difficult by an increasingly outdated set of resources. Finally, the essay concludes by demonstrating the potential value of this process by examining the Crusades through the lens of several recent texts that examine the history from Muslim perspectives. In so doing, the non-specialist reader can bring his or her own sense of purpose and perspective to bear on these issues and, one would hope, further enlighten the discussions taking place within the smaller, narrower circles of scholars working in medieval Islamic studies.

Basic resources for a survey of recent developments in the field: general overviews

Until recently, either outdated and massive survey tomes or the dreaded compiling of course packs unifying scattered source materials was the chore awaiting most teachers of the Islamic enterprise in its medieval phase. Thankfully, that picture is starting to improve considerably. The following represents a short list of recommended introductory works to help the non-specialist quickly acquire a basic understanding of medieval Islamic history. It should be noted, unfortunately, that some of these resources presently are, more expensive than works in other fields of historical study, in part due to the limited number of works dealing with the topic (i.e., not as much competition), and in part due to the smaller number of units sold. However, I would also add that the prices quoted are generally from publishers' lists; Internet sites, like <http://www.bookfinder.com>, can often enable one to seek out and find lower prices.

Vernon O. Egger, *A History of the Muslim World to 1405: The Making of a Civilization* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2004). 352 pages. \$59.60.

Non-specialists and undergraduates alike can gain a broad overview of the state of the field from a recent two-volume textbook project by Vernon Egger;⁴ this first volume in particular covers the period from the origins of Islam up to the end of the reign of Timur-e Lang (Tamerlane) in 1405. While the periodization of the work is odd even from the perspective of Islamic historians (the capture of Constantinople by the Ottoman

⁴ For our purposes, the critical volume is the first in the series. However, the newly released second half of the project, *The Muslim World Since 1260: The Making of a Global Community* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice-Hall, 2008), carries the narrative up to the modern period, and includes sections on the later medieval period in various regions. The section covering the years 1405-1750, chapters three to seven, are also useful for concluding the events of the later medieval period.

Turks in 1453 might have been a more appropriate turning point), the work nevertheless provides a broad overview of narratives and topics that have occupied the attention of medieval Islamic historians to date. It is also cleverly divided into chapters dealing with what might be called political and dynastic history, and others that aim to explain religious, social and intellectual history that operated in a framework independent of politics and dynasties. This can be helpful for non-specialists, as attempts to present all of these phenomena together at once can lead to confusion.

It should be noted that the work is not totally free of errors or missteps. For example, the description of the formative period of Umayyad caliphate under the second chapter's heading of "Arab Imperialism" seems woefully anachronistic and unnecessarily controversial to various Muslim groups of different nationalities and ethnic backgrounds, and often sidetracks students from more important key issues of the medieval period. Yet on the whole the volume is a useful introduction that far surpasses the magisterial, but dated studies of earlier times.⁵

Hugh Kennedy, *The Prophet and the Age of the Caliphates*, 2nd ed. (Harlow, UK: Pearson/Longman, 2004). 414 pages. \$41.60.

More detailed analytical narratives for the medieval period have also appeared in recent years. For the period from 600 to 1050 C.E., this recent updated version of an earlier 1980s general history by Hugh Kennedy does an excellent job of updating the outlines of the standard political and narrative history of the

⁵ For those who wish to examine the earlier foundations of the field, Marshall G.S. Hodgson, *The Venture of Islam*, 3 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1974) still yields important insights in its first and second volumes despite having been left partially unfinished at its author's untimely death. Another monumental achievement, now in its second edition, is Ira M. Lapidus, *A History of Islamic Societies*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), which covers the full geographical and chronological sweep of the Islamic world, albeit clocking in at well over 900 pages.

period. However, on the questions of social and intellectual history, the work is not as comprehensive as that of Egger; in addition, a disadvantage of the work is that it concludes its narrative with the appearance of the Seljuq Turks. Since the activities of the Seljuq state are viewed by many scholars of this period as responsible for the consolidation of many of the subsequent cultural and political legacies of the medieval Islamic world, this omission can be frustrating. Nevertheless, for details on the more obscure aspects of the early Islamic period and an excellent understanding of the Arab tribal and political connections that wove the politics of the early caliphates together, there is no better introductory word. Especially useful is the bibliographical appendix at the back that introduces and briefly describes some of the various primary and secondary sources for the study of the first four centuries of Islamic political history and narrative.⁶

Jonathan Berkey, *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003). 312 pages. \$26.99.

Another attempt at a synthesis of medieval Islam is that of Jonathan Berkey, who approached broad chronological periods of Islamic history through thematic and analytical chapters. This work, for some, may provide a nice corrective to the overly political or chronological narrative histories such as the aforementioned work by Kennedy. In some of its chapters, it does examine key periods or elements of Islamic history and frame them in the context of ideas or developments rather than offering a strictly chronological or teleological approach to the story. In addition, the bibliography and footnotes are helpful reference for further research on given topics. However, a lack of attention to detail in critical parts of the work—often notable by the short

⁶ An older work, Stephen Humphreys, *Islamic History: A Framework for Inquiry*, rev. ed. (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1991), though now becoming dated, still acts as a much more in-depth extended bibliographical essay on various aspects of the medieval Islamic sub-field up to 1500.

length of some of the chapters dealing with otherwise critical elements in Islamic historiography—suggests that one of the aforementioned works also should be consulted. It should also be noted that as the book's chronology progresses, the coverage of issues becomes progressively weaker—events after the rise of the Mamluk Sultanate of Egypt in the 1200s, are handled in an increasingly sketchy fashion; the period from 1500 to 1800 is little more than an epilogue attached to the end of the book.⁷

Frederick Mathewson Denny, *An Introduction to Islam*, 3rd ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2006). 432 pages. \$62.20.

A typical challenge for the neophyte is the question of which introduction to Islam as a religious tradition, as opposed to just a historical treatment of Islamic civilizations as a whole, is most useful from a medievalist's point of view. All overviews of Islam as a religion require the inclusion of modern issues and concerns, and Frederick Denny's third edition of his introduction is no exception, having updated the original work to include post-9/11 commentary. Nevertheless, for important developments within Islam during its formative and medieval contexts, this work is unequalled (the first four sections, representing over half of the text, focus specifically on medieval issues). In addition to sections on pre-Islamic influences on Islam, the early Islamic community and the Islamic expansion, and the development of Muslim sources of religion and doctrine, it is particularly useful for insight on the phenomenon of Islamic mysticism and mystical movements. This is a frequently understated element that is central to understanding much of medieval religious life in the Islamic world. Another

⁷ These and other faults of the work have been noted in a review of the work by Khalid Yahya Blankinship, "Book Review: Jonathan P. Berkey. *The Formation of Islam: Religion and Society in the Near East, 600-1800*," *American Historical Review*, 109, (June 2004), 1013-14. Muslim reviewers have also expressed reservations; see, for example, Tahir Uluc, "Book Review: *The Formation of Islam*," *Muslim World*, 94 (January 2004), 150-55.

introduction to the religion, found in the better-known writings of John L. Esposito, also is helpful.⁸ However, Esposito's focus predominantly is on modern manifestations of the faith; while the medieval periods are thoroughly discussed, Esposito does not reach the same level of detail as Denny.

Richard W. Bulliet, *The Case for Islamo-Christian Civilization* (New York: Columbia UP, 2004). 200 pages. \$19.95.

Though not an introductory or overview work in a strict sense, the non-specialist of the medieval period is well-advised to take into account this brief but provocative rethinking of the historical development of Islam and (Latin) Christianity. While written in part with an eye for recent developments, Bulliet himself is more noted for his work on medieval Persia and the development of Islam as an evolving religious tradition in multiple contexts. In particular, the medievalist community should pay close attention to the first chapter of this work, from which its title is drawn. In it, Bulliet argues for a parallel, rather than contrasting, evolution of the two religious traditions during their formative periods, which he extends well into the beginning of the second millennium C.E. Only in subsequent eras that marked the growing consolidation of their respective traditions and doctrines did the two traditions begin to diverge in their approach to problems such as expansion into distant and different cultural frameworks and the tension between hierarchy and popular forms of religious expression. The remainder of the book, though frequently bound up with modern issues, nevertheless can also offer insights on how to better assess the medieval period; in particular, the fourth chapter, "The Edge of the Future," illustrates in brief how evolving Muslim communities at the geographical or intellectual fringes of the tradition have frequently played an influential role in creating the religion's "center." This, in turn, is a shorter restatement of an earlier, influential work by Bulliet on the formation of Islam

⁸ John L. Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, rev. 3rd ed. (New York: Oxford UP, 2005).

during the medieval period in the context of Persia that is also worth extended scrutiny.⁹

Basic resources for a survey of recent developments in the field: primary source compilations

One of the more difficult aspects of the field of Islamic history is the need for translated primary sources that are accessible to students, as opposed to just specialists in the field. Sadly, this is a deficit that has not yet been rectified for the medieval period, despite some notable advances for more recent times. To a great extent, a reliance on anthologies compiled in the 1970s and 1980s is still the norm for actual primary source readings; many of these are out of print, but can generally be easily acquired through online used book dealers.

Bernard Lewis, ed. *Islam from the Prophet Muhammad to the Capture of Constantinople*, rev. ed., 2 vs. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). v. 1, 266 pages. \$29.95 and v. 2, 310 pages. \$32.95.

One of the most comprehensive collections of translated primary source texts for the medieval Islamic world remains that of Bernard Lewis who, in a two-volume set published in 1974, translated selections from multiple primary sources dating from the origins of Islam up through the early Ottoman period. Despite a notable myopia on certain subjects—the Crusades are nowhere to be found throughout the two-volume set, for instance, nor is anything involving Islamic mysticism or Sufism—the work can still be mined for short snippets of very accessible primary source texts. Some areas of the Islamic world that are traditionally neglected in other studies, such as Islamic Spain, receive a good deal of coverage here. Certain selections, such as extracts from medieval joke books and humor, are outright invaluable for injecting some levity into a classroom setting. It should be noted

⁹ Richard W. Bulliet, *Islam: The View from the Edge* (New York: Columbia UP, 1994).

that the translations body cannot be used uncritically; Lewis' scholarship has been criticized for overemphasizing the role of Islam in the thinking of Muslim elites and commoners alike, and focusing heavily on tensions in Muslim relations with indigenous non-Muslims within the Islamic world at the expense of the broader context of the region's history, all of which may explain some of the aforementioned myopic characteristics of the collection.¹⁰ However, the continued relevance of this debate does not invalidate the potential value of the vast majority of the 167 translated excerpts made available here.

William H. McNeill and Marilyn Robinson Waldman, *The Islamic World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973). 468 pages. \$25.00.

A more modest, but sometimes equally invaluable contribution was this compilation of primary sources that spanned the entire sweep of Islamic history from the pre-Islamic period up to the twentieth century. Unfortunately, this overly broad coverage range limits the value of the work for the medievalist, and only about two-thirds of the 40 or so translations provided here have relevance to various aspects of the medieval period. Nevertheless, the work makes a nice complement to Lewis' two-volume set by filling some of the gaps left open in its selection of content (the Crusades are addressed from a Muslim perspective, for instance), and includes some highly entertaining segments like the work of Abu 'Ali al-Muhassin al-Tanukhi (d. 994), who recreates colorful scenes from the life of medieval Baghdad and its inhabitants. The

¹⁰ The debate over Orientalism, sparked by the late Palestinian literary critic and historian Edward Said, was instrumental in reshaping the field of Middle Eastern studies during the 1980s and beyond. While this debate has not been as influential in the field of medieval studies, it nevertheless has led to a more critical inquiry into received wisdom on questions involving medieval religion and society. See Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978), 105-07, 315-20 for a critique of Lewis' scholarship. For a critical and more recent discussion of both sides of this debate, see Fred Halliday, *Islam and the Myth of Confrontation* (London: I. B. Tauris, 2003), 195-217.

work also has value in re-creating the medieval poetry and culture of Arabic and Persian-speaking authors such as al-Mutanabbi and the great mystic Jalal al-Din Rumi, an aspect of medieval culture which Lewis' collection neglects. Finally, it should be added that this text carries the medieval period beyond 1453 to address issues surrounding the later Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal Empires.

Norman A. Stillman, *The Jews of Arab Lands: A History and Source Book* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979). 536 pages. \$25.95.

Studies of medieval Sephardic Jewish history frequently intersect in fruitful ways with the study of medieval Islam, and excellent primary-source examples of this can be found in Stillman's work. Stillman was a student of Shlomo Dov Goitein, a well-known scholar who began the work of sifting through a mass of documents discovered in a Cairo synagogue in the late nineteenth century that are written in a mixture of Hebrew and Arabic (rendered in Hebrew letters). Stillman went on to provide translated excerpts of various sources, Jewish and Arabic alike, with a heavy nod to some of the documents recovered from the Geniza. It should be noted that the collection and its documents focus heavily on the conflicts that arose between Jewish and Muslim communities in the medieval period and carry this theme into modern times in the latter half of the work. Since open hostilities were not necessarily the normal state of affairs in all times and places during the medieval period, such sources should be used critically. Still, they can provide insight on issues like medieval taxation, trade, and the role non-Muslims could play in government under various Muslim rulers in a way that the other source compilations do not. In addition, the selections provide a valuable window onto social and economic history that is often lacking in the historical chronicles or religious works that dominate the medieval Islamic survivals from this period. An excellent comparative study on the status of medieval Jewish communities under both Islamic *and* Christian rule that addresses some of the pathologies and problems surrounding this subject is

that of Mark R. Cohen, *Under Crescent and Cross: The Jews in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994). 304 pages. \$24.95.

University of Southern California—Muslim Student Association,
Compendium of Muslim Texts. The web site is
<http://www.usc.edu/dept/MSA/>

One of the thornier problems faced by scholars of the Islamic medieval period is the question of sifting through the mass of translations of the *Qur'an* and the even more formidable edifice of the Prophetic Traditions (*hadith*). A good way to avoid some of these difficulties is to refer to the USC-MSA website.

While the *Qur'an* exists in multiple translations by both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars alike, it should be recognized that all translations of the original Arabic are viewed as inferior by Muslims. A good way to get students to understand the reason for this reluctance in accepting translations is to visit the USC-MSA website, which offers a full translation of the entire text of the *Qur'an* from the perspective of three different translators: Marmaduke Pickthall, Yusuf 'Ali and M.H. Shakir. The differences in rendering and vocabulary can be striking, and gives the reader a sense of the richness of interpretations that can spring from the text. In addition, a search engine allows the researcher or student to search the text for key terms. However, for the reader uncomfortable with diving straight into the Qur'anic text without guidance for both its medieval and modern contexts, it is suggested that they consult the recent *Cambridge Companion to the Qur'an*, edited by Jane Dammen McAuliffe (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2006), or the older but still serviceable works by Fazlur Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Bibliotheca Islamica, 1994), or Toshihiko Izutsu, *God and Man in the Koran* (Tokyo: Keio Institute, 1964).

Of even greater value is the collection of the some of the canonical works of Sunni Prophetic Tradition, or *hadith* literature (labeled on the site as "Sunnah"). A full translation of the compilation of accepted traditions that achieved canonical status in later eras can be found in the ninth-century works of the *Sahih* of

Muhammad b. Isma'il al-Bukhari (d. 870), and the Sahih of Muslim b. al-Hajjaj (d. 875). The site has also expanded to include a partial translation of the *Sunan* of Abu Dawud Sulayman b. al-Ash'ath al-Azdi al-Sijistani (d. 889), and more importantly, a full translation of the early collection of Prophetic Traditions done by Malik b. Anas (d. 795), one of the founders of the four schools of Islamic law. While the translations are imperfect by the site administrators' own admission, the search engine function and organization of the Prophetic Traditions into their traditional order of topics as conceived of by the original Muslim scholars is invaluable. Many other primary source compilations provide only a mixture of traditions divorced from their broader context, which make their use potentially problematic. Once again, the context of the Prophetic Traditions and their compilation has key elements of historical context; these might be addressed by consulting the work of Muhammad Zubayr Siddiqi, *Hadith Literature: Its Origin, Development and Special Features*, rev. ed. (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1993). The aforementioned introductions to Islam by Denny and Esposito can also be helpful in this regard.

Norman Calder, Jawid Mojaddedi and Andrew Rippin, *Classical Islam: A Sourcebook of Religious Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2003). 288 pages. \$43.95.

Those whose curiosity extends into religious history and the development of Islamic law, along with the primary sources for it, may find the recent publication of the late religious studies scholar Norman Calder's project by two of his colleagues interesting. In addition to examining parts of the *Qur'an* and Prophetic Tradition, this study also carries its inquiry into other aspects of Muslim religious scholarship, such as the formation of Islamic schools of law, the development of Islamic mysticism (often relegated to the background in many studies), and the sciences of Qur'anic interpretation (*tafsir*), theology and philosophy. It is particularly useful to examine the translations of discussions among Muslim scholars over how to interpret key points of law (such as the issuing of medieval *fatwas*), or over the

thorny issue of some of the earlier scholars being out of step with later Prophetic Traditions that became widely accepted. A particular strength of this work is its inclusion of Shi'ite texts as part of its vision—a critical contribution that helps to break up the overly Sunni-centric tone of so much of the work on the field of medieval Islamic studies.

From the general overview to the specific implementation: the case of the Crusades

For scholars and teachers of medieval European history, one of the most useful topics for integrating an Islamic historical context is the Crusades. While certain texts that document the Muslim perspective on the Crusades have gained greater visibility over the years, such as short excerpts from the memoirs of the Syrian frontier warrior `Usamah b. al-Munqidh or the pilgrimage narratives of the Spanish Muslim pilgrim Ibn Jubayr (see below), there have otherwise been few studies or analyses of primary source material that depict the Crusading period from a Muslim perspective. An often-neglected element in the history of events leading up to the First Crusade are the contemporary developments amongst the elites of the Seljuq Turkish state that had established itself throughout the eastern Islamic world to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea by the mid-eleventh century. The following works, in particular, can contribute to a fuller understanding of the context of the First Crusade and its aftermath.

Rashid al-Din b. Tabib (d. 1318), *The History of the Seljuq Turks from the Jami' al-tawarikh: an Ilkhanid Adaptation of the Saljuq-nama of Zahir al-Din Nishapuri*, tr. Kenneth Allin Luther, ed. Edmund Bosworth (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2001). 189 pages. \$85.00.

Despite the placement of this work into a larger universal history composed by a grand vizier who served the Mongol Ilkhanid state (1258-1335), the *Saljuq-nama*, a history of the origins of the Seljuq state, can contribute invaluable background

for discussing some of the events cited by Pope Urban II in calling the First Crusade at Clermont in 1095. In it, we learn of the difficulties faced by the Seljuq leaders such as Toghril Beg (d. 1063) and Alp Arslan (d. 1072) in consolidating their realm in the wake of the substantial migratory movements of Turkish-speaking peoples into the Islamic world from the late tenth century onward. Since the Seljuqs followed the Central Asian political practice of bloody tanistry (i.e., the practice of allowing all male relations of the ruler to contest the throne after his death), and their political conflicts frequently drew on nomadic peoples beholden only to the highest bidder, one Seljuq tactic was to send defeated or problematic groups further westward to settle on the frontiers of the Islamic world and expend their martial energy there against non-Muslims (or perhaps more accurately, non-Seljuqs!). These tactics may fruitfully compare with the elaboration of the “Peace of God” in the Latin West, where church leaders may have seen an opportunity at harnessing potentially destructive martial energy within their own societies to a more promising avenue of religious and territorial expansion that would not damage the hard-won stability of western Europe itself. Ironically, the very same variation of this tactic employed by the Seljuqs in the mid-eleventh century—a tactic that (somewhat accidentally) led to the Seljuq victory over the Byzantine army at Manzikert (1071)—may have triggered the counter-reaction of the Crusades. The interesting backdrop of Nishapuri’s chronicle may prove enlightening on the origins of the Crusades themselves.

ʿIzz al-Din Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), *The Annals of the Saljuq Turks: Selections from al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh*, tr. D. S. Richards (London: Routledge-Curzon, 2002). 304 pages. \$85.00.

ʿIzz al-Din Ibn al-Athir (d. 1233), *The Chronicle of Ibn al-Athir for the Crusading Period from al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh*, tr. D. S. Richards (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2006). 408 pages. \$94.95.

The equally rapid fragmentation of the Seljuq state in the

wake of its conquest of the Ghaznavid and Buyid states after 1055 is another important contextual point that can be used to more fully enrich the Islamic context of the First Crusade. For this material, one can supplement Nishapuri's chronicle with the far more detailed chronicle of Ibn al-Athir, whose universal history aspired to continue the earlier work of Muhammad b. Jarir al-Tabari (d. 923) up to the author's own death in 1233. Until fairly recently, the work of Ibn al-Athir has been neglected by all but specialists, with translations being devoted to the more formidable but equally important chronicle of al-Tabari that described the evolution of Islam, and the caliphates and states that succeeded the Prophet Muhammad.¹¹ Fortunately, recent translations by Donald S. Richards have begun to rectify this situation, thereby broadening our understanding of the Crusades from Muslim perspectives.

While the more recent 2006 volume that extracts the period of Ibn al-Athir's chronicle from the First through the eve of the Second Crusades (1097-1146) seems the more apt choice to the non-specialist, the Islamic medievalist's perspective might be more skeptical about the dating and draw also from the earlier 2002 volume that covers the period from 1029 to 1097, especially its latter parts. In it, Ibn al-Athir discusses the almost simultaneous collapse of both the Seljuq and Fatimid states during the period from 1092 to 1094, which are key events that allow for a greater understanding of why the initial Frankish invasions were not more thoroughly contested. In particular, Ibn al-Athir's discussion of the near-simultaneous demise of both Sultan Malik-Shah and his experienced grand vizier Nizam al-Mulk in 1092 (251-65) goes a long way to explaining the fundamental internal weaknesses of the Seljuq state. The lack of a proper succession meant that the Seljuq elites would spend the next thirteen years battling with each other over the various regions of the Near East rather than paying much

¹¹ Al-Tabari's history, *Tarikh al-rusul wa'l-muluk*, was broken into thirty-nine parts and translated from Arabic into English by various scholars starting in the 1980s; it was completed piece-by-piece in a chronologically-uneven fashion between 1985 and 1999 and published by the State University of New York Press, in their SUNY series in Near Eastern Studies.

attention to the Crusading forces setting up their bases along the Mediterranean littoral and northern Mesopotamia, despite pleas from Muslim subjects in those areas. Likewise, the death of the long-lived Fatimid Caliph al-Mustansir in 1094 capped a period of growing anarchy in the Nile Valley and culminated in an internal schism amongst the Shi'a community that had been dominant in the political hierarchy there since the tenth century. The sect of the Nizari Assassins of Alamut, which would have such a devastating impact on the political life of the Seljuqs and others in the region affected by the Crusades, would be one consequence of the chain of events proceeding from the Fatimid schism. A sectarian movement that would back a failed rival claimant to the Fatimid throne, the Nizari Shi'a would chart an independent path of their own making for the next several centuries.

Since these conflicts carry on into the period of the First Crusade, any non-specialist seeking to understand the Muslim vision of the historical period will find themselves lacking a good contextualization of Muslim political life if they start with the more recently-published volume in the middle of 1097—the sudden introduction of already-active key figures to the narrative will prove confusing at best! Still, if both of these recent volumes are used in conjunction, one can extract from them a sense of the disorder that prevailed in the various major states of the Muslim world between 1092 and 1144.

This in turn can benefit students studying the early period of the Crusades, as they will quickly realize that from a Muslim perspective, the conflicts between various pretenders to power in the regions of Syria, Egypt and Mesopotamia take up far more of the Muslim chronicler's attention than the activities of the Crusaders themselves, who presence only intrudes periodically into the narrative of events. This helps to correct one of the weaknesses of the earlier work of translation done by Francisco Gabrieli (see below). In sum, the medieval historian can, with the help of these materials, pose a provocative question to students and other scholars: was the success of the First Crusade won on the battlefields of Antioch and Jerusalem, or was it guaranteed by a

lack of unity and will in Baghdad and Isfahan?

ʿUsamah b. Munqidh (d. 1188), *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman and Warrior in the Period of the Crusades: memoirs of ʿUsamah ibn Munqidh (Kitab al-Iʿtibar)*, tr. Philip K. Hitti, rev. ed. (New York: Columbia UP, 2000). 265 pages. \$24.00.

A critical work for the study of the Crusades since its first appearance in the late 1920s, the memoirs of ʿUsamah b. Munqidh are, at least initially, as much a source of frustration as a useful primary source. It is clear that ʿUsamah's perspective is valuable; after all, he represented the membership of a Syrian frontier elite that on the one hand periodically served with an emerging constellation of forces that would mold itself into the Ayyubid Syrian leadership that would generation Salah al-Din (Saladin), and on the other periodically served the Egyptian Fatimids, and occasionally even formed temporary alliances to serve with the Crusaders' leadership. Despite this diversity in allegiances, however, a quick skimming of the work's contents often meets with a focus on what appears to be trivial matters at the expense of the historical perspective many modern historians would prefer to see. For example, ʿUsamah's stories of hunting and everyday pursuits of the petty nobility of the era can be interesting in the right context, but tell us little or nothing about Muslim-Crusader relations. In addition, it should be noted that recent studies of ʿUsamah's work have begun to debate the objectivity and value of many parts of his account that are relevant. Detractors argue that in some points (especially those related to gender or religious ideas), the situation of his own historical context would have dictated a narrative structure aimed for making Crusaders the butt of jokes and negative stereotypes rather than giving a fully accurate narrative of the actual course of events.¹² Nevertheless,

¹² See, for example, Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 259-62. A recently published monograph has also treated ʿUsamah's life and work in greater detail; see Paul

whatever the faults of his work, he represents one of our best sources for assessing the Muslim perspective of the events of the Crusades, and on the Occidental Crusaders themselves.

In particular, the seventh and eighth chapters of the work offer fascinating, if biased insights on the nature of Crusader society, not all of which betray an overt hostility toward all Franks. In particular, 'Usamah distinguishes between Franks who have assimilated into the Near Eastern environment and those who are newcomers and lacking the proper understanding of the diverse peoples who made up the region's population. He even discusses the role that women could play in the Crusades, both as combatants and as linkages between the two cultural worlds of Muslim and non-Muslim. In other parts of the narrative that often elude the scrutiny of the casual reader, we can compare 'Usamah's dealings with other Muslim powers in the region with his contacts with the Crusaders themselves—in particular, he is also noted for his observations on the Egyptian Fatimids, whom he served for almost a decade. When used carefully, 'Usamah's narratives offer clues of a world in which at least modest interactions between Muslim and non-Muslim could take place. However, elements of overt hostility still suffuse the narrative, especially in matters of religion and gender morality, and suggest that such contacts were viewed more as annoying necessities than providers of fruitful gain.

Muhammad b. Ahmad b. Jubayr (d. 1217), *The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, being the chronicles of a medieval Spanish Moor concerning his journey to the Egypt of Saladin, the holy cities of Arabia, Baghdad the city of the caliphs, the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, and the Norman kingdom of Sicily*, tr. Ronald J.C. Broadhurst (London: J. Cape, 1952). 432 pages. \$26.00

While also concerned primarily with other things, most notably the author's pilgrimage to Mecca, which was the focus of

M. Cobb, *Usama ibn Munqidh: Warrior Poet in the Age of Crusades* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006).

the work, Ibn Jubayr's work sometimes slips off the radar of modern scholarship, and it should not. In the course of a pilgrimage from Muslim Spain to the Near East, Ibn Jubayr traveled on Christian ships bound for the eastern Mediterranean and leaves us a firsthand witness to life in the various port cities of the region. While he, like 'Usamah b. Munqidh, has his share of biases about the Occidental population there (most notably in the form of admiration for the rising star of Salah al-Din in the region and his actions against the Crusaders), one can also find times, for instance, where Salah al-Din's port administration in Egypt compares rather unfavorably with that of the Crusader-held Levant. In part, his direct experience with Crusader-controlled regions was partially due to an attempt to avoid returning to Egyptian ports to repeat his experiences there! Parts of these writings can also make for a useful corrective to student perceptions from other sources that the Crusades were merely a source of friction and conflict on all fronts. In the regions of Syria and Lebanon, Ibn Jubayr bears witness to peaceful relations between Christian rulers and their Muslim subjects, and points out that Muslim and Christian merchants alike travel freely between the two regions even in times of war (pp. 300-01, 316-17). At another point, Ibn Jubayr was the recipient of assistance from the King of Sicily on his return journey home across the Mediterranean when he was shipwrecked (pp. 337-38), and this experience suggests that not all relations between individual Muslims and Christians were hostile even if their leaders were consistently in conflict. Therefore, despite its limited coverage both chronologically (his journey only lasted from 1183 to 1185) and geographically for the period of the Crusades, Ibn Jubayr's narrative still has value for student and scholar alike.

Francisco Gabrieli, *Arab Historians of the Crusades*, tr. Francisco Gabrieli and E.J. Costello (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969). 398 pages. \$21.95.

An oft-used historical reference for multiple perspectives from Muslim witnesses to various periods of the Crusading era is

this work of translation by Francisco Gabrieli. It still remains an invaluable reference; however, certain problems attend its composition. The work is structured in such a way as to give chronological coherence to the history of the Crusades over the several centuries of their development. The problem with this, first of all, is that it does narrative violence to the actual authors themselves, as one finds they will be directed from chronicler to chronicler rather than examining the work of each on its own terms and merits. In addition, one quickly notes that substantial parts of the original work from which the translation is drawn, such as that of Ibn al-Athir mentioned previously, has been omitted when it does not directly pertain to the Crusaders themselves. Moreover, the work as we have it in English is the product of multiple translations, as the original Arabic sources were first rendered into Italian, and thence from Italian to English, which may have led to some distortions over the course of the process. Nevertheless, if these problems are taken into account, the work still remains the only source by which certain Muslim historians of the Crusades can be accessed, in particular for the later Crusades in Egypt.

In the past, I have found the work of 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani (d. 1201), drawn from Gabrieli's work in various spots, to be useful as a comparative work to frame against 'Usamah b. Munqidh and Ibn Jubayr. A product of the Muslim religious and intellectual elite, al-Isfahani's more polished and elaborate writing style, combined with his very hostile and one-sided approach to the Crusaders during the siege of Jerusalem, can demonstrate to students and scholars alike how accounts from this period have to be compared with others in order to fully assess their uses and validity. In fact, the biggest problem with 'Imad al-Din al-Isfahani as a historical source lies in the nature of the Jerusalem victory of 1187 under Salah al-Din; after reading this account, the reader might be forgiven for assuming an unusually strong Muslim unity that would carry into the future and drive the Crusaders from their perches. The post-1187 history, however, does not bear this interpretation out, as Salah al-Din's Ayyubid-dynasty descendants would instead choose to return to the status quo of multiple and

shifting alliances, as one Ayyubid prince sought to maintain his local position at the expense of another. The Crusaders would even regain temporary control of Jerusalem in the first half of the thirteenth century! Even so, 'Imad al-Din's work adds yet another perspective that can be useful as a viewpoint on the workings of religious and intellectual elites at the court of Salah al-Din, who could be tapped to whip up the furor for anti-Crusader sentiment or the legitimacy of a local ruler willing to battle the Crusader menace at a moment's notice.

It should also be added that another translation by D.S. Richards of the work of Salah al-Din's personal secretary, Baha' al-Din b. Shaddad (d. 1234), has recently become available and also provides insight on (and sometimes an apologetic for) the activities of Salah al-Din during the period before and after the Third Crusade (roughly from the years 1168 to 1193), which should further supplant the need for sections of Gabrieli's earlier work.¹³ Still, Baha' al-Din's account approaches the campaigns of Salah al-Din primarily from a military perspective. Beyond that, it is most interesting for its propaganda justification of Salah al-Din's actions as exemplary paragons of key Islamic virtues (pp. 18-38).

Carole Hillenbrand, *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2000). 648 pages. \$82.50.

Those who still feel uncomfortable approaching primary sources from the Muslim perspective will benefit immensely from the various sections of Carole Hillenbrand's work. Produced to coincide with the 900th anniversary of the Frankish capture of Jerusalem during the First Crusade, Hillenbrand's study provides a remarkable synthesis of the state of scholarship on the Islamic historiography of the Crusader period. First of all, she provides a helpful historical counter-narrative of the history of the Crusades from a Muslim perspective, and she breaks the history into three

¹³ Baha' al-Din b. Shaddad (d. 1234), *The Rare and Excellent History of Saladin, or al-Nawadir al-Sultaniyya wa'l-Mahasin al-Yusufiyya* by Baha' al-Din Ibn Shaddad, tr. D.S. Richards (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2002).

key blocks of time. The first, dealing mostly with the short period of the First Crusade and its aftermath, focuses on the well-known events but with an emphasis on the reaction of various actors in the region (or the lack thereof) to the appearance of the Frankish forces. She then uses Salah al-Din's accession to power as a convenient dividing point to discuss the ebb and flow of Muslim ideological, political and military responses to the Crusades which, with notable exceptions, were often limited in their scope. Additional important chapters also deal with reading past the problematic cultural stereotypes that dominate our sources for the purpose of examining more thoroughly the realities of social and religious life during the period. For the military minded, chapters on the nature of the various military forces and the warfare they conducted are also useful. The work is also heavily interspersed with the art history of the period for those seeking visual materials for classes (a potential reason for the work's heavy price tag)—though a criticism should be made that these materials frequently do not match up with what is being discussed in the text of Hillenbrand's work itself.

Conclusion

While this survey can hardly be a comprehensive listing of all of the available literature for developing a field in Islamic historiography, it should provide the medieval historian approaching this set of materials with good starting points for a quick acquisition of the basic foundations. In addition, one hopes that the potentially provocative aspects that will be raised by the greater inclusion of medieval Islamic sources into the teaching repertoire of comparative medieval histories will shake up the scholarship on both sides of the divide between European and Islamic studies. As such, this introductory reference must remain only a starting point, and one in need of further evolution and development. Given the improved state of today's resources, though, those who take up the challenge will find that the benefits and rewards will easily outstrip the initial costs.

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*Autograph of Ibn Khaldân (upper left corner
From MS. C (Atif Effendi 1936)*

*Texts and Teaching:
Books Recommended for Courses*

History as a Detective Story

Josephine Tey (*nom de plume* of Elizabeth MacKintosh). *The Daughter of Time*, with Introduction by Robert Barnard (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995; original copyright 1951 by Elizabeth MacKintosh). 206 pages. \$14.00.

*James H. Forse
Bowling Green State University*

What can a British, mid-twentieth century, mystery novel teach students about medieval and early modern studies? Perhaps more than one would think at first glance.

The gist of the story revolves around the curiosity of Inspector Grant of Scotland Yard who is bored while recuperating in a hospital. Trying to lift his spirits, his friend Marta suggests he “could do some academic investigating Finding a solution to an unsolved problem.” Grant prides himself on his ability “to characterise faces,” an ability that has helped him solve crimes over the years. So Marta brings him several pictures of historical figures to scrutinize. Among them is “A man dressed in the velvet cap and slashed doublet of the late fifteenth-century. A man about thirty-five or thirty-six years old, lean and clean-shaven.” Grant is taken with the portrait and ponders whether this person was “A judge? A soldier? A prince? Someone used to great responsibility, and responsible in his authority. Someone too conscientious.”

When he turns the portrait over he discovers that the figure is King Richard III: “Crouchback. The monster of nursery stories. The destroyer of innocence. A synonym for villainy.”



Posthumous Portrait of Richard III, referred to in Daughter of Time as spurring on Grant's investigations into the death of the princes in the Tower National Portrait Gallery

Unable to accept the notion that his ability to judge a person's character by looking at a person's face might be mistaken, Grant begins to question the truth of the story of Richard III as passed down through the centuries by scholars and school-book histories. How could a face in which Grant sees the qualities of

sensitivity, nobility, and conscientiousness be that of the evil monster who slaughtered his own brother and innocent nephews to gain the crown of England? Was Richard III truly the “bottled spider” whose image Shakespeare painted so indelibly in the English-speaking world’s historical memory? Or was Richard III the victim of “character assassination” perpetrated by slanders spread by the Tudor king and his followers who overthrew him?

From his hospital bed, and with the help of Brent Carradine, an American graduate student who is studying in England, Inspector Grant collects, sifts, re-examines and analyzes the evidence in this 400-year old “cold case” to discover if the “real” Richard III matches the “received” tradition, and, if not, who then really had the best opportunity, and most importantly *motive*, to engineer the murder of the famous “Little Princes in the Tower.” What unfolds as the book progresses is that Grant, Carradine (and through them the reader) discover that what has been an “accepted” narrative about a subject learned in school may be flawed, misleading, slanted, and sometimes just plain wrong.

If nothing else, this is one lesson comes through loud and clear to a student reader. After reading *The Daughter of Time*, several of my students over the years, whether or not they agreed with Grant’s (Tey’s) conclusions, have vowed never again will they accept the interpretations, assumptions and conclusions presented in an history book at face value. Even though names, events, and authors’ names may be unfamiliar to American students, Tey, through the vehicle of Grant’s investigation, demonstrates some of the pitfalls of scholarship. One is the tendency to perpetuate a “master-narrative,” or “consensus” interpretation. Using the nineteenth- and early twentieth-century historians Cuthbert Oliphant and James Gairdner as examples, *The Daughter of Time* shows that despite clear indications in their books that their own investigations of sources produces, in the earlier pages, a more favorable, almost sympathetic, portrayal of Richard III, they later abandon their own conclusions when summarizing his life and “place” within the roll of English monarchs. In the end they return to the “master-narrative,” the

“consensus” of their predecessor historians that Richard was a consummate “villain,” who, as Shakespeare so portrayed him, plotted all along to seize the throne.

Perhaps Tey’s best example of how an historical master-narrative, or consensus, can be perpetuated is shown near the end of the novel. As Grant is packing up his books preparing to leave the hospital he glances through one of the schoolbooks lent to him by a nurse. It condemns Richard III for his “murders” of opponents and “the elimination of two nephews,” and states that “his name was a synonym for evil,” but it credits the “shrewd and far-seeing monarch” Henry VII with a “settled and considered policy of the Tudors to rid themselves of all rivals to the throne, more especially those heirs of York who remained alive on the succession of Henry VII.” Not as obvious to the uninitiated, but still implied in Grant’s investigation is the issue of historiography. Tey shows there can be two (and by implication more than two) sides to historical events and interpretations, and that historical narratives can, and do, shift their conclusions over time.

Closely tied to Grant’s (Tey’s) discoveries regarding secondary sources is the realization that so-called “primary” sources also need be examined closely. The most obvious example in the book is Sir Thomas More’s *History of Richard III*. Grant becomes aware that this much-cited source must be nothing but “hearsay evidence,” since More himself was only five years old when Richard succeeded to the throne and eight when Richard was killed at Bosworth Field. Further, Grant discovers, More had served as a page-boy in the household of Richard’s bitter enemy, John Morton, Henry VII’s Archbishop of Canterbury. Grant concludes, therefore, that More’s history is nothing more than Morton’s propaganda. Similar conclusions are reached about other oft-used sources when it is discovered that virtually all the “primary” sources about Richard III are after-the-fact, most written during the reigns of his Tudor successors. In short, *The Daughter of Time* makes it clear that even so-called primary sources must not be taken at face value but questioned using such criteria as immediacy, validity, and potential bias.

I will grant that for typical, American, college students an instructor will need to take some class time, and entertain students' questions, to explain the historical context of the "mystery" Tey is exploring, especially if it is used (as I do) in a freshman world history survey. Also, one can find other books discussing the same issues—for instance *Royal Blood: Richard III and the Mystery of the Princes* by Bertram Fields, a Hollywood lawyer to entertainers like Madonna and John Travolta (New York: Regan Books, 2000, 352 pages). But while that book takes each accusation against Richard and examines the evidence, and credibility of sources, for and against those accusations from the perspective of presenting the case in a court of law, *Royal Blood* does not have the sense of solving the "mystery" to drive the reader along (laying aside the fact that students would rather read a 206 page *story* than 352 pages of legal/historical analysis). Because Tey is implying that a scholar really is a sort of detective, or investigator, she is turning the reader (in my case the student-reader) into one of those scholar-detectives. Some of them even decide to read further on Richard III and the Wars of the Roses.

To be sure, one can fault Tey herself for a lack of "up-to-date" research. Most of Grant's (Tey's) reasoning and arguments are drawn from the 1906 work by historian Sir Clements Markham¹—hardly "recent research" by 1951. Nor does Tey mention the 1936 translation of Dominic Mancini's first-hand account of events in 1483 leading up to Richard's seizure of power.² This work, when first published, was said to "prove" Richard's guilt in the murder of his nephews. Yet Tey was, after all, a novelist, not an academic historian. And whether or not one accepts Grant's—Tey's—Markham's conclusions about Richard's character, motives and actions, the fact still remains that *The*

¹ Clements Markham, *Richard III: His Life and Character, Reviewed in the Light of Recent Research* (London: Smith and Elder, 1906).

² C. A. J. Armstrong, TR. *The Usurpation of Richard the Third* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1936)

Daughter of Time involves most students in detective and reflective scholarship in a way no academic book could do.

The Daughter of Time also could serve well to inform students in courses dealing with medieval and early modern philosophy, literature, or art history; for many of the same issues of questioning the provenance and possible bias of original sources, and a tendency by modern scholars to build upon an established “master-narrative,” are the same. For instance, many of the writings of Jean Gerson (Chancellor of the University of Paris at the time of Joan of Arc), along with other university scholars of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries, were shorter treatises dealing with contemporary issues, controversies, and ideas. They were not the theological “commentaries” typical of the age of St. Thomas Aquinas. Therefore, in order to fit these “schoolmen” into their master-narrative, historians of Scholasticism have dismissed their efforts as examples of the decline of Scholasticism and creative theological ideas. On the other hand, other historians have removed Gerson and his contemporaries from *that* master-narrative only to place them in *another*. These historians have labeled Gerson and his contemporaries as precursors of Humanism and/or the Reformation. The category to which Gerson *et al.* were assigned depends upon whether the master-narrative was that of the traditional historian of ideas who emphasized the medieval world, or that of one who emphasized the era of the “Renaissance” and Reformation.³ To offer another example: despite the emergence of new avenues of literary criticism in the late twentieth

³ Daniel Hobbins, “The Schoolman as Public Intellectual: Jean Gerson and the Late Medieval Tract,” *The American Historical Review*, 108 (2003), 1308-10, 1324-34. Hobbins’ main thrust is to argue that it is a timeworn master-narrative that characterizes Gerson and his contemporaries as a “vulgarization” of scholastic theology.” Instead, he writes, “we should recognize the historical shift that was occurring here.” Gerson and his fellow University schoolmen worked within a different intellectual milieu. They turned their attentions from writing theological commentaries to writing tracts concerning contemporary issues and concerns, as Hobbins puts it, they made “increasing application of magisterial learning to real-world cases.”

century—feminist, post-modernist, Marxist, to name a few—some practitioners of these new forms of criticism still frame their newer insights about Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* within the preconceptions arising from the master-narratives of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century literary critics, many of whom labeled *Romeo and Juliet* as a "problem," or "flawed," tragedy, because the play lacks some elements necessary to what they perceived necessary to an Aristotelian formula for "true" tragedy.⁴

Every student of medieval and early modern culture has to be a kind of detective. All such studies face the problems of incomplete, sometimes contradictory, primary sources and artifacts, the sometimes contradictory and confusing interpretations scholars have drawn from those sources, and the weight of interpretations in the past that, unconsciously, cause those preconceptions to shape newer scholarship. *The Daughter of Time* introduces students to such issues in a way that brings them face to face with the notion that it can be dangerous to trust someone else's data and conclusions blindly, and does so in a way that leads students to share in those processes of questioning and reasoning that scholars must use.

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⁴ James H. Forse, "Arden of Feversham and *Romeo and Juliet*: Two Elizabethan Experiments in the Genre of 'Comedy-Suspense,'" *Journal of Popular Culture*, 29 (1995), 85-7.