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Letter From the Editors

August 2025

Welcome to the fifth volume of *Dies Legibiles*!

As always, I was blown away this year by the superb work undergraduate students submitted to this journal, some first forays into medieval studies and others final projects before pursuing a graduate degree in the field. If the submissions to *Dies Legibiles* are any indication, the next generation of medievalists are thinking deeply about the past, about which histories have been neglected, and about what those histories reveal about the present moment.

I am so incredibly proud to have helmed the journal for the past three years, for almost the entirety of my own college career. The journal has always sought a broad range of perspectives; thus, we welcomed medievalist essays on any subject from students at any university and strove to include multimedia elements. I am proud to say that tradition has carried on. In this volume, you will marvel at a recreation of an illuminated manuscript folio, a case for reattributing a Sienese painting, Old English translations, and essays on topics ranging from art history to queer theory to religious commentary.

I will be sad to leave the journal after three years, but I have the utmost faith in Rouen Nelson—the editor-in-chief for the 2025–2026 volume—and the next generation of Smithies. I can't wait to read what comes next.

Finally, I want to extend my deepest gratitude and appreciation to the members of the CODEX Medieval Studies Lab at Smith and to its faculty advisor, Professor Joshua C. Birk. Truly, the advice

and support you provided affected every step of the journey of publishing this volume. Thank you for all the tech support, fact-checking, and lab dinners.

Dalia Dainora Cohen and the *Dies Legibiles* Team
We proudly present: *Dies Legibiles* Volume V

Mystical Visions: Female Affective Piety and Queering the Divine

Kelly Eleonore Hicks
Brown University '25

In transgressing seemingly established boundaries, the experiences of medieval Christian women offer space for queer interpretation. Observing the writings and visions of specific Beguines, saints, anchoresses, and abbesses (Hadewijch, Julian of Norwich, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Angela of Foligno, and Hildegard von Bingen), female interactions with mysticism may display a distinctly queer form of religious relationality. Expanding upon affective piety, the medieval female mystic sought a direct, real, and "unmediated experience of God," aspiring to recognize herself in the divine.[1] Desiring to be one with God, these mystics disobeyed borders of sex and sexuality, presenting "accounts of insane love and endless desire in which gender becomes so radically fluid that it is not clear what kind of sexuality—within the heterosexual/homosexual dichotomy [...]—is being metaphorically deployed to evoke the relationship between humans and the divine."[2] Thus, to be one with the divine was to mirror its all-encompassing nature, inhabiting a body that is both male and female, both heterosexual and homosexual. The means by which the female mystic "courted" the sacred often evoked a homoerotic sentiment, seeking to love a reflection of herself in God expressed through same-sex attraction. Elizabeth Petroff asserts that the mystic upheld a "double consciousness of self and God," knowing "God first-hand, and [...] herself in that same light of illumination."[3] Union with Christ disregarded otherwise "stable" categories of gender and sexuality through the negation of a singular identity for multiple. Once one with God, the female mystic imbued the masculine divine with a feminine essence, complicating sex binaries. The simultaneous existence of the feminine and masculine

[1] Elizabeth Alvilda Petroff, "Women and Mysticism in the Medieval World," in *Women's Lives Self-Representation, Reception and Appropriation in the Middle Ages*, ed. Nahir I. Otaño Gracia and Daniel Armenti (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2022), 14.

[2] Amy Hollywood, "Sexual Desire, Divine Desire; Or, Queering the Beguines," in *Toward a Theology of Eros: Transfiguring Passion at the Limits of Discipline*, by Virginia Burrus, ed. Catherine Keller, Transdisciplinary Theological Colloquia Series (New York: Fordham University Press, 2007), 122.

[3] Petroff, "Women and Mysticism," 14.

in one body stimulated a queer identity, creating a portal through which one could express both homoerotic and non-binary selfhoods. Thus, medieval female mystical experiences upheld a queer divinity, maintaining a genderqueer subject through their relation to a simultaneously feminine/masculine divine.

Recognizing the divine to be a diversely gendered figure, the female mystic often feminized the form of Christ, offering her a means to more directly relate to God. Seeking union with a figure expressed through female terms, these medieval mystical experiences could be regarded as homoerotic or "lesbian-like." While the application of the term "lesbian," or "lesbian-like" is contested in premodern studies,[4] I will opt to use the designation "lesbian" when referencing female/female sexual, erotic, or intimately affective relationships. Although reluctance to apply the term to a premodern context may stem from a concern of historical anachronism,[5] the decision not to use "lesbian" when describing medieval sexualities can serve to further obfuscate the already obscured identity of queer premodern women. While medieval people did not view their sexualities through the identifications that surround current terminology, Judith Bennett argues that "lesbian" nonetheless "has considerable antiquity," citing a Byzantine commentator who associated "'lesbian' with same-sex relations between women" over a thousand years ago, "indicating that the term 'lesbian' might have long roughly signified what it still does today."[6] Further, the application of this term does not need to apply solely to sexual relations between women. Rather, following Bennett's assertions, I will view lesbian identity as it exists on a continuum of relationality between women.[7] Bennett argues for the malleability of lesbian identity in both the past and the present era, contending, "Since no word has transparent meaning, now or in the past, surely we need not single out 'lesbian' as a word that must be proscribed, or even just italicized."[8] Martha Vicinus seconds this point, raising a pertinent question: "Is the past so different that we need different tools of analysis and theoretical assumptions, or should we acknowledge our affinity with parts of the past that resonate with our own needs and attachments?"[9] Thus, in an endeavor to unobscure premodern queer women's existence, I will prioritize the usage of the term lesbian.

In the medieval period, lesbian identity remained largely "invisible" to both clerical and non-clerical authors.[10] Same-sex relations were often grouped together under the banner of sodomy, as

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[4] See: *The Lesbian Premodern*, ed. Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Diane Watt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[5] Judith Bennett, "Remembering Elizabeth Etchingham and Agnes Oxenbridge," in *The Lesbian Premodern*, ed. Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Diane Watt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 137.

[6] Bennett, "Remembering Elizabeth," 137–138.

[7] Bennett, 139.

[8] Bennett, 138.

[9] Martha Vicinus, "Lesbian Ghosts," in *The Lesbian Premodern*, ed. Noreen Giffney, Michelle Sauer, and Diane Watt (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 195.

[10] See: Jacqueline Murray, "Twice Marginal and Twice Invisible: Lesbians in the Middle Ages," in *Handbook of Medieval Sexuality*, ed. James A. Brundage and Vern L. Bullough (New York: Routledge, 2000); Ulrike Wiethaus, "Female Homoerotic Discourse and Religion in Medieval Germanic Culture," in *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Carol Braun Pasternack (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003).

penitentials, theological writings, and law codes ignored the distinct nature of lesbian selfhood.[11] When these texts did explicitly cite relations between woman and woman, they largely reimagined female sexuality through a phallocentric perspective, remaining unable to conceptualize an absence of the male figure in the sex act. The eighth-century *Penitential of Theodore* displays this concern regarding the lack of masculine presence in sexuality. Jacqueline Murray cites the book's three canons that reference punishment for female homosexual acts:

> 12. If a woman practices vice with a woman, she shall do penance for three years.
> 13. If she practices solitary vice, she shall do penance for the same period.
> 14. The penance of a widow and of a girl is the same. She who has a husband deserves a greater penalty if she commits fornication.[12]

Locating "solitary vice" beside female/female sex acts, Murray affirms that the *Penitential* "highlights the primacy of a phallocentric understanding of human sexuality [...] It is the absence of the male partner that unites conceptually masturbation and lesbian sexual activity."[13] A perpetual unimaginability surrounding sex bereft of the male phallus furthered this obscurity of lesbian existence. Refusing to recognize the potential absence of male genitalia, some authors imagined that lesbian women used dildos or artificial penises to replicate heterosexual sex.[14] The women's usage of imitated phallus was an act to which these authors largely attributed a harsher punishment than other, non-penetrative forms of lesbian sex.[15] Threatening the perceived male position in intercourse, the use of a false penis represented the locus of utmost concern to clerical authors. However, while Murray argues that "female sexuality was not taken seriously except insofar as it threatened male privilege or the natural hierarchy of the genders,"[16] the texts remain critical, albeit less so, of lesbian sex acts bereft of phallic presence.

Nonetheless, despite the largely condemnatory nature of religious texts, medieval beliefs surrounding homosexual identity remain a contested site of scholarly investigation. The obscure nature of medieval gender stimulates a lack of clarity when evaluating the "general" consensus of premodern Christian European culture toward homosexuality. Bennett cites the diversity of scholarly interpretations that consider medieval gender: "some scholars argue that there was just one (male) gender in the Middle Ages (most women were defective males); others argue that a two-gender binary rigidly separated women and men; and still others argue that medieval people played readily with ideas about intermediate genders or third sexes."[17] Furthering this point, James Schultz claims that medieval

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[11] Jeffrey Richards, "Homosexuals," in *Sex, Dissidence, and Damnation: Minority Groups in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 1994), 135.

[12] Murray, "Twice Marginal," 197.

[13] Murray, 197.

[14] Murray, 199.

[15] E. Ann Matter, "My Sister, My Spouse: Woman-Identified Women in Medieval Christianity," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 2, no. 2 (1986): 90.

[16] Murray, 199.

[17] Bennett, "Remembering Elizabeth," 137–138.

people did not even have a concept of heterosexuality against which to contrast any "alternative" sexualities.[18]

While it is unclear what the general population's attitude may have been toward lesbian and lesbian-like behavior in the Middle Ages, it nonetheless remained largely condemned by clerical authors. Existing in this religious space, the female mystical experience could offer a socially acceptable means by which to transcend these potential boundaries dictating sexuality and gender. Although clerical male authors criticized women's "divergent" non-procreative behavior, the possibilities of Christian mystical interaction undermined such strict limitations. Viewing the divine as a gender-diverse figure, medieval female Christian mystics "queered" their religious experiences, evolving through various sexualities and gender designations in an attempt to achieve a holy elevation.

The writings in Middle Dutch of thirteenth-century Beguine Hadewijch reflect this diversely gendered and sexual self, desiring a union with a complex, multi-gendered divine body. Throughout her visions, poetry, and letters, Hadewijch often seeks to "court" Minne, the Middle Dutch word for love personified as a female figure. The boundaries between Hadewijch and this personified Minne are obscure: at times indistinguishable from God, a mortal woman, or Hadewijch herself.[19] Hadewijch upholds the obscure interchangeability of this figure in her poem *Were I But in Love*, in which she merges with Minne into a dual yet simultaneously singular identity:

> Be you, Love, my Beloved;
> You gave yourself as Love for your loved one's sake,
> And thus you, Love, uplifted me, your loved one, with you!
>
> O Love, were I but love,
> And could I but love you, Love, with love!
> O Love, for love's sake, grant that I,
> Having become love, may know Love wholly as Love![20]

When speaking to her beloved, Hadewijch simultaneously desires to use love to "become love" and "love you, Love, with Love," complicating a bodily and spiritual separation between herself and the object of affection. The oneness Hadewijch achieves with Minne deconstructs boundaries between the self and the divine, subsuming the mystic within the body of the worshipped. Considering the female nature of Minne, Hadewijch's ambition to love Love can be seen as both autoerotic and homoerotic. Externally seeking the affection of a female form, Hadewijch also seeks internally through the recognition of herself within Minne. In a letter offering spiritual advice to a younger Beguine, Hadewijch offers spiritual community as an acceptable outlet for lesbian behavior and emotion:

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[18] James Schultz, "Heterosexuality as a Threat to Medieval Studies," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 15, no. 1 (2006): 14.

[19] Ulrike Wiethaus, "Female Homoerotic Discourse and Religion in Medieval Germanic Culture," in *Gender and Difference in the Middle Ages*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Carol Braun Pasternack (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 291.

[20] Hadewijch, "Poems in Couplets: 15. Were I But in Love," in *Hadewijch: The Complete Works,* The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), lines 46–52.

> How unspeakably sweet Love makes me find her being and the gifts that come to me from her! Oh, I can refuse Love nothing! And you, can you wait for Love and withstand her, this Love that is said to conquer all things? O beloved, why has not Love sufficiently overwhelmed you and engulfed you in her abyss? Alas! when Love is so sweet, why do you not fall deep into her? And why do you not touch God deeply enough in the abyss of his Nature, which is so unfathomable? Sweet love, give yourself for Love's sake fully to God in love. Necessity requires it, for your not doing so is hurtful to us both; it is hurtful to you and too difficult for me.[21]

Acknowledging the blurred boundaries created between Hadewijch and Minne, the assertion that the young Beguine must "fall deep into" Love may suggest that through union with Minne, she will simultaneously grow closer to Hadewijch. The letter thus potentially offers insight into lesbian expressions of love through the lens of religiosity. Beyond an interpersonal female relationship, however, Hadewijch's mysticism stimulated a transgression of gender binaries. Although identifying herself within Minne, Hadewijch's conception of the figure neglects a wholly feminine nature. Rather, Minne is dually male and female, imbued with the Holy Spirit, the Father, and the Son simultaneously. In one of her visions, Hadewijch recounts a visitation by the Countenance of the Holy Spirit, who "possesses the Father and the Son in one Essence." However, the masculine Countenance reveals himself to simultaneously exist as the female Love when speaking to Hadewijch:

> With regard to all things, know what I, Love, am in them! And when you fully bring me your self, as pure humanity in myself, through all the ways of perfect Love, you shall have fruition of me as the Love who I am. Until that day, you shall love what I, Love, am. And then you will be love, as I am Love. [...] In my unity, you have received me and I have received you. Go forth, and live what I am; and return bringing me full divinity, and have fruition of me as who I am.[22]

The otherwise male Countenance of the Holy Spirit denies a singular gender identity, imbued with the female essence of Love in total "unity." The Spirit instructs Hadewijch to mirror these "ways of perfect Love," an emulation of the female that will allow her to receive this masculine/feminine body. Further, as Hadewijch unites with Christ, a diverse gender union generates a decimation of self where gender is irrelevant:

> I lost that manly beauty outwardly in the sight of his form. I saw him completely come to nought and so fade and all at once dissolve that I could no longer recognize or perceive him outside me, and I could no longer distinguish him within me. Then it was to me as if we were one without difference. [...] After that I remained in a passing away in my Beloved, so that I wholly melted away in him and nothing any longer remained to me of myself.[23]

Achieving a state of equality with the divine, Hadewijch dissolves into the male Christ's body in a spectacle of annihilation, becoming "one without difference." Melting away in "him," Hadewijch's dissolution of self generates a newly male yet simultaneously female gender identity, being "one without difference" in Christ.

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[21] Hadewijch, "Letter 5: False Brethren," 56.
[22] Hadewijch, "Visions: Who and What is Love," 272.
[23] Hadewijch, "Visions: Oneness in the Eucharist," 280.

Figure 1. *Illumination from the Lindsey Psalter [Christ inside a mandorla]*. Before 1222. Illumination on vellum. Large octavo, 25 x 35 cm. Burlington House (MS 59).

Pursuing this entrance into the divine, the female mystic found space to "queer" their religious experiences through interactions with Christ's side wound. The late medieval era's increasingly popular visualization of Christ's side wound in the manuscript tradition coincided with a rise in affective piety.[24] Focusing on the cultivation of a distinctly personal relationship with Christ, images of the side wound provided a realm within which the medieval reader could meditate upon and relate to his sufferings. These illustrations of the wound detached from Christ's body are particularly rich sites of contemplation when investigating the female mystic's "queer" interaction with the divine. Often displayed vertically, these depictions simultaneously evoke imagery of a mandorla (see Fig. 1) or a vulva. While scholars contest the wound's likeness to a vulva,[25]

[24] Vibeke Olson, "Penetrating the Void: Picturing the Wound in Christ's Side as a Performative Space," in *Wounds and Wound Repair in Medieval Culture*, ed. Larissa Tracy and Kelly DeVries (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 315.

[25] See: Amy Hollywood, "'That Glorious Slit,'" in *Luce Irigaray and Premodern Culture: Thresholds of History*, ed. Theresa Krier and Elizabeth Harvey (London: Routledge, 2004); Sophie Sexon, "Gender-Querying Christ's Wounds: A Non-Binary Interpretation of Christ's Body in Late Medieval Imagery," in *Trans and Genderqueer Subjects in Medieval Hagiography*, ed. Alicia Spencer-Hall and Blake Gutt (Amsterdam University Press, 2021); Martha Easton, "'Was It Good for You, Too?' Medieval Erotic Art and Its Audiences," *Different Visions: New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 1, no. 1 (2008); Michelle M. Sauer, "Queer Time and Lesbian Temporality in Medieval Women's Encounters with the Side Wound," in *Medieval Futurity: Essays for the Future of a Queer Medieval Studies*, ed. Will Rogers and Christopher Michael Roman, New Queer Medievalisms (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

the site of the wound as vulva allowed the female mystic to experience a "queer" religion, offering her a way to recognize herself in the predominately masculine Christian divine subject. Beyond its immediate vulvic similarity, the side wound found a further association with the vagina through medieval birthing girdles (see Figs. 2–3) and amulets. Carrying depictions of the wounds of Christ, women used these objects to ease pain in labor and menstruation by pressing the vellum closely against their skin.[26]

Figure 2. A life-size representation of Christ's Side Wound. Fifteenth century. Ink on parchment. British Library (Harley Roll T 11).

Figure 3. *Birth scroll with prayers and invocations to Saints Quiricus and Julitta*. Circa 1500. Vellum. Wellcome Collection (MS. 632).

Medieval ideologies surrounding blood, milk, and water stimulated this relationship between wound and birth. As Michelle Sauer claims, "the gospels report that when the side of Jesus was pierced at the crucifixion, both blood and water flowed forth. This echoes the water and the blood that issue with the birth of a child."[27] Analogizing the wound to the vagina through birthing imagery, medical beliefs further feminized Christ's body. Medieval concepts connecting blood to the female breast

[26] Sexon, "Gender-Querying Christ's Wounds," 140.

[27] Michelle M. Sauer, "Queer Time and Lesbian Temporality in Medieval Women's Encounters with the Side Wound," in *Medieval Futurity: Essays for the Future of a Queer Medieval Studies*, ed. Will Rogers and Christopher Michael Roman, New Queer Medievalisms (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 207.

emphasized the potentially feminine nature of Christ's bleeding wound: the popular late thirteenth–early fourteenth-century treatise *Women's Secrets* argued "that breast milk is created from surplus menses not released during childbirth."[28] These aspects of the female in the masculine Christ's body rejected a vision of the divine as a wholly masculine figure, encompassing both binary genders simultaneously. For the female mystic, the opening of Christ's wound could thus offer an entrance through which she could unite with the divine, upholding a possibility for oneness.

Figure 4. *The Measure of the Side Wound and the Body of Christ.*
Circa 1484/1492. Hand-colored woodcut on paper. 12 x 8.1 cm. National Gallery of Art (1943.3.831).

[28] Sauer, "Queer Time," 208; Hollywood, "'That Glorious Slit,'" 119.

Representations of the detached side wound stimulated an intimately personal relationship between the worshiper and the physical body of Christ, often purporting to match the actual size of the wound.[29] This focus on recreating reality through visual illustration emphasized the possibilities of medieval affective piety through the book, upholding a real connection between the reader and the represented image. Sauer attests to the importance of the medieval user's "sensory engagement" with the manuscript, contending that "the book was therefore seen as alive to many medieval users, and by extension any likeness that was placed on its surfaces. To a certain extent, then, touching an image of Christ was akin to touching a proxy of his body."[30] The manuscript's inherently performative space thus demanded the reader's tactile interaction, with touch serving as the path to cross from the secular into the sacred. Sophie Sexon maintains that "the haptic is evoked when viewing images in which Christ's finger points to his wound, asking the viewer to consider how that suffering body is similar to their own suffering body. The image erases the opposition between subject and object by pointing out the similarities between Christ's humanity and the humanity of the viewer."[31] Following this disintegration of boundaries between Christ and worshiper, a fifteenth-century woodcut (Fig. 4) upholds physical engagement as a key means of affective piety, instructing viewers to touch the image of the wound.[32] On the left banderole, the text clarifies the specifics of this touch: "This is the length and width of Christ's wound which was pierced in his side on the Cross. Whoever kisses this wound with remorse and sorrow, also with devotion, will have as often as he does this, seven years indulgence from Pope Innocent."[33] The text on the right banderole reiterates the necessity of kissing specifically: "This little cross standing in Christ's wound measured 40 times makes the length of Christ in his humanity. Whoever kisses it with devotion shall be protected from sudden death or misfortune."[34]

The fifteenth-century Loftie Hours (Fig. 5) reveal a medieval user's similar physical dedication to engagement with Christ's wounds. While a majority of the Loftie Hours' illuminations reflect no signs of tactile interaction,[35] Christ's wounds on fol. 110v demonstrate a history of unique physical attention. Standing out from the rest of the manuscript, the lower two wounds on the page are eroded and less vibrant, suggesting that they have "been touched or kissed in a way that has resulted in abrasion of the pigment."[36] Sophie Sexon affirms that "no other illustrations in the manuscript, including those of Christ's body and face, have been touched quite so fervently," singling out the wounds "as objects of adoration [...] worthy of attention that other body parts do not merit."[37] The slit's detached nature further marks it as the site of special attention. The wound is designed to

[29] Hollywood, "'That Glorious Slit,'" 113.
[30] Sauer, "Queer Time," 210.
[31] Sexon, "Gender-Querying," 147.
[32] Hollywood, "'That Glorious Slit,'" 117.
[33] Peter W. Parshall and Rainer Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking: Fifteenth-century Woodcuts and Their Public* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 2005), 259. https://archive.org/details/originsofeuropea0000pars/page/258/mode/2up.
[34] Parshall and Schoch, *Origins of European Printmaking*, 259.
[35] Sexon, "Gender-Querying," 147.
[36] Sexon, "Gender-Querying," 147.
[37] Sexon, "Gender-Querying," 147.

stimulate an affective experience, directing the reader to intimately connect with the body of Christ through touch. As a literal opening or slit, the wound represented an entrance through which the worshiper could directly relate to Christ, a portal to become "one" with his sufferings. The emotional purpose of this experience is directly displayed through Figs. 6 and 7, inserting a depiction of the Sacred Heart, largely associated with the Passion,[38] in the wound's opening.

Figure 5. *Leaf from Loftie Hours: Five Wounds of Christ*.
Mid-fifteenth century. Parchment. 9.5 x 14.5 cm. The Walters Art Museum (W.165.110V).

The tactile engagement with the vulvic wound, Amy Hollywood argues, may suggest a homoerotic relationship for the female Christian reader.[39] However, although representing a potentially erotic

[38] Sauer, "Queer Time," 202.
[39] Hollywood, "'That Glorious Slit,'" 117.

interaction with a feminine form, this affective piety denied a solely lesbian expression, as Christ remained simultaneously masculine. While the vulvic wound could serve as an entrance for the female mystic, Hollywood maintains that Christ's body still existed across gender binaries:

> The radicality of medieval devotional practices [...] refuse any absolute identification between masculinity and penetration or between femininity and penetrability. The very mode of reading implied by medieval devotional texts and images, with their constantly interpenetrating biblical, extrabiblical, and liturgical citations, suggests the ubiquity of an erotics of penetration within medieval spiritual traditions. The fluidity of sexual difference may be, at least in part, an outcome of such reading practices.[40]

Figure 6 (left). *The Side Wound of Christ.* 1480–1490. Tempera colors and gold leaf. 11.9 × 17 cm. Getty Museum (MS 101, fol. 105v).

Figure 7 (right). *Heures d'Isabelle Stuart, duchesse de Bretagne, fol. 410.* 1401–1500. Ink and gold on parchment. 25 x 18.3 cm. Bibliothèque François-Mitterrand (Latin 1369).

In her *Revelations of Divine Love*, fourteenth-century anchoress Julian of Norwich follows in a diversely gendered "eroticization and maternalization" of Christ as man and woman, imagining his form through the terms of both mother and lover.[41] Upholding his outwardly male figure, Julian nonetheless subverts a purely masculine identity through reference to Christ in the feminine:

[40] Hollywood, "'That Glorious,'" 121.
[41] Sauer, "Queer Time," 208.

> Jesus Christ who does good in return for evil is our true mother; we have our being from him where the ground of motherhood begins [...] As truly as God is our father, so truly is God our mother; and he revealed that in everything, and especially in those sweet words where he says: 'It is I', that is to say: 'It is I: the power and the goodness of fatherhood. It is I: the wisdom and the kindness of motherhood [...] It is I: the Trinity. It is I: the unity [...] It is I: the endless fulfillment of all true desires.[42]

Recognizing Christ to be "our true mother," Julian imbues the divine with a dual male and female existence, defining God as both "the kindness of motherhood" and the opposing "goodness of fatherhood." To Julian, God and Jesus represent one being, inseparable within "the unity" of the Trinity. Simultaneously masculine and feminine, Christ's gender duality serves to reflect the all-encompassing nature of the divine, negating a binary separation for the expression of a "unity" that offers "the endless fulfillment of all true desires." Further, meditating upon Christ's side wound, Julian upholds medieval associations between vagina, blood, and breast, imaging the slit as a distinctly female form: "Jesus is our true mother, feeding us not with milk but with himself, opening his side to us and claiming all our love."[43] Wound becomes breast in Julian's *Revelations*, a source where one can receive holy sustenance as a child receives milk from a mother.

Expanding on Julian's visions, some female mystics regarded the wound as a space of refuge for the body and soul. Martha Easton claims that the wound acted as "an entrance into and exit from the body, the devotional contemplation of which led to a kind of swallowing and engulfing, all-encompassing experience, the liminal zone from which the Church is literally born."[44] Through their testimonies, the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century saints Angela of Foligno and Catherine of Siena describe "engulfing" experiences with the wound, considering it to be a destination of union with God. Specifically focusing on the consumption of Christ's body, their visions illustrate moments in which Christ directs them to drink his blood and subsequently take rest inside his wound. Angela recounts the enlightening and "cleansing" consolation of drinking the blood from Christ's side:

> He did say unto me, 'Put thy mouth into the wound in My side.' Then me thought that I did put it there and did drink the blood which was running freshly from out of His side, and in the doing of this it was given me to know that I was cleansed. And here I did begin to receive great consolation. [...] I did pray the Lord that He would cause my blood to be shed and poured out for His love's sake, as His had been shed for me, and I did desire that for His love all my members should suffer affliction and death, more vile and more bitter than His Passion.[45]

Although diverging from Angela's desire to directly replicate the sufferings of Christ and "His Passion," several scenes from Catherine of Siena's hagiography similarly display the saint consuming the blood of Christ. In one such moment, Catherine evokes Julian of Norwich and her associations

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[42] Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love*, trans. Barry Windeatt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 128.

[43] Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine,* 130.

[44] Easton, "'Was It Good,'" 3–4.

[45] Angela of Foligno, *The Book of Divine Consolation of the Blessed Angela of Foligno*, trans. Mary G. Steegmann (London: Chatto and Windus, 1909), 8. https://archive.org/details/BookOfDivineConsolation/page/n287/mode/2up.

between blood and breast, using a metaphor to liken her consumption of Christ's blood to a child sucking on a mother's breast:

> Do you know what the Lord did to my soul that day? He behaved like a mother with her favourite child. She will show it the breast, but hold it away from it until it cries; as soon as it begins to cry, she will laugh for a while and clasp it to her and, covering it with kisses, delightedly give it her full breast. So the Lord behaved with me [...] He showed me His most sacred side from afar, and I cried from the intensity of my longing to put my lips to the sacred wound. [...] He came up to me, clasped my soul in His arms, and put my mouth to where His most sacred wound [...] the wound in His side. [...] my soul entered right into that wound, and found such sweetness and such knowledge of the Divinity there that if you could ever appreciate it you would marvel that my heart did not break, and wonder however I managed to go on living in such an excess of ardour and love.[46]

Catherine's comparison of Christ to a teasing mother further establishes a divine femininity, blurring distinctions between the Virgin Mother and the Son. Recognizing the intertwined associations between blood, breast, and vulva, women's experiences with the wound may uphold an erotic sentiment. Catherine and Angela's interactions with Christ similarly evoke consumption, directed to "feed" on or "drink" the material body of Christ. This material interaction, however, fulfills an intensely spiritual purpose, following in the mystic's goal to become one with the divine. As Easton asserts, the wound's structured opening evokes "medieval theories of sight as penetration,"[47] thus enabling the female mystic to "penetrate" inside of Christ through material interaction. Entering a simultaneously masculine and feminine body, these exchanges with and inside of the wound allowed a heteronormative expression of potentially homosexual longing, seeking union with a male figure through his female aspects.

However, once inside the wound, the female mystic rejected designation by any categories of gender, instead inhabiting the all-encompassing nature of divine form. Julian of Norwich and Hadewijch both express an ambition to achieve self-annihilation at the hands of divine experience. Julian's assertion, "until I am of one substance with him I can never have complete rest nor true happiness; that is to say, until I am so joined to him that there is no created thing between my God and me,"[48] mirrors the statement by Hadewijch that "I desired that his Humanity should to the fullest extent be one in fruition with my humanity [...] and that for me he should be all that he is, without withholding anything from me."[49] Aligning one's humanity with God so closely that "no created thing" may exist between oneself and the sacred generates self-decimation and simultaneous renewal at the hands of the mystical vision. Rejecting human categories for a divine state of dual-gender-oneness, the female mystic is no longer bound by any gendered or sexual degrees of separation when in union with God. The wound's momentarily vulvic portal thus transfers the mystic to the divine intersection of a non-binary, queer mandorla. Illustrating the convergence of heaven and earth, the wound's

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[46] Blessed Raymond of Capua, *The Life of St. Catherine of Siena*, trans. George Lamb (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 2011), 173. https://archive.org/details/lifeofstcatherin0000raym/page/n10/mode/1up.

[47] Caroline Walker Bynum, "Interrogating 'Likeness,'" *Historische Anthropologie* 28, no. 1 (2020): 37.

[48] Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine*, 145.

[49] Hadewijch, "Visions: Oneness in the Eucharist," 280.

mandorla-like imagery may represent the unity that exists between and across gender binaries. Simultaneously vulva and mandorla, the wound is feminine, masculine, and gender-neutral.

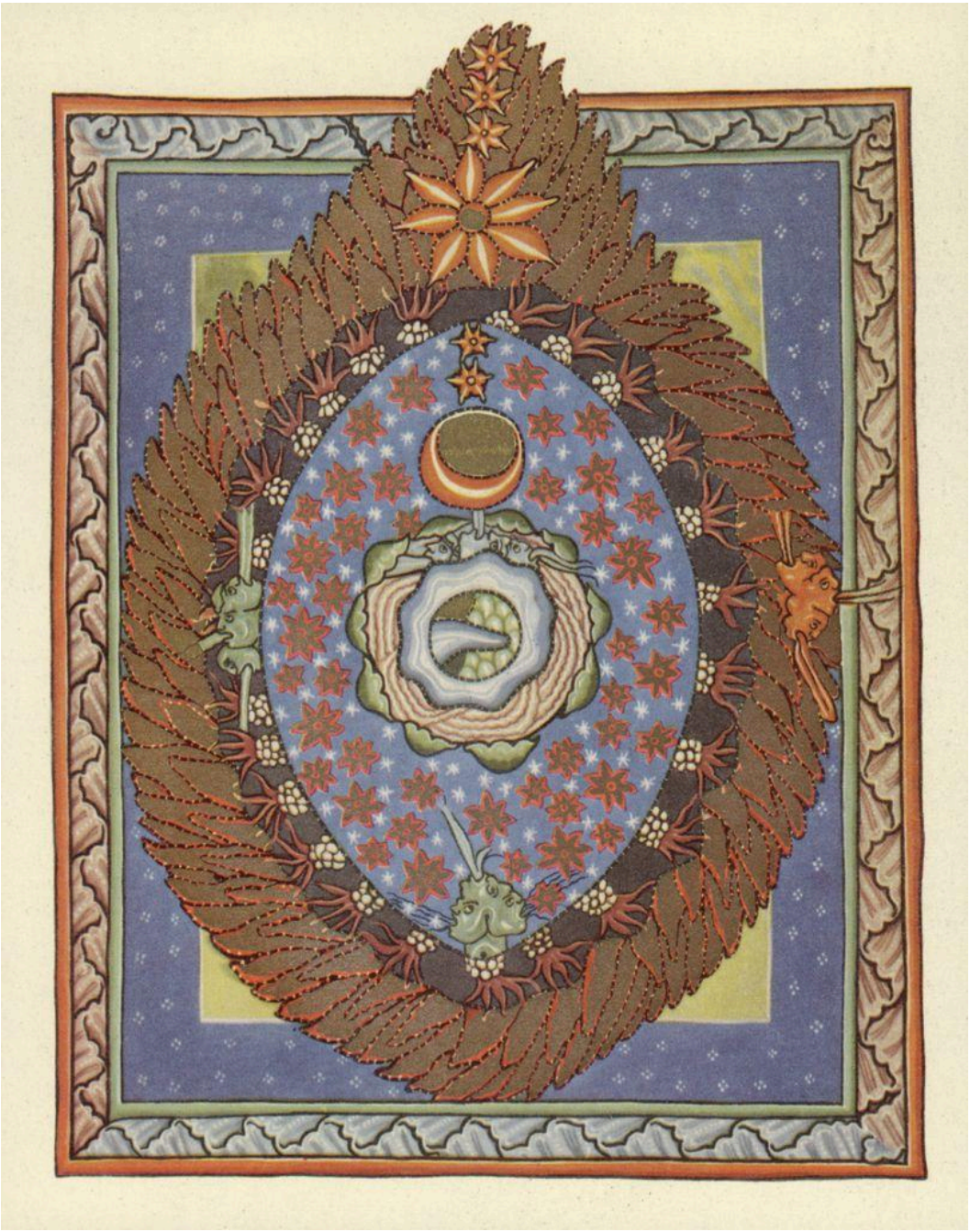

Figure 8. Hildegard of Bingen. *Liber Scivias, fol. 14r.*–79. JSTOR (5Dk.193).

The potentially engulfing nature of the mandorla shape is seen through Hildegard von Bingen's illustration "The Universe" in her visionary text *Scivias* or *Sci vias Domini*. Mirroring the traditional models of the mandorla and Christ's side wound, Hildegard's vision of this fiery "cosmic egg"

represents "the universe as a symbolic, layered structure in which God sustains powerfully contesting forces in a delicate balance."[50] Upholding the totality of divine existence, the image evokes both mandorla and wound imagery, locating the completeness of the universe inside an almond-shaped symbol.

Aspiring to mirror the diverse, cross-boundary nature of the divine, female Christian mystics effectively "queered" their religion, embodying alternative constructions of piety in order to exist across binaries of sexuality and gender. While Hadewijch's visions, letters, and poetry deconstruct boundaries between the worshiper and the divine subject, female interactions with the wound-mandorla similarly transgress limitations of gender and sexuality. Often courting female divine forms or interacting with feminized expressions of Christ's body, women's mysticism created an outlet for lesbian expression through religious sentiment. Touching Christ and being one with him in all of his femininity and masculinity, the mystic further "queered" their religious expression, desiring to become the dually gendered form of Christ through their love for him. Although the general beliefs surrounding medieval lesbian identity and gender remain a site of scholarly debate, the female mystics' elevation past potential societal limits nonetheless stands as a subversive and "queer" act. Negating a singular gendered or sexual identity, female mystics opposed the existing clerical condemnation of lesbian existence. Interacting with the feminine divine under a heterosexual pretense, the female mystic could "queer" their divine experiences and express love for the female form in the guise of man. Further, their piety "queered" gender expression, remaining malleable through union with God. Heterosexual and homosexual, female and male, the mystic upheld a diversely gendered and sexual body, uniting with God across spectrums of existence.

[50] Barbara Newman, introduction to *Scivias*, by Hildegard of Bingen, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1990), 28.

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Birth scroll with prayers and invocations to Saints Quiricus and Julitta. 1500. Vellum: in four strips, sewn together. Wellcome Collection, London. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:MS.632._Saints_Quiricus_and_Julitta_%28_-304%29._Recto._Wellcome_L0074228.jpg.

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"Ishmaelites" and the End of the World: Christian Reactions to the Rise and Spread of Islam

Stella Metcalf
Smith College '25

"As many as the stars which cannot be counted. As multitudinous as the sand by the sea, And exceeding (the number of) the stars in the sky."

Pseudo-Ephrem

"The apocalypse of John has as many mysteries as words," remarked St. Jerome in 394.[1] By the late seventh century, verging on the eighth, Byzantine writers seized on the idea of apocalypse to explain the success of Islam, both as a religion and with respect to the military pursuits of the Islamic world. Christian writers in the early Islamic period described Islam as a forerunner of the Antichrist, as a sign of the impending end times. Starting with Pseudo-Methodius, these writers invented new paradigms that later dominated Christian theorizing about the end of the world. While these narratives and feelings lack a singular strain, their overlapping anxieties and concerns demonstrate the variety of responses to Islamic invasion, from the beginning to consolidated rule. Previous narratives during the early invasions of Arab forces offered fairly dry commentaries on the takeover, but later, after the end of the second fitna, these accounts became more frantic as Byzantine Syriac Christians witnessed the political strength and staying power of these rulers. These apocalyptic texts were written as Christians in the East contended with what this invasion meant in a world ordered by divine power, but also reveal their ultimate preoccupation with the fragmented nature of Eastern Christianity as the defining issue of their time.

[1] St. Jerome, Letter 53:9.

Accounts predating the second fitna—the civil war that shook Islamic leadership—depict the Islamic invasion in dry, non-catastrophic terms, as Syriac Christians felt the effects of this invasion and takeover far less than the previous Byzantine-Persian wars from 602 to 628.[2] Multiple regime changes in the previous decade meant that the shifting of political leadership in this territory seemed of little significance to the local Christian population. The earliest extant reference to the Islamic conquests, the Account of 637, occurs in a sixth century manuscript of a Syriac translation of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, scrawled in the margins.[3] This account, riddled with lacunae, offers a dry recitation of the events, without invoking theological explanations. The author notes that many "villages were destroyed through the killing by...Muhammad and many were killed." The account details that "the Romans fled from Damascus...many, about ten thousand. And the following year, the Romans came," and, after some missing words, "Romans were killed, about fifty thousand."[4] This rather neutral description makes sense in the context of the Byzantine-Persian wars that took place from 602 until 628, with four regime changes in rapid succession.[5]

These early accounts still attributed divine wrath against Christian misbehavior, but saw the Islamic invasion as a brief trial, rather than a world-defining and -ending event. A brief reference to the Arab military success by Maximus the Confessor, written sometime between 634 and 640, described these events as a "temporary divine retribution for Christian sins."[6] George of Khoziba, an ascetic of the monastery near Jericho, reportedly scolded Christian misbehavior, asking "[w]hat should deter [God] from loosing a flood upon the world or a rain of fire and sulphur to consume the earth like Sodom and Gomorrah?" George imagined a biblical reckoning, placing the conquering of Byzantine lands within a familiar narrative, rather than as an exceptional event. He continued his sermon by stating he "[was] in fear and tremble [sic] at the misfortunes that are coming to the world because of the wickedness we [Christians] practice."[7] George of Khoziba died in the 630s, but his biographers wrote in the 640s, and it seems probable that they tailored such predictions to fit the context of Islamic invasion. Similarly, a letter by the Catholicos Isho'Yahb III from the 650s, briefly notes that "at this time God has given them to rule over the world."[8] Isho'Yahb continues, describing how the new rulers

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[2] Robert G. Hoyland "The Historical Background," in *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc, 1997), 2, 12.

[3] Michael Philip Penn, "Early Syriac Reactions to the Rise of Islam," in *The Syriac World*, ed. Daniel King (New York: Routledge, 2018), 177.

[4] Account excerpted from Michael Philip Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People: Syriac Memories of the Islamic Conquests," in *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 20. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15jjdbx.4.

[5] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 21.

[6] András Kraft, "The Last Roman Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition," *Byzantion* 82 (2012): 256. http://www.jstor.org/stable/44173259.

[7] Robert G. Hoyland, "Greek Sources," in *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc), 54.

[8] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 21.

"[n]ot only do not oppose Christianity, but they praise our faith, honour the priests and saints of our Lord, and give aid to the churches and monasteries." He uses this exemplary conduct to criticize those who convert to Islam, as they "themselves admit that the Arabs have not compelled them to abandon their faith, but only asked them to give up half of their possessions in order to keep their faith. Yet they forsook their faith, which is forever, and retained the half of their wealth, which is for a short time."[9] Though he likely exaggerated his praise of the treatment by Muslim rulers to harshly criticize conversion, this reference to Islam as a means of critiquing Christian behavior appears commonplace in the extant writings about the new rulers. These early accounts largely attributed the invasion to God and Christian transgression, making little reference to the invaders, their motives, or their morality.

The first casting of the invaders themselves into biblical terminology appears in the Khuzistan chronicle, written in the 660s. Descriptions of the battles largely lacked emotionally-charged language, in keeping with previous accounts that simply narrated the action. The anonymous chronicler of the Khuzistan account noted that "the Arabs dashed in and besieged Shush, taking it after a few days. They killed all the distinguished citizens and seized the House of Mar Daniel, taking the treasure that was kept there, which had been preserved on the king's orders ever since the days of Darius and Cyrus."[10] By the seventh century rise of Islam, Christian writers had already developed "a complex methodology of historical writing, one that was not merely concerned with preserving the history of past events, but which viewed contemporary and past events through the lens of the biblical narrative of history, from creation to the ultimate end as prophesied in the eschatological books of the Bible."[11] Therefore, fitting this conquest into an eschatological and sweeping chronicle seems a natural conclusion for the seventh century chroniclers. An anonymous East Syrian Christian wrote a chronological survey of the world's events, and described the Muslim invaders as "the sons of Ishmael," "Ishmaelites" or "sons of Hagar."[12] The author of this chronicle reassured his readers that the "victory of the Sons of Ishmael who overcame and subjugated their two kingdoms was from God."[13] Like most other early descriptions of the conquests, the Khuzistan Chronicle provided neither motivation for the Sons of Ishmael's actions nor morals to learn from their military success, despite using theological terminology to explain what took place.

During the reign of 'Abd al-Malik, both the number of converts to Islam and persecution of the sign of the cross increased, and the tone shifted in these accounts of the conquest, turning to apocalyptic explanations to understand Islamic rule. 'Abd al-Malik's rule from 685 until his death in

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[9] Robert G. Hoyland, "East Syrian Sources," in *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam* (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc), 181.

[10] Hoyland, "East Syrian Sources," 184.

[11] Jessica Lee Ehinger, "Biblical History and the End of Times: Seventh-Century Christian Accounts of the Rise of Islam," *Studies in Church History* 49 (2013): 52. doi:10.1017/S0424208400002011.

[12] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 21.

[13] Hoyland, "East Syrian Sources," 182.

705 ushered in various changes disruptive to Byzantine Christian life. As caliph, he changed the monetary system, circulating Islamic coins with his image, made Arabic the administrative language of his dominion, and experienced successful military campaigns against the Byzantines, cementing Muslim hegemony in formerly Christian lands.[14] Crucially, this included Jerusalem.[15] [16] The second fitna of 683 to 692 ushered in a period of turmoil followed by a devastating famine from 686 to 687.[17] In 690 or 691, according to some scholars, a Christian monk in the Sinjar region of modern-day Iraq wrote a text that became a seminal piece of apocalyptic writing, shaping future eschatological imagination for generations to come. The anonymous author identified himself as Methodius, the fourth-century martyr and church father. Under this claim, the author professed the text as a prophetic vision, beginning at creation and ending with the coming of the Antichrist and the sorting of peoples into heaven and hell. The anonymous author draws a parallel between biblical Israel and Moses and the current struggles. He explains that,

> Not because the Lord God loves you does he bring you into the Land of Promise to inherit it, but because of the sins of those who dwell in it. Just so with the sons of Ishmael. Not because the lord God loves them does he give them power to conquer the land of the Christians, but because of the sin and the lawlessness which have been brought into being by them. For nothing like their sin has arisen nor will arise in all generations. Why? Men put on the apparel of adulterous and wanton women and adorned themselves as women and stood in the streets and squares of the cities openly and "did change the natural use into that which is against nature" as the Holy Apostles say. Likewise women also did the same things as the men.[18]

In this apocalyptic vision, the "sins of Christians" brought on this invasion. Specifically, sexual sin and immorality caused this onslaught, and troubled gender roles. The alleged upset of a heterosexual gender regime allowed the complete upending of normalcy; those chosen by God—Christians—experienced defeat at the hands of this nascent religion. During this time period, Muslims began citing the military successes of the 630s as proof of the truth of Islam.[19] Additionally, anxieties about the depiction of the cross enter into this end of the world narrative; Pseudo-Methodius 'predicts' that "[m]any will deny the true faith and the life-giving cross and the holy mysteries, and without violence or punishment or ill-treatment they will deny the Christ and follow the apostates."[20] Sidney Griffith notes the author would have been witness to the rapid and irresistible advance of the

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[14] Jacob Lassner, "'Abd Al-Malik and the Temple Mount: Revisiting S. D. Goitein and Oleg Grabar," in *Medieval Jerusalem: Forging an Islamic City in Spaces Sacred to Christians and Jews* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2017), 84. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.3998/mpub.9394056.12.

[15] Lassner, "'Abd Al-Malik and the Temple Mount," 84.

[16] Robert G. Hoyland, "Apocalypses and Visions," in *Seeing Islam as Others Saw It: A Survey and Evaluation of Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian Writings on Early Islam*, (Princeton, NJ: The Darwin Press, Inc), 263.

[17] Hoyland, "Apocalypses and Visions," 263.

[18] Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius: An Alexandrian World Chronicle*, ed. and trans. Benjamin Garstad (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), 39–41.

[19] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 51.

[20] Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius,* 49.

Arab armies in Mesopotamia, a large number of Christian conversions to Islam, and ʻAbd al-Malik's erection of the Dome of the Rock in 691 on the temple site in Jerusalem.[21]After the second fitna, the increasing strength of the Islamic caliphate "made untenable the previous way of remembering the conquests as unfortunate but relatively mundane, temporary events."[22] Almost all extant examples of Syriac Christian apocalyptics were written under the reign of ʻAbd al-Malik, suggesting that his reign in particular incited reaction among the Christian population.[23] Accordingly, local Christians saw his construction of the Dome of the Rock as the rebuilding of the Temple of Jerusalem, something that earlier Christian apocalyptics ascribed to the Antichrist.[24]

The Pseudo-Methodius text drew on pre-conquest rhetoric about the Roman empire as it related to the end of the world. In pre-Islamic apocalyptic narratives, early Christian theologians saw Rome as a key aspect to narratives of the world's impending end. In the aftermath of Constantine's conversion, the Roman Empire became associated with the power to constrain the apocalypse. St. Jerome believed Paul's writings on the apocalypse pointed to the dissolution of Roman power as a harbinger of the apocalypse, with a decline in Roman imperial unity associated with the arrival of the Antichrist.[25] Pseudo-Methodius identified Rome as the Fourth Kingdom, an idea that became paradigmatic of the apocalyptic genre during this period. The existence of a Roman Empire, loosely defined, meant an apocalypse was yet to come.[26] Pseudo-Methodius also believed the Last Roman Emperor would appear, stave off the armies of Gog and Magog, and defeat the Antichrist, before giving his crown up to God, triggering the Day of Judgement. This Last Emperor figure was the "typological equivalent of the Old Testament judge Gideon, Emperor Jovian, and Alexander the Great…just as Gideon freed the Hebrews from the Midianite oppression in the fifth millennium, so will the Last Emperor defeat the descendants of the Midianites, i.e, the Ishmaelites, at the end of time."[27] Pseudo-Methodius appears to have invented this paradigm, or, at least, this text contains the earliest extant reference to this figure.[28]

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[21] Sidney H. Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008), 182; Lassner, "'Abd Al-Malik and the Temple Mount," 93.

[22] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 32.

[23] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 33.

[24] Emmanouela Grypeou, "'A People Will Emerge from the Desert': Apocalyptic Perceptions of the Early Muslim Conquests in Contemporary Eastern Christian Literature," in *Visions of the End: Apocalypticism and Eschatology in the Abrahamic Religions between the 6th and 8th centuries*, ed. Hagit Amirav, Emmanouela Grypeou, and Guy G. Stroumsa (Leuven: Peeters Publishers, 2017), 302.

[25] Anne A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800-1229* (Ithaca, N.Y: Cornell University Press, 2020), 538.

[26] Lorenzo DiTommaso, "The Four Kingdoms of Daniel in the Early Mediaeval Apocalyptic Tradition," in *Four Kingdom Motifs before and beyond the Book of Daniel*, ed. Andrew B. Perrin, Loren T. Stuckenbruck, Shelby Bennett, and Matthew Hama (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 213. http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.1163/j.ctv1sr6k2b.14.

[27] Kraft, "The Last Roman Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition," 218.

[28] Kraft, "The Last Roman Emperor *Topos* in the Byzantine Apocalyptic Tradition," 217.

Despite the transitory nature of the conditions under which Pseudo-Methodius wrote his text on the Islamic conquest as a harbinger of the coming end times, Christians across place and time used this apocalyptic and incorporated it into their own time and context. Peter the Monk translated the text, noting in a foreword "what was prophesied is more relevant to our own times 'upon whom the ends of the world,' as the Apostle Paul says, 'are come,' so that now through those very things which we discern with our own eyes we may believe to be true what was foretold by our fathers."[29] While some translators or copyists made no remark, the long-lived nature of the text demonstrates its continued re-use and relevance to Christian writers and thinkers, as they incorporated the concepts into their own time. Additionally, even without the text itself, Latin Christian authors mobilized several key ideas of the work into their own visions of the end times. Several tropes of the apocalyptic genre developed out of the Syriac work, making their way into Latin eschatological writing and thinking. The Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius describes Alexander's enclosure in the form of gates against Gog and Magog. The wide transmission of the Greek version of the text, written between the years 700 and 710, spread this motif, influencing later Greek and medieval apocalyptic texts.[30]

Another text that used an apocalyptic narrative to understand these events, the Sermons of Pseudo-Ephrem, described the Muslim invasion and detailed the ensuing horrors. This text, according to Michael Penn, was relatively understudied, and likely came about in the late seventh century or around the year 700.[31] Pseudo-Ephrem, like Pseudo-Methodius, proclaims himself as a fourth-century Church Father, positioning the account as a prophetic text. The anonymous author writes that "They will separate a son from his father / and a daughter from her mother's side / They will separate a brother from his brother." He explained that God would release the armies of Gog, Magog, and other nations of the North to destroy the Sons of Hagar. After these tribes would be defeated by an angelic host, the author imagines a "second cycle of Roman rule" which would "conclude with the coming of the Antichrist, the eschaton, and the Last Judgment."[32] In this vision, the sons of Hagar are depicted as one of several forerunners of the end times and only briefly discussed. The Muslim invaders become one of many armies that invade, signaling the end of the world. Pseudo-Ephrem suggests that the Huns will return, as well as various others, as "rulers will arise, one against another."[33] The account speaks of a sign that appears in the heaven, the fear it will inspire, and then the eventual sorting of the faithful and the unfaithful, concluding that the "good will go forth into the Kingdom, And the bad will

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[29] Pseudo-Methodius, *Apocalypse of Pseudo-Methodius,* 77.

[30] Emeri van Donzel and Andrea Schmidt, *Gog and Magog in Early Eastern Christian and Islamic Sources* (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 30.

[31] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 22.

[32] Penn, "When Good Things Happened to Other People," 23.

[33] John C. Reeves, translated from Edmund Beck, ed., *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III* (CSCO 320; Louvain: Secrétariat du Corpus SCO, 1972).
https://pages.charlotte.edu/john-reeves/research-projects/trajectories-in-near-eastern-apocalyptic/pseudo-ephrem-syriac/ .

remain in Gehenna; The righteous will fly up to the height, And the sinners will burn in fire."[34] This description and conclusion of events broadly follows all apocalyptic narratives, demonstrating an unexceptional quality attributed to the Muslim invaders, as Persians and Byzantine rulers also usher in the end times.

After the initial spate of apocalyptic texts, Christian writings shifted away from this paradigm, as they settled into Muslim rule and with the death of 'Abd al-Malik ibn al-Marwan in 705, whose particularly aggressive rule sparked such catastrophizing narratives.[35] In the 730s, John of Damascus wrote about Islam in his text on heresies, incorporating Islam into a plethora of forms of Christianity that he saw as out of line with proper Christian practice. He first asserts this by claiming that Islam came from worshippers of Aphrodite, when Muhammad "appeared in their midst." John assumes that Muhammad, "after having chanced upon the Old and New Testaments and likewise, it seems, having conversed with an Arian monk, devised his own heresy."[36] In this vision, unlike in Pseudo-Methodius or Pseudo-Ephrem, Islam remains as a "forerunner of the Antichrist," but only in the sense that all of the aberrant forms of Christianity signaled the coming end times. Before John of Damascus became a monk and wrote his treatise *On Heresies*, some scholars believe he worked in the service of the Caliph at Damascus, the capital of the Umayyad Empire. In this understanding, after Caliph al-Walid took power and increasingly desired to have a Muslim administration, John left and became a monk.[37] However, this narrative that he worked as a dignitary comes from an eleventh-century Arabic hagiography, calling into question the veracity of these claims.[38] Regardless, John inherited his father's position, either as a diplomat or a mere tax-collector for Christians in the territory.[39] This context may have informed his view of Islam as an offshoot of Christianity, given the fractious nature of Eastern Christianity. This interpretation of Islam also suggests that John saw the variety of Christian practice as the central catastrophe of his time, not Islam itself, which he relegated to third to last on his list of one-hundred and three heresies.

Similarly, John of Nikiu, as a Monophysite, positioned the practices of Orthodox Christians as the cause of Islam's success.[40] John, a Coptic Egyptian bishop, saw the Islamic conquest in the last

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[34] Reeves, *Des heiligen Ephraem des Syrers Sermones III*.

[35] Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque*.

[36] John and Frederic H. Chase, "On Heresies," in *Saint John of Damascus: Writings* (New York: Fathers of the Church, Inc., 1958), 153.

[37] Andrew Louth, "Introduction," in T*hree Treatises on the Divine Images* (Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003), xii.

[38] John Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 18 (1964): 116. https://doi.org/10.2307/1291209.

[39] Meyendorff, "Byzantine Views of Islam," 117.

[40] Adam Folorunsho Olowo, *The Dialogical Evolution of Christian-Muslim Relations: From the Medieval to Modern Period* (paper presented at the GCRR International Conference on Inter-religious Dialogue, University of Cambridge, November 2021), 4.

decades of the seventh century as the result of "unclean persons" who "defiled the Church by an unclean faith, and they have wrought apostasies and deeds of violence like the sect of the Arians, such as neither pagan nor barbarian has wrought, and they have despised Christ and His servants."[41] This suggests that, more broadly across the areas conquered by Muslims, Christians fit the conquest into their understandings of the moral failures of different sects of Christianity. Rather than the spread of Islam, most Eastern Christians concerned themselves with their fellow Christians and their misuse of their religion. Though written around the same time as the Pseudo-Methodius text, he avoids mention of the apocalypse. This suggests that apocalypticism emerged out of the specific context of Byzantine Syriac Christian reaction.

While a popular genre, the apocalyptic writings define only certain moments of interaction between Muslims and Christians. Relations between these groups often existed with blurred lines between the differing communities. Penn suggests that on the surface, in many parts of former Byzantine territories, Muslims attended Christian ceremonies, married Syrian Christians, and various groups existed in conversation with one another.[42] The momentary turn towards apocalyptic narrative happened concurrently with 'Abd al-Malik's various policy reforms, ones which made visible and cumbersome Islamic rule, as Arabic became the bureaucratic language, forcing many former Byzantine Christians to adapt in ways not previously required of them. While the apocalyptic genre remained a popular one, the region of Mesopotamia/Greater Syria largely moved on from this momentary trend in chronicling of accounts, a form of collective memory established in the aftermath of a political takeover that only later became relevant, as Muslims held up their military successes as proof of Islam's veracity. This trend in written reaction demonstrates the constant changeability of Christian-Muslim interaction, as well as the variety of feelings expressed and felt by Christians living under Muslim rule.

[41] Robert Henry Charles and Hermann Zotenberg, *The Chronicle of John, Bishop of Nikiu. Translated from Zotenberg's Ethiopic Text by R.H. Charles* (London: 1916), 187.

[42] Michael Philip Penn, "Blurring Boundaries: The Continuum Between Early Christianity and Early Islam," in *Envisioning Islam: Syriac Christians and the Early Muslim World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 143. http://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt15jjdbx.7.

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Scaling the Geometric Cosmos: Artistic and Demiurgic Creation in Francisco de Holanda's Visions of Genesis

Vernita Zhai
Stanford University '25

Several decades after Michelangelo (1475–1564) filled the Sistine Chapel ceiling with a panoply of human forms chronicling the biblical tale of creation, Portuguese painter and philosopher Francisco de Holanda (circa 1517–85)—to whom Michelangelo was both a mentor and a lifelong friend[1]—colored the pages of his sketchbook with a radically different vision of cosmic genesis. In the opening plates to *De aetatibus mundi imagines* (Images of the Ages of the World), a visual retelling of biblical history from the Creation to the Apocalypse, Holanda trades the torsion of muscle and sinew for the precision of mathematical principles and geometric forms. Why, when his own mentor as well as contemporaries were preoccupied with mastering the world of concrete and sensible objects, did Holanda seek to manifest the divine through the ordered forms of a higher, intelligible reality?

Focusing on the opening plates to *Imagines,* which together testify to Holanda's belief in the immanence of divine wisdom within temporal phenomena*,* this essay unravels the geometric transformations embedded in these plates so as to crystallize the philosophical underpinnings of Holanda's nonpareil vision of a geometric cosmos.[2] Examined in light of the painter-philosopher's own

[1] Michael Benson, "Cosmos as Masterpiece," *The New York Times*, October 13, 2014, https://www.nytimes.com/2014/10/14/science/space/in-cosmigraphics-our-changing-pictures-of-space-through-time.html.

[2] While Holanda was by no means the first to conceive of a geometric cosmos, he was, arguably, the first to depict the geometric cosmos through geometry itself. The notion of God as the architect of a geometrically ordered cosmos was

writings on the artistic enterprise, Holanda's compositions materialize as a meditation on the creative potential immanent within humanity. Drawing various parallels between the processes of divine and artistic creation, they configure the mortal artist as a terrestrial analogue to the demiurge. For Holanda, this essay argues, access to the divine is attained by emulating the process of demiurgic creation through one's own creative enterprise.

PART I. A Survey of the Holandian Corpus

The initial idea for *De aetatibus mundi imagines* arose in 1545,[3] while Holanda was working in Évora, Portugal under the patronage of Queen Dona Catarina and the Infante Dom Luís.[4] Eight years prior, Holanda had traveled to Italy alongside Dom Pedro de Mascarenhas, the Portuguese ambassador to the Holy See, who had been tasked by King Dom Joäo III with securing papal authorization for the deployment of Portuguese Jesuit missionaries in India.[5] The young artist, too, had been entrusted by the king with his own mission: to "see Italy and make drawings of the fortresses and other notable and important things there," as Holanda himself would later recount.[6] Departing for Rome from Lisbon toward the end of 1537 and traveling by way of Spain and France, Holanda began to work on a series of travel sketches that would become the *Antigualhas*, or the *Escorial Album*, a 54-folio book documenting around two hundred of the paintings, sculptures, monuments, and buildings—encountered both within Italy and on the road—which he deemed suitable for the purpose of revitalising the arts in Portugal.[7] Arriving in Rome, finally, in August or September of 1538,[8] Holanda soon found himself frequenting the circles of several notable figures of the Italian Renaissance, all of whom feature in his *Diálogos de Roma* (*Roman Dialogues*), a catalog of the conversations that the artist engaged in during his time in Italy, published a decade later, in 1548, as the second part to his treatise *Da Pintura Antigua* (*On Antique Painting*). Among those whom Holanda came into contact were the humanist Lattanzio Tolomei, miniaturist Giulio Clovio, poet Vittoria Colonna, and, most prominently, Michelangelo, who had completed his work on the Sistine Chapel

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commonly held by medieval scholars, but portrayals of this architect-deity depicted its subject mimetically—that is, in the likeness of a human (see Fig. 6). Only in the opening plate to Holanda's *Imagines* does the demiurge materialize through pure geometry.

[3] Maria Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur: Francisco de Holanda as Artist, Reader and Writer," in *The Artist as Reader: On Education and Non-Education of Early Modern Artists*, ed. Claus Zittel, Michael Thimann, and Heiko Damm (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 396.

[4] Alessandra Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes: Francisco de Holanda and an Art History of the Universal," *The Art Bulletin* 102, no. 4 (2020): 39.

[5] Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes," 42.

[6] Francisco de Holanda, *Da Fabrica,* 16, quoted in J. B. Bury, "Francisco de Holanda and His Illustrations of the Creation," *Portuguese Studies* 2 (1986): 17.

[7] Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 391.

[8] Bury, "Francisco de Holanda," 17.

ceiling six years before Holanda's arrival in Rome. Holanda would remain in Italy until March 1540, when Mascarenhas finally succeeded in procuring Paul III's approval for the Jesuit mission.[9]

Exalting the profound metaphysical and spiritual depth of the mimetic mode of painting that he observed during his Italian sojourn, Holanda proclaims in *Da Pintura Antigua* that "the good painting is nothing but a copy of the perfections of God and a recollection of His painting,"[10] and, through the voice of Michelangelo, that "divine and excellent painting is that which most resembles and best copies any work of the immortal God."[11] The *Antigualhas*, furthermore, visually elaborates upon these written sentiments on the supremacy of the mimetic arts. Featuring sculptures such as the *Apollo Belvedere* and *Laocoön and His Sons* alongside architectural landmarks such as the Pantheon and Trajan column, Holanda's *Antigualhas* implicitly affirms a key tenet of the Renaissance conception of the human form: that it expresses microcosmically the c*oncinnitass universarum partium*, or harmony of all parts, found in classical architecture,[12] and, by extension—since classical architecture is in turn a microcosmic expression of a yet greater phenomenon—the macrocosmic harmony which pervades the universe itself.[13]

Together, Holanda's *Da Pintura Antigua* and *Antigualhas* constellate an ideologically unified artistic vision that celebrates the imitation of divine creation as the aim of true art. It is for this reason that the abstract visuality of the opening plates to *Imagines* is so remarkable and surprising. Here was a man who had immersed himself in the classical humanist milieu of early cinquecento Italy, a place and time to which he would return time and time again throughout his oeuvre;[14] who extolled

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[9] Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes," 42.

[10] Francisco de Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua,* ed. Ángel González García (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1983), 236, quoted in Maria Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur: Francisco de Holanda as Artist, Reader and Writer," in *The Artist as Reader: On Education and Non-Education of Early Modern Artists*, ed. Claus Zittel, Michael Thimann, and Heiko Damm (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 397.

[11] Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua,* 302, quoted in Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 397.

[12] Rudolf Wittkower, "Alberti's Approach to Antiquity in Architecture," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 4, no. 1/2 (1940): 7.

[13] Marsilio Ficino writes in a passage from Proclus' *Alcibiades*: "The heaven is full of *concentu* (consonance) and *concinnitas* (harmony) in its motions. Then, the divinities that are superior to us participate in this harmony, which proceeds from heaven; after them, human life, when it is disposed correctly, receives from them the consonance of its customs and the harmony of its actions... For the superior beings [...] order each soul by means of harmonious proportions, and they unite each body by means of measures..." Quoted in Maude Vanhaelen, "Cosmic Harmony, Demons, and the Mnemonic Power of Music in Renaissance Florence," in *Sing Aloud Harmonious Spheres: Renaissance Conceptions of Cosmic Harmony*, ed. Jacomien Prins and Maude Vanhaelen (New York: Routledge, 2017), 110. Ficino's discourse, though focused upon the subject of music, draws upon the Albertian architectural concept of *concinnitas*. Just as *concinnitas* governs the empyrean realm, so too does it manifest itself in the architecture of the human body and soul.

[14] In the prologue to the first book of *Da Pintura Antigua*, Holanda refers to himself as "um homem vindo de terra strangeira inda não ha muitos dias" (62)—"a man coming from a foreign land not many days ago." In the prologue to the second book, *Diálogos de Roma*, he declares: "vindo eu de Italia ha pouco tempo" (175)—"I came from Italy a little while ago." Quoted in Bury, "Francisco de Holanda," 25. Holanda's Italian sojourn must've been fresh on his mind as he began to work on *Imagines*, despite the five years that had elapsed since his return to Portugal.

Michelangelo's vision of Genesis upon the Sistine Chapel ceiling as the apotheosis of artistic achievement;[15] who sought to galvanize within his nation an artistic *renovatio* guided by Tuscan ideals.[16] Yet, peculiarly, his own artistic project seems to bear little resonance with the principles that he himself so ardently and unwaveringly asserts in writing.

The disconformity between *Imagines* and the rest of Holanda's oeuvre is made all the more inexplicable by the temporal overlap in the artist's realization of his various projects. The first book of *Da Pintura Antigua* was completed on 18 February 1548, and the second book, *Diálogos de Roma*, precisely eight months later on 18 October.[17] With his drawings of the first two days of Creation completed in Évora in 1545, and his drawings the second and fourth day drawn in Santarém in 1547 and colored in Almeirim in 1551,[18] Holanda was presumably creating his geometric illustrations of Genesis at the same time that he was exalting the spirituality of Italian painting in his writing. Further compounded by the fact that Holanda supposedly lacked instruction in the particular cosmological models which inform his illustrations, the dissonance between *Imagines* and the rest of Holanda's corpus has led some scholars to altogether dismiss his part in conceiving the Creation segment of *Imagines*, accepting only his role in its execution.[19] In the following section, I will seek to restore intellectual ownership of *Imagines* to Holanda by demonstrating the compatibility—indeed, the synergy—between the artist's aesthetic theory as conveyed in his written works, and his vision of cosmic genesis as conveyed in *Imagines*.

PART II. Holanda's Geometric Cosmos

Holanda's fascination with the geometry of the cosmos begins in earnest in his watercolor painting of the first day of Creation (Fig. 1), in which a series of three nested triangles extend from a common base situated within a pink circle, reaching downwards to penetrate an empty spherical vessel. The opaque triangular forms partially obscure the circumference of the circle; however, manually connecting the broken perimeter and recovering the hidden arc reveals that the lower vertex of the central, equilateral triangle rests precisely upon the circle's lowermost point.[20] Inscribed within a form whose perimeter is cyclical, directionless, and thus infinite, and further marked at its upper base and

[15] Holanda expresses this sentiment in *Diálogos de Roma* through the character of Vittoria Colonna, who describes the Sistine Chapel ceiling as "the fountain-head from which [famous paintings] all spring and have their being." Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua*, 236.

[16] Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 389.

[17] Bury, "Francisco de Holanda," 24–25.

[18] Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes," 43.

[19] For a comprehensive discussion on the issue of Holanda's authorship of *Imagines*, see Bury, "Francisco de Holanda and His Illustrations of the Creation."

[20] Note the structural similarity between Holanda's composite triangle-circle and Leonardo's *Vitruvian Man*, whose outstretched legs and arms rest precisely on the circumference of the circle in which he is contained. Again, we are reminded of the order and *concinnitas* of the human form.

lower vertex, respectively, with the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet—a direct reference to God's self-proclamation as the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last" (Rev. 22:13, KJV)—the equilateral triangle is symbolically imbued with the eternality and infinitude of the Holy Trinity. An emblem of divinity whose usage dates back to the writings of twelfth-century liturgist and theologian Joannes Belethus,[21] the iconography of a triangle anchored within a circle reflects, too, the doctrines of German Catholic theologian Nicolaus Cusanus (1401–64), for whom the triangle, as the fundamental and irreducible unit from which all other polygons are derived, stood alongside the circle as a symbol of the divine.[22]

The fraternity between the circular and triangular forms, however, extends beyond the mere fact of their numinosity, for the two shapes are further linked by geometric manipulations that may not be immediately evident. One might imagine, in the mind's eye, the three arcs that form the circumference of the circle collapsing to form the three edges of the equilateral triangle. From there, the triangle is replicated twice, with each new form extending from the same base but reaching downwards for a greater distance, entering and finally penetrating the body of the darkened orb. This series of hypothetical geometric transformations, from the triangulation of the circle to the replication of the triangle, is made possible by what Nicolaus Cusanus terms the *coincidentia oppositorum*, or coincidence of opposites, wherein seemingly opposed geometric properties such as the curvature of a circle and rectilinearity of a triangle, at the scale of the infinite, turn out to coincide.[23] To visualize this phenomenon, consider a circle positioned in such a way that it remains tangential to a straight line at a specific point on its circumference (Fig. 2). As its diameter increases in length and the circle expands in size, the curvature of the circle—that is, its degree of deviation from the straight line—decreases, so that, as the diameter of the circle tends toward infinity, the arc of the maximally enlarged circle attains perfect alignment with the straight line to which it was originally tangential. Thus, in the form of a circle, which is curvilinear at minimum and rectilinear at maximum, curvature and straightness coincide. Similarly, consider a triangle ABC, with A as the vertex angle and B and C as the base angles. As vertex A is lowered onto the base side BC while BC increases in length, the elongated triangle tends toward a straight line that possesses the properties of both singularity (in being one line, and bearing one angle) and triunity (in enfolding the three sides and three angles of the original triangle).[24] As the phenomenon of *coincidentia oppositorum* demonstrates, circles and triangles achieve an identity of form when they are geometrically transformed into a line of infinite magnitude. While the potential of

[21] Guillaume Durand, Anselmus Davril, and T. M. Thibodeau, "Chapter 44," in *Rationale Divinorum Officiorum* (Turnholti: Brepols, 1998).

[22] Nicholas Cusanus and Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa On Learned Ignorance: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Docta Ignorantia* (Minneapolis: A.J. Benning Press, 1996), 33.

[23] Jean Celeyrette, "Mathematics and Theology: The Infinite in Nicholas of Cusa," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 70, no. 2 (2011): 151–65.

[24] Celeyrette, "Mathematics and Theology," 23.

infinitude is already latent in the geometric properties of even a finite circle or triangle, the material realization of this infinitude here in this realm of finite forms can only be apprehended by way of the intellect.[25] This is precisely what Holanda's isosceles triangles, in their incremental elongation and thus gradual progression toward infinity, prompt the viewer to consider: the potential of boundlessness that inheres within a bounded form.[26]

Holanda's composition thus gestures toward a vision of an immanently divine cosmos, where even temporal phenomena harbor an embryonic infinitude. At first blush, superimposed upon a primordial, shadow-drenched netherworld of flames and foaming seas, the sharply delineated syntax of circular and triangular forms in the foreground appear as if to belong to an altogether distinct ontological plane. In their perfect symmetry and perfect clarity, the geometric figures occupy the intelligible realm of first principles and eternal forms; beyond them lies an abyss of indeterminacy, a world in flux. Yet, dispelling the illusion of separation are suggestions of slippage, of the descent of the Trinity onto the material realm—specifically, through the vessel of divine light. Vertically inscribed within the central triangle are the words *FIAT LUX,* or "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3), uttered by God on the first day of creation. Through the conduit of the triangular forms, inverted so as to resemble a funnel, the luminosity that suffuses the firmaments advances toward the earth in a swathe of celestial light. There, it enters through the oculus of the perceptible world so as to illuminate the orb from within. Upon puncturing this temporal sphere of existence, the pure and opaque structures of light fuse with the atmosphere, transforming from the pink of the firmaments into the cerulean of the sphere's ocean-like terrain—this is "the Spirit of God [moving] upon the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). That divine light does not merely irradiate the temporal realm, but penetrates it and suffuses it from within becomes all the more apparent in Holanda's depiction of the second day of Creation (Fig. 3), in which we see the precise intersection at which the now translucent cone of light pierces the surface of the sphere, transforming it from a dark orb into a crystalline sphere. Belted with concentric markings and furnished with a minuscule earth at its nucleus, the sphere recalls the geocentric and homocentric

[25] Celeyrette, "Mathematics and Theology," 151–65.

[26] While it is the presence of the infinite within the finite that is the subject of Holanda's illustration, it is perhaps equally fascinating to consider the finitude of the infinite. An illumination in a late thirteenth-century Genoese manuscript, *Supplicationes variae*, depicts Christ enrobed in a gold tunic and green mantle, standing upon an ornate *linea*, or line, accompanied by the following caption: "If prolonged twelve times, this [*linea*] shows the *mensura* [height] of the body of our Lord." Both mirroring and subverting the manner in which Holanda's illustration compels its viewer to imagine the gradual elongation of the triangles toward infinity, the Genoese manuscript encourages its readers to actively reconstruct the entire length of Christ's body through the faculty of imagination. In both cases, an artist has attempted to reduce something ineffable into a finite image, entrusting the viewer with the task of recovering the essence of the intended subject. In the Genoese case, however, even the intellectually and imaginatively recovered subject remains a finite incarnation of the infinite divine. The medieval phenomenon of seeking to measure the unmeasurable body of Christ thus provides a fascinating counterpart to Holanda's illustration, pointing to the human inclination to grasp the divine by reducing it into something tangible. For further exploration of this topic, see Emanuele Lugli, "The Height of Christ," in *The Making of Measure and the Promise of Sameness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2019), 145–152.

cosmological model proposed by Aristotle, who conceived of the universe as comprised of a series of celestial spheres that move the sun, moon, and planets in the course of their rotation around a stationary earth (Fig. 4).[27]

The immanence of the divine within corporeal reality is entrenched deeper still, penetrating the very core—and heart—of the created world. In the sixth plate of *Imagines,* having witnessed the creation of light on the first day (Gen. 1:1–5), the creation of the sky on the second (Gen. 1:6–8), the creation of dry lands, seas, plants, and trees on the third (Gen. 1:9–13), the creation of the sun, moon, and stars on the fourth (Gen. 1:14–19), and the creation of aquatic and aerial creatures on the fifth (Gen. 1:20–23), we finally arrive at the creation of mankind (Gen. 1:27) (Fig. 5).[28] Deprived of the sprawling cosmic perspective that Holanda grants us on the first and second days of Creation, we instead find ourselves as earthbound observers in the interior of the celestial sphere, the oculus above revealing a vista of the azure, star-speckled heavens. Adam lies before us, his vegetative, petrified body still sutured to and undifferentiated from the earth from which it is being fashioned (Gen. 2:7). In producing form out of non-form, being out of non-being, and life out of the primordial, insensate matter of the earth, the process of the divine creation of man may be likened to an act of sculptural *poiesis*, of carving figures out of virginal stone. A body in the midst of metamorphosis from earth to flesh, then, may be analogized to an unfinished sculpture, a figure that appears to remain one with the raw material that composes it. Holanda's decision to portray Adam in the manner of such an unfinished sculpture, and thus to evoke the *non finito*—a sculptural technique often employed by Michelangelo[29]—perhaps reflects an implicit recognition of the Neoplatonic sentiment that the corporeal human form, though created in the likeness of the divine, is at best a counterfeit image of its creator. Therein arises another parallel between artistic *poiesis* and divine creation: the existence of an unbridgeable chasm between the creative concept and its execution (in the case of artistic *poiesis)*,[30] and between the ideal form and its corporeal realization (in the case of divine creation).

Yet, as in the case of the intelligible and sensible spheres of existence, the chasm between the Godhead and his creation is not entirely impenetrable. Regardless of the intentionality (or lack

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[27] Aristotle, "Metaphysics," in *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, ed. Richard McKeon (New York: The Modern Library, 2001), 882–883.

[28] Note that Holanda's depiction of the sixth day of Creation is divided into two illustrations. See Fig. 10 for the second.

[29] Paul Barolsky, "As In Ovid, So In Renaissance Art," *Renaissance Quarterly* 51, no. 2 (1998): 451.

[30] Giorgio Vasari writes of Leonardo that "... he began many projects but never finished them, feeling that his hand could not reach artistic perfection in the works he conceived..." (287) and of Michelangelo that "he found it impossible to express such grandiose and awesome conceptions with his hands, and he often abandoned his works, or rather ruined many of them... for fear that he might seem less than perfect" (472). Giorgio Vasari, *The Lives of the Artists,* trans. Julia Conway Bondanella and Peter Bondanelle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), quoted in Jeremy Angier, "The Process of Artistic Creation in Terms of the Non-Finito," *Machine Graphics*, May 7, 2001, http://machinegraphics.com/writings/non-finito/non-finito.html.

thereof) behind Holanda's invocation of the *non finito,* his representation of an Adam whose mortal vessel is more earth than flesh minimizes any semblance of a physical likeness between man and God, and thereby turns our attention toward observing the spiritual likeness that binds them. While Adam's body remains lifeless, the opening on his chest reveals a heart colored in the same shade of crimson that saturates the divinities above. God and Adam are further linked by three sets of three golden lines, with the central set emanating from God's mouth, and the two peripheral sets emanating from the cloud formations that mirror God's visage, again evoking the triune personality of the Godhead as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. In the biblical account of Creation, the divine breath of life enters Adam's body through his nostrils (Gen. 2:7), but here, the central triad reaches directly from God's mouth to Adam's heart. Departing from scripture, Holanda's conception of human creation depicts the divine breath of life entering Adam's body not solely through an intermediary orifice, but through the vital organ of the heart itself. From there it is propagated, by way of the arteries visible on Adam's chest and along the length of his four limbs, throughout the rest of his body. Again we are witness to the immanence of the divine within temporal reality. In much the same way that divine light impregnates the corporeal sphere, divine breath powers the corporeal body from within. Holanda's depiction of the heart as the seat of the life principle further calls to mind Aristotle's cardiocentric theory, which posits that the tripartite aspects of the soul—its vegetative element (in its association with fundamental life processes such as nourishment and reproduction), sensitive element (in its association with sensation and movement), and intellectual element (in its association with cognition and reflection)—each arise from the functioning of the heart.[31] Holandat thus appears to subscribe to an Aristotelian cardiocentrism about the human body as he does an Aristotelian geocentrism about the universe in which humanity resides.

PART III. The Demiurge & the Mortal Artist

If divinity is indeed immanent within the fallen kingdom, Holanda's painting seems to say, it exists in its purest form in the interior constitution of the human soul, and in particular, in human creative potential. A particular detail in Holanda's illustration of the creation of Adam that demands further attention is the drawing compass positioned toward the right of the composition. If, as Holanda's illustration of the first day of Creation demonstrates, the cosmos was born of a generative process governed by the laws of geometry, then we might conjecture that this compass here is that very same device with which God demarcated the firmaments, the sun and moon, the concentric spheres in which earth is englobed, and the topographies of the earth itself. Such a conception of God as the geometer of the universe was first represented pictorially in a prefatory miniature from the *Bible moralisée*, which portrays God in the process of imposing order upon the disorder of an

[31] Giuseppe Santoro et al., "The Anatomic Location of the Soul from the Heart, through the Brain, to the Whole Body, and Beyond," *Neurosurgery* 65, no. 4 (2009): 637.

unindividuated earth[32] (Fig. 6). Notably, however, Holanda's depiction subverts the iconography of the architect-God in displacing the demiurgic device from God's hands. An unseen force now moves the compass, which stands upright at the feet of the immobile Adam as an Aristotelian *primum movens*, or unmoved mover: a prime cause that sets the cosmos in motion while itself remaining causeless.[33] The compass—and the faculties of intellect and *inventio* which it signifies—has been divinely endowed to humankind, the inheritor to God's demiurgic power.

If the act of divine creation may be considered a form of artistic *poiesis*, then artistic *poiesis*, too, may be considered a mortal act that instantiates the process of divine creation, and the mortal creator a figure who instantiates the demiurge. Indeed, *Da Pintura Antigua* opens with a discussion of the parallels between the creation of the cosmos and the creation of a painting. In much the same manner in which God "[applied] light over the darkness and obscurity that covered the great picture of the world," the creation of a painting unfolds by way of the interaction between light and shade, which, "coordinated in their diminution or augmentation, will paint all things."[34] A painter is thus able to, in a sense, reenact divine creation through engaging in artistic creation. Accordingly, in citing Middle Platonist philosopher Alcinous' *De doctrina Platonis* (The Handbook of Platonism), Holanda suggests that in reproducing nature upon the canvas, a painter ought not to observe reality through their senses, but to emulate the very principles which facilitated God's engendering of that reality.[35] We thus find that the imitation of the *products* of divine creation (mimesis) and emulation of the *principles* of divine creation (abstraction), rather than existing in conflict, are inextricably intertwined. Whatever an artist seeks to reify upon their canvas, whether it be a product of God's creation or the event of Creation itself, they must probe deeper so as to grasp the subject through an apprehension of the principles of harmony, proportion, and order that make up its essence. This intellectual process plays out in Holanda's geometric imagination as much as in Michelangelo's precise *disegno* of the human form. In scaling the proportions of the cosmos as in the proportions of the human form, an artist engages in a creative and intellectual act that approximates divine creation itself. In doing so, they depart from the world of temporary objects and enter into a realm of pure concept—a realm closer to the divine. Far from being at odds with his written works, then, Holanda's cosmic vision affirms, albeit indirectly, the Holandian thesis that worthwhile painting is that which instantiates divine creation, be it its products or principles.

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[32] John Lowden, "Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, MS 2554," in *The Making of the Bibles Moralisées I: The Manuscripts* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), 47.

[33] Istvan Bodnar, "Aristotle's Natural Philosophy," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2025 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aristotle-natphil/.

[34] Francisco de Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua*, ed. Ángel González García (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 1984), 73.

[35] Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua*, 97.

Let us now return momentarily to the first day of Creation, which appears to encode a visual allegory for the act of intellectual contemplation that is so central to the artistic enterprise. In positioning the words *FIAT LUX* along a vertical line, Holanda compels us toward a lateral reading of the image (see Fig. 1, rotated). As we reorient our viewpoint, we find ourselves immediately struck by the imagistic resemblance of Holanda's composition to the schematic of a human eye, a resemblance further underscored by the artist's decision to leave visible the intersecting lines from which the triangles have been constructed, such that the point of intersection is made to recall the focal point of a convex lens. In accordance with the emission theory of vision originated by Empedocles (circa 494–34 BCE) in the fifth century BCE, the tapering of the light cone towards the entry of the eye suggests that it is the eye itself that is the source of light, which emanates outward and, upon making contact with the perceived object—in this case, the circular plane of ideal and infinite forms—is reflected back into the eye. The theological implications of such a theory were profound, for it drew the perceiving subject and perceived object into direct contact via the trajectory of light.[36] In Empedoclean theory, all objects emit particles, or "effluences," that enter the organ of perception upon being perceived;[37] in intuiting divine light, then, we interiorize the metaphorical effluences of the divine. As divine ontology cannot be apprehended sensorily, however, we might instead interpret the eye as a synecdoche for the *mind's* eye, and Holanda's portrayal of the visual perception of divine light, in turn, as a synecdoche for the intellectual contemplation of the divine. With a simple rotation of the image and reconfiguration of our viewpoint, a painting of cosmic creation thus becomes a meditation on how the immanent divine may be accessed through inward illumination. For if the aim of human creative activity is to approximate the prime cause of creation, and creation itself was enabled by a mastery of geometric intuitions, then this mastery must also be an aim of any true artist. While there is no evidence to suggest that Holanda himself subscribed to the emission theory of vision or intended for his illustration to conjure the impression of a human lens, reading his illustration in this manner nonetheless enables one to better grasp what Holanda understood to be a key marker of the artist: the ability to intuit that which lies beyond the reach of one's sensorium.

PART IV. The Dialectic of Abstraction & Mimesis: Toward a Visual Language of the Divine

This analysis of *De aetatibus mundi imagines* has thus far focused on the geometric elements that abound throughout the first plates of the Creation segment. But Holanda's illustrations of Creation are not entirely devoid of mimetic forms—as early as the second day, he presents the viewer with a figural manifestation of the divine. While the geometric elements within Holanda's

[36] Robert S. Nelson, "Introduction," in *Visuality Before and Beyond the Renaissance: Seeing as Others Saw* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4–5.

[37] K. Scarlett Kingsley and Richard Parry, "Empedocles," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2025 Edition), Edward N. Zalta & Uri Nodelman (eds.), https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/empedocles/.

compositions may be their most striking feature, the interplay between the geometric and the figural yields further insight into Holanda's cosmic vision.

Throughout Holanda's works, the artist appears to struggle with competing impulses toward both geometric abstraction and figural representation as modes of portraying the divine. In *Da Pintura Antigua*, Holanda writes that divinity, which "has no shape nor figure," can only be made intelligible through geometry. Shortly thereafter, however, he acknowledges the insufficiency of pure abstraction and turns to the subject of how a painter ought to give flesh to the Trinity: "To the Principle and Father they shall give the image and age of a very mild and handsome old man. To the Son and Logos the image of a most benign and peaceable Saviour, and to the paraclete Holy Spirit the image of flame and figure, and also the purity of the dove."[38] In Holanda's illustrations, too, we find instances of slippage, or rather fusion, between geometric and figural forms. The Trinity first assumes a corporeal form on the second day of Creation (Fig. 3), with the Holy Spirit concretized as a flame, and Christ, or Logos, depicted with his arms outstretched and a seraph at his pubis. Inscribed upon his arms, thorax, and abdomen are the words *PIETAS* (piety), *RATIO* (reason), and *MANSUETUDO* (gentleness), among others.[39] In the manner of a leitmotif, the alpha and omega symbols upon the light rays bursting forth from Christ's hands, as well as the placement of Christ and the Holy Spirit within the silhouettes of three concentric circles, marks the figure of Logos and the flame of the Holy Spirit as constituting the same ontological entity as that which was symbolized by the equilateral triangle on the first day of Creation. From the second day onwards, each illustration of Creation contains some figural trace of the Trinity.

Even as Holanda depicts the divine mimetically, however, he resorts to a purposefully restrained style of imitation that appears to signify a resistance to complete mimesis. On the third day of Creation (Fig. 7), for instance, the geometric representation of the Trinity as a triangle circumscribed by a circle reappears, rising over the horizon of an earth now furnished with dry lands, mountains, and flora. Diverging from the pure geometry of the first day, Holanda inserts an image of God the Father into the upper left vertex of the triangle, and an apparition of a crucified Christ into the lower vertex. Uncolored, faintly rendered, and each enclosed in a mantle of clouds, God and the incarnated Logos appear more as mirages than they do figures of the flesh. Then, on both the fourth and fifth days of Creation (Fig. 8 and Fig. 9), the Godhead appears again, but with his body entirely concealed from view, extending beyond the pictorial frame on the fourth day and obscured by the faces and wings of his seraphim on the fifth. The minimalism of Holanda's figural representation of the divine is perhaps most pronounced, however, in his second illustration of the creation of man (Fig. 10), in which the Godhead gazes down upon his creations and gestures toward the now fully formed

[38] Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua*, 146.

[39] Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 400.

Adam. Here, the manner in which Holanda represents Adam provides a foil to his representation of God. Whereas Adam's hair is painted a rich umber, God's hair, as well the rest of his visage, is rendered in beiges, whites, and greys that meld him with the clouds from which he is emerging, in much the same way that God is infused with the ultramarines and reds of the firmaments in Holanda's first illustration of the sixth day (Fig. 5). Furthermore, as in Holanda's portrayal of the divine on the fourth and fifth days, God's body is entirely concealed, this time by a blank triangle and a plumage-like mass of clouds. We thus observe at work the two characteristics of the minimalist mode of mimesis that Holanda adopts throughout his illustrations of Creation: the use of line rather than color to delineate the form of the divine,[40] and a reliance upon a deliberate visual obscurantism such that God is never illustrated in the totality of his incarnate form.[41] Holanda's illustrations thus appear as if caught at a crossroads between enfleshing the divine and conceding to the impossibility of such an endeavor.[42]

Beyond artistic and theological concerns, there is perhaps a further narrative explanation for Holanda's resistance to mimesis in his illustrations of Creation. *De aetatibus mundi imagines* is divided, according to the model of world history proposed by Eusebius in the fourth century, into six narrative segments, beginning with the period from the Creation to the Flood and culminating with the founding of the New Jerusalem at the end of the Apocalypse.[43] Paralleling this diegetic progression from Creation to Apocalypse is a spatial progression from the celestial heights to the infernal underworld (before the eventual triumph of the divine), and a Neoplatonic, metaphysical progression from a realm of intelligible forms to a sensible realm wanting in truth and virtue. Imagistically, Holanda mirrors these progressions by turning from a visual language of pure geometry to one of geometric-figural hybridism, and finally of pure mimesis in capturing the grotesque corporeality of the

[40] Holanda's preference for line over color in materializing the divine can be understood in light of the sixteenth century elevation of Florentine *disegno* (exemplified by Michelangelo, Leonardo, and Botticelli), above Venetian *colorito* (exemplified by the likes of Giorgione and Titian). Whereas *colorito* merely captures the transitory, sensorily perceived qualities of light, shade, and color, *disegno* reveals the more stable features of matter: mass, volume, form, and patterns which may be unseen to the naked eye ("Disegno: Italian Fine Art Drawing," Visual Arts Cork, accessed June 12, 2023, http://www.visual-arts-cork.com/drawing/disegno.htm.). Holanda likely subscribed to such a Neoplatonic understanding of the respective functions of color and line, deeming the latter, with its spiritual depth, more suitable than the former, with its optical superficiality, for the purposes of visualizing the divine.

[41] The only exception is Holanda's illustration of the second day of Creation, in which the Trinity's infinitude is instead signified through its containment within the three circles.

[42] See footnote 25. The simultaneous impulse to abstract and concretize the divine reminds one of the medieval practice of the *mensura Christi,* or the measurement of Christ, which art historian Emanuele Lugli describes as "a practice that constantly flips the plane on materiality—abstracting the specific and, at the same time, making the metaphysical palpable..." (Lugli, *The Making of Measure*, 146). Lugli postulates that this latter endeavor to "[make] the metaphysical palpable" stems from a desire to exist in close proximity to the divine. For a divine and living body to enter into contact, after all, there must be some ontological nexus that both can inhabit, and such a nexus can only exist if a human were to be elevated onto the plane of the divine, or the divine lowered onto the plane of materiality—i.e., if the human or divine acquired spatial extension.

[43] Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 391.

creatures of Apocalypse (see Fig. 11, 12, 13—notice that Holanda's illustrations of Apocalypse are monochromatic; we can only imagine the tactile presence of their subjects had they been realized in color). Here we can glean a direct correspondence between *Imagines* and *Da Pintura Antigua*, where Holanda writes that "the discreet painter shall leave those [geometric figures] to the diadems of the Holy Trinity."[44] We can postulate two reasons for Holanda's decision to restrict the use of geometry for the portrayal of the divine. First, there is the ontological polarity between divinity and the beasts of Apocalypse: while beings of monstrous materiality can be demarcated without recourse to abstraction, beings of pure spirit require geometry to be made intelligible. Secondly, beyond the human need to make the Trinity intelligible, order and harmony are qualities intrinsically connected to the divine. To journey away from the Creation and toward the end of times is to descend, both physically and metaphysically, through tiers of reality increasingly deficient in order, harmony, and indeed, geometry.

In the final assessment, Holanda was not so different from his mentor after all. Both he and Michelangelo sought to reify the essence of the divine through their art, merely turning to different intermediaries in doing so: Michelangelo to the human form, and Holanda to the geometric forms which he saw as reflecting the potential of both divine and human creativity—both subjects, as we have seen, encode the same principles of proportion and harmony that governed God's own act of creation. Moreover, as the suggestions of immanence within Holanda's paintings emphasize so consummately, the creative powers of the demiurge have been bestowed to humanity in the form of a specifically rational, orderly creative potential. As art historian Alessandro Russo writes, Holanda conceived of humanity as "endowed [with artistic excellence] at its inception," and thus "*immanently*, not phenomenologically, artistic."[45] ("Artistic" here is defined broadly, as possessing "the capacity to mentally conceive and materially realise."[46]) Against the entropy of the universe, the material realization of this artistic potential—like the exercise of divine intelligence—asserts an negentropic force that creates form out of formlessness. For Holanda, it is through the exercise of this geometric and generative consciousness that an artist may reenact, upon a literal or hypothetical canvas, the divine act of creation which bequeathed them that potential in the first place. And, as for Holanda's own images, through which we might ourselves glean something of the infinite and eternal, all that remains to be said is that they themselves are the product of one such luminous consciousness.

[44] Holanda, *Da Pintura Antigua*, 236, quoted in Berbara, "Nascentes Morimur," 400.

[45] Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes," 37.

[46] Russo, "Lights on the Antipodes," 49.

Figure 1. Francisco de Holanda, *The Creation of Lights (First Day of Creation)*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 6r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

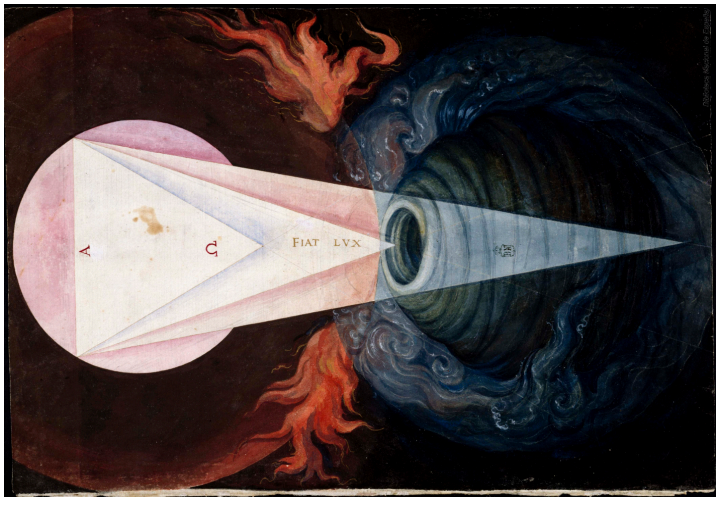

Figure 1., rotated.

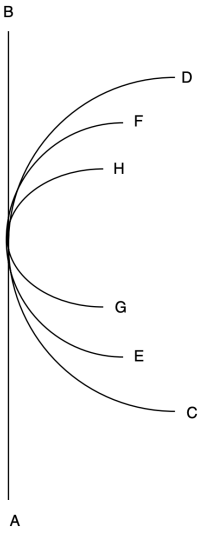

Figure 2. Coincidence of circularity and linearity, from Nicholas Cusanus and Jasper Hopkins, *Nicholas of Cusa on Learned Ignorance: A Translation and an Appraisal of De Docta Ignorantia* (Minneapolis: A.J. Benning Press, 1996), 21.

Figure 3. Francisco de Holanda, *Second Day of Creation*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 7r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

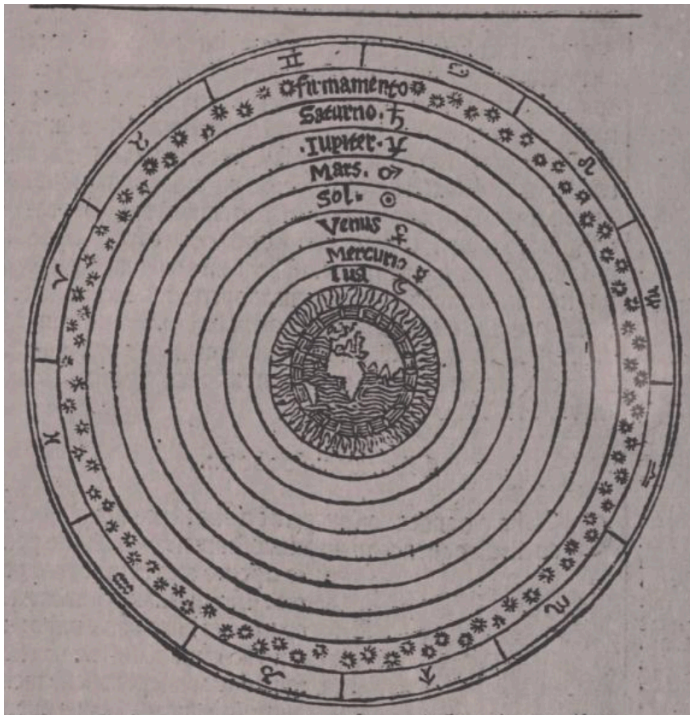

Figure 4. Concentric spheres, from Pedro Nunes, *Tratado da sphera*, Lisbon, 1537, John Carter Brown Library, Providence, RI. Photo credit: Internet Archive.

Figure 5. Francisco de Holanda, *Creation of Adam*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 10v, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

Figure 6. Prefatory miniature from the *Bible moralisée*, folio I verso, Paris, circa 1220–1230. Ink, tempera, and gold leaf on vellum. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (2554). Photo credit: Web Gallery of Art.

Figure 7. Francisco de Holanda, *Third Day of Creation*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 8r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

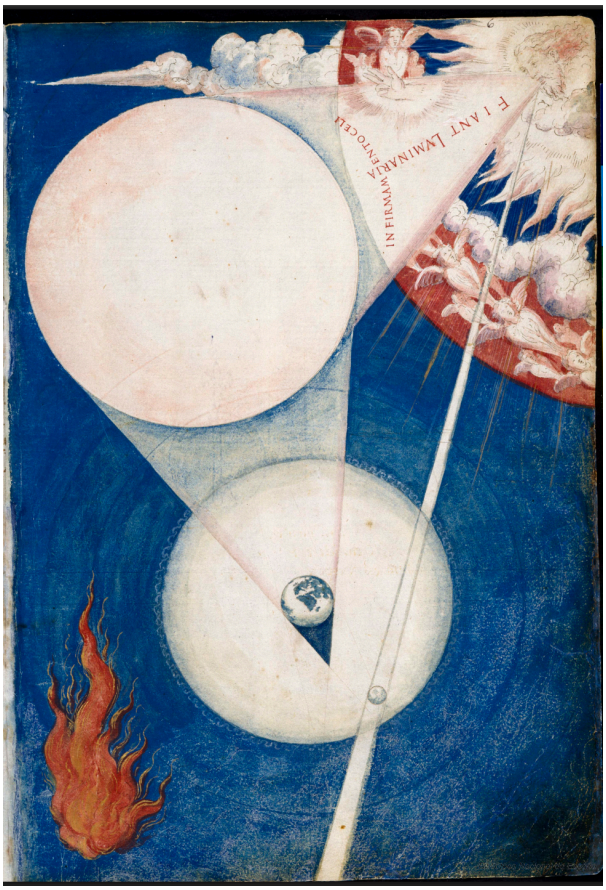

Figure 8. Francisco de Holanda, *Fourth Day of Creation*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 9r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

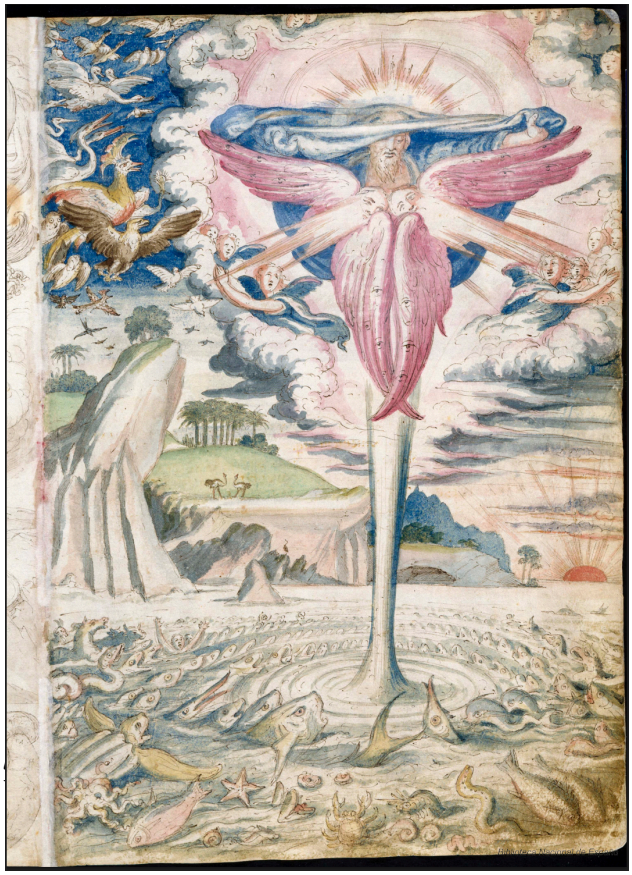

Figure 9. Francisco de Holanda, *Fifth Day of Creation*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 10r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

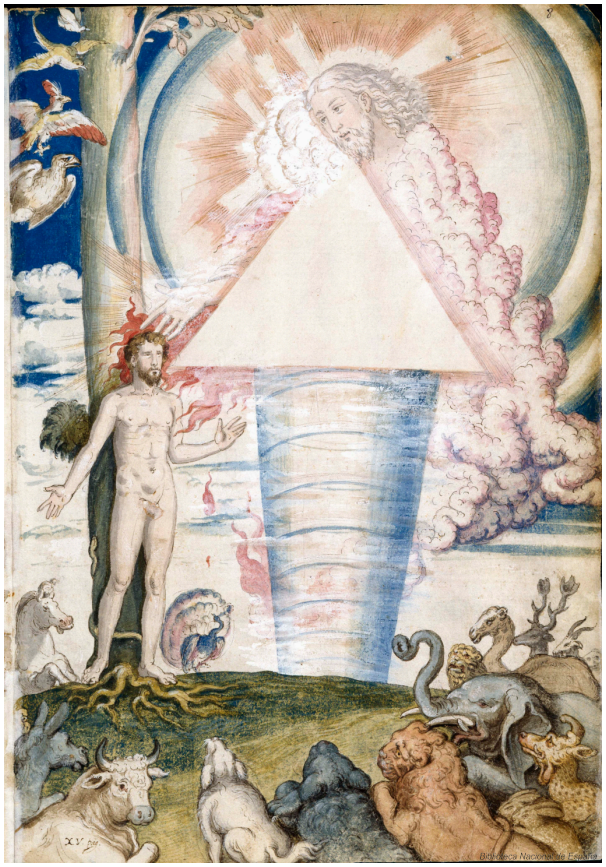

Figure 10. Francisco de Holanda, *Creation of Man*, from *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, 1547–51, painted manuscript, fol. 10r, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Digital Hispánica.

Figures 11, 12, 13. Francisco de Holanda, Images from *Apocalypse*, *De aetatibus mundi imagines*, circa 1570, Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. Photo credit: Biblioteca Nacional Digital.

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Hybrid Ketubbot in the Cairo Genizah: A Re-Examination of Karaite-Rabbanite Relations in Medieval Egypt

Alexandra Orbuch
Princeton University '25

INTRODUCTION

Amidst Egypt's scorching summer heat, two young Jews, Rayyisa and Yehya, entered into one of the most sacred unions in Judaism: marriage. According to their marriage agreement (*ketubbah* in Hebrew), they married in 1117 CE in the Jewish month of Elul (אלול) in Fustat, a city in what is today the southern part of modern Cairo.[1] The existence of the *ketubbah* certifying their union is somewhat surprising, as the pair came from two groups within the Jewish faith long believed to have been separate and disdainful of one another: the Karaites and the Rabbanites.[2] The merging of their two families—and documentation certifying the merging of a handful of others—attests to a level of connection and intermingling between the groups. For centuries, Rayyisa and Yehya's *ketubbah* remained tucked away in the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat, which housed a room piled high with letters, deeds of betrothal, legal contracts, and other long-forgotten manuscripts from Fustat's Jewish community.[3] These documents, most of which were drafted

[1] According to the *ketubbah*, the marriage took place in 1428 in the Seleucid Calendar (sel.). (Bodl. MS heb. a.3/42, Bodleian Library).

[2] Rabbanite (a Jew who follows the Talmud and broader rabbinical tradition) should not be confused with the similarly spelled rabbinate (rabbis as a group or their status).

[3] Zina Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah," in *Composition Analysis of Writing Materials in Cairo Genizah Documents: Cambridge Genizah Studies Series, Volume 15* (Leiden: Brill, 2022).

between 950 and 1250 CE, were part of the synagogue's Genizah collection.[4] Genizah is a Hebrew word derived from the Persian *ganj*, meaning "hoard" or "hidden treasure."[5] The word's root was used in different forms throughout the Talmud. *Ganuz* meant "hidden" or "thrown out,"[6] while the noun Genizah evolved to refer to a storage area, burial plot, or "cabinet where any damaged or somehow dubious holy book would be ritually entombed."[7] Over time, fragments of text bearing the name (*shem*) of God began to be placed in cubbies, basement rooms, and other nooks in synagogues until they were buried—a process known as *shemot*, as prescribed in Mishnah Shabbat 16:1.[8] In Fustat, however, Jews brought all documents containing Hebrew letters to the Geniza, not just holy documents, and they never underwent burial.[9] Instead, over a quarter million pages remained suspended in time, protected from mold by Cairo's mild climate. This treasure trove of documents provides a window into Jewish life in Egypt, and, by extension, the greater Near East, during a period lacking the archival documentation characteristic of Ottoman rule in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.[10] Today, the term "Cairo Genizah" applies not only to documents found in the Ben Ezra Synagogue but to all genizah manuscripts found in Cairo.[11] Approximately 300,000 Cairo Genizah fragments are located in collections across the globe, but the majority (estimated at 70%) currently sit in Cambridge.[12]

In this paper, I will use a small sample of these documents to examine relations between the Karaites and Rabbanites, two Jewish groups in Fustat during the rule of the Fatimid Caliphate between the tenth and twelfth centuries CE. The preeminent twentieth-century historian and Genizah scholar Shelomo Dov (S.D.) Goitein calls this the "classical" Genizah period.[13] Where the Rabbanites deferred to the authority of the rabbinic tradition and the *geonim* (sg: *gaon*),[14] heads of Rabbinical academics (*yeshivas*) who studied the Talmud, the Karaites based their practice solely on the Bible and rejected the rabbinic tradition.[15] The weakening of the Abbasid Caliphate, punctuated by the loss of Egypt to the Fatimids in 967, led to an economic downturn, which

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[4] Precise dating of Genizah manuscripts is not always possible, as many of them are mere fragments, torn or otherwise deteriorated.

[5] Adina Hoffman and Peter Cole, *Sacred Trash: The Lost and Found World of the Cairo Geniza* (New York: Schocken Books, 2011), 14–15.

[6] Hoffman and Cole, *Sacred Trash*, 14–15.

[7] Hoffman and Cole, *Sacred Trash*, 16.

[8] Hoffman and Cole, *Sacred Trash*; Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah."

[9] Ibid., 17.

[10] Marina Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 3–4.

[11] Rebecca J. W. Jefferson, "Deconstructing 'the Cairo Genizah': A Fresh Look at Genizah Manuscript Discoveries in Cairo before 1897," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 108, no. 4 (2018): 422.

[12] Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah," 11.

[13] Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah," 14. The Fatimid caliphs ruled from 969–1171 (Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*).

[14] *Gaon* is short for *rosh yeshivat ge'on ya'aqov*, "the head of the yeshiva of the pride of Jacob." See Marina Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria: A Study Based on Documents from the Cairo Geniza" (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2004), xiv, Proquest (3110175).

[15] Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah," 18.

spurred a westward migration of people toward Fustat, Palermo, and other Mediterranean centers. A considerable number of those who moved were from the prominent and literate segments of society—and many of them were Jews. This movement of Jews to Fatimid territories in the southeastern Mediterranean meant that the *geonim* in Baghdad were able to spread their practices westward, gaining substantial numbers of loyalists in what would become the Jewish hubs of Fustat and Jerusalem.[16] These two cities were also centers for the Karaite community, who migrated westward at this time as well, spreading their countervailing influence.[17]

Scholars have often depicted the period between the tenth and twelfth centuries as one of "gradual but inevitable Babylonian Rabbanite triumph over the other varieties of Judaism," such as the Karaites, in the words of historian and co-director of the Princeton Genizah Lab Marina Rustow.[18] S.D. Goitein, in many ways, exemplified this view, arguing that Judaism's many "splinter groups" did not even "survive long enough to make an enduring impact on the main body of Judaism."[19] Moreover, he displayed a disdain for Karaism as an "ill-timed and badly conceived...radical" group and dismissed the Karaites' core tenets as "not justified by the biblical texts from which they were derived.[20] In contrast, he painted an image of a Jewish society in which the Rabbanite "yeshivas regulated and streamlined religious life."[21]

But is this narrative wholly accurate? According to Goitein, Karaites "differed from...Rabbanites, that is, the followers of the rabbis or teachers of the Talmud, as markedly as one Christian church from another."[22] Rustow counters this view, explaining that "[f]or sociologists of religion, 'sects' are separatist," a definition that does not fit with the reality of the medieval Egyptian Karaites.[23] As such, Rustow takes issue with the long-held view of the Karaites as a sect perceived as heretical by a prevailing Rabbanite orthodoxy. She argues that "[t]he sociological typology of sectarianism has tended to generate its own historical reality, one that does not accord with the preponderance of the evidence, which suggests that the Qaraites[24] were not merely a part of the Jewish people but a central part of it."[25] They traded with Rabbanites, donated to their institutions, and even married them.[26] This intermingling suggests that Karaites did not view themselves as a heretical sect on the periphery of mainstream Judaism. They viewed their

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[16] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," xiv.

[17] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community.*

[18] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community,* 3–4.

[19] S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza, Vol. 5: The Individual* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 359.

[20] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 5*, 365.

[21] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 5*, 360.

[22] S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 2: The Community* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1967), 7.

[23] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, xxvii.

[24] While Rustow utilizes the spelling Qaraite, I will adhere to the alternate spelling (Karaite) throughout this paper, except when directly quoting Rustow and other scholars who use the former spelling.

[25] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community,* xxix.

[26] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community,* xxix.

interpretation of Jewish practice as equally "legitimate" to that of the Rabbanites.[27] Throughout the documents in the Cairo Genizah, Karaites and Rabbanites are both described as "schools of law" (*madhahib* in Arabic, or *madhhah* in the singular), including in documents written by the leaders of rabbinic academies (*geonim*).[28] Despite their differences, Rustow argues that these *madhahib* within Judaism were just that—different schools of law within the same community, not separate communities with one at the center and the other sidelined.

This paper examines hybrid Rabbanite-Karaite marriage documents from medieval Fustat to build on Rustow's re-evaluation of the mainstream narrative of polemical rivalry that culminated in the triumph of the Rabbanites and the obsolescence of the Karaites. Rustow devotes a short section of her book, *Heresy and the Politics of Community: The Jews of the Fatimid Caliphate*, to the topic of hybrid marriages. She cites them as proof of the more complex, intertwined nature of the Karaite-Rabbanite relationship. But she provides a holistic overview of all hybrid marriage-related documents from across the Mediterranean, rather than an in-depth look at Jewish society in Fustat in particular through a close reading of its corresponding marriage documents. This study focuses on Fustat because the city was the "undisputable centre of the Karaites" in the eleventh century, according to the eminent historian Judith Olszowy-Schlanger.[29] Moreover, both Karaites and Rabbanites lived in the Jewish Al-Mamusa quarter of Fustat between the tenth and twelfth centuries, making Fustat a prime location to examine in terms of community relations.[30] In 1201–1202, plague and famine drove much of the Jewish community, particularly those in the upper-middle class, out of Fustat and towards Cairo and other urban centers.[31] As such, the centuries preceding the famine in Fustat are the richest to study in terms of the presence of both *madhahib* and the documentary evidence available.

This study examines eight hybrid *ketubbot*, one betrothal agreement, and one Karaite marriage formulary from Fustat in the period 1009 to 1135, with the following questions in mind: Do the documents favor one *madhhah* and its legal formulae consistently over the other?[32] What do the pledges taken by the Karaite and Rabbanite parties in the *ketubbot* reveal about how each *madhhah* viewed the other? And, finally, do the *ketubbot* reveal anything about the social status and standing of the Karaites in the broader Jewish community, either affirming or complicating the vision of Karaism as a sect of Judaism? The answers to these questions revealed by the legal formulae and the pledges made by the couples in the *ketubbot* suggest two conclusions: many

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[27] Marina Rustow, "Karaites Real and Imagined: Three Cases of Jewish Heresy," *Past & Present* 197, no. 1 (November 2007): 47.

[28] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, xxviii.

[29] Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents From the Cairo Geniza: Legal Tradition and Community Life In Medieval Egypt and Palestine* (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 59.

[30] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents From the Cairo Geniza*, 59.

[31] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 5*.

[32] See Exhibit A for all of the marriage documents I examine in this paper broken down by their format/court of origin (Karaite or Rabbanite), the bride's *madhhah*, and the groom's *madhhah*.

Karaites occupied prominent places in society, and there was a spirit of cooperation and acceptance of intermingling between the two groups.

POLEMIC LITERATURE AND RELIGIOUS TENSION

Is there any truth behind the prevailing narrative of deep religious conflict between the Karaites and Rabbanites? Documentary evidence from both *madhahib* reveals significant ill will between the leaders of both *madhahib*. Natronay bar Hilay, ninth-century *gaon* of the rabbinic academy of Sura—one of the major Babylonian centers of learning—spoke of the Karaites as "heretics" who "strayed and whored" after their founder, Anan ben David.[33] Natronay threatened to excommunicate anyone who shortened the *haggada*, the Jewish text that orders the Passover seder, as he believed the act to be proof of Karaite beliefs.[34] Natronay was far from the only Rabbinic leader to draft polemical works that painted Karaism as a heretical sect. Saadiah al-Fajjumi Saadiah, or Saadiah Gaon as he came to be known after he assumed the role of head of the Sura yeshiva and rose to prominence as a Jewish theologian, was also an outspoken opponent of Anan ben David. At the age of 23, Saadiah composed a polemical work attacking the core tenets of Karaism.[35] In the face of these accusations of heresy, many Karaite polemicists pushed back, leveling their own doctrinal denunciations. One prominent tenth-century Karaite who fit this description was Daniel al-Kumisi, who condemned Rabbanite doctrine as "a commandment of men, learned by rote."[36] Rustow argues that doctrinal deviances were not the sole—or even the primary—reason for the zeal of polemicists among rabbinic leaders. Rather, social dynamics of authority played a key role. By embracing scripturalism and refusing to accept the oral tradition, the Karaites set themselves apart from the framework of rabbinic leadership and, thus, the power and reach of the *geonim*. The *geonim* in Babylon viewed it as their mission to spread Talmudic Judaism and establish a coherent and singular Jewish practice. As such, the major academies of Sura and Pumbedita began to issue responsa, answering legal questions posed to them by Jewish communities across the diaspora.[37] This "social contex[t]," says Rustow, is vital to understanding the core of the polemical discourse of both groups.[38]

Despite the anti-Karaite polemics emerging from Rabbanite leadership, the social reality in medieval Fustat did not reflect deep religious tension. A good portion of the Jewish communities in urban centers in the Near East, like Fustat, were "highly mobile."[39] According to Rustow, this "setting tended not merely to tolerate collaboration among people whose ideologies differed but to

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[33] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 2.

[34] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 2.

[35] Samuel Poznanski, "The Anti-Karaite Writings of Saadiah Gaon," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 10, no. 2 (1898).

[36] Jacob Mann, "A Tract by an Early Ḳaraite Settler in Jerusalem," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 12, no. 3 (1922): 265.

[37] Mann, "A Tract by an Early Ḳaraite Settler in Jerusalem," 265.

[38] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 4.

[39] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 18.

reward it."[40] Furthermore, while the Rabbanites' efforts to disseminate Babylonian rabbinic authority and Talmudic learning across the Islamic world were largely successful by the end of the tenth century, the group's leadership still argued about basic issues like the specifics of the Jewish calendar.[41] In 921–922 CE, there was a tense disagreement between Rabbanites in Babylon and Palestine about the organization of the calendar, leading the two groups to celebrate Rosh Hashanah (the Jewish New Year) and Passover on different days in 922 CE.[42] While they resolved the dispute by 923 CE, the willingness of two groups within the Rabbanite community to celebrate major holidays on different days is striking. Against this backdrop of mobility, communal autonomy, and the lack of a fully unified Rabbanite practice, the social realities of Jews in Fustat diverged from the polemics and rabbinical teachings hundreds of miles away in the *yeshivot* in Babylon.

THE MERE EXISTENCE OF HYBRID *KETUBBOT*: A SIGNAL OF CONNECTION AND INTERMINGLING

Monotheistic non-Muslims in Egypt—primarily Christians and Jews—received the status of *dhimmi* under Muslim rule. This "protected person" status meant that the Jews could run their own communal affairs—including their internal legal system—and receive protection from the Muslim rulers in exchange for paying special taxes. This extended to both Karaites and Rabbanites, meaning that they were able to deal with marriages and other legal transactions internal to the Jewish community, such as *ketubbot* and other marriage documents, rather than turning to Muslim courts.[43]

At their core, these marriage documents speak to a deep level of cooperation between the two *madhahib*, as both allowed the most sacred unit, the Jewish family, to arise from a mixed origin. In each case, both parties agreed to produce a *ketubbah*, a binding Jewish legal document, suggesting that each side believed that the other was truly a part of the Jewish faith. If this basic assumption was not met, neither side would have permitted such a union through the Jewish legal system. It would have been considered akin to intermarriage, and no Jewish legal documents would have been drawn up to codify the transaction. Authoritative voices in the Rabbanite community made clear that this was no accident. Maimonides said the following about how Rabbanites in Egypt should treat Karaites in vol. 2 of his *Responsa* (שאלות ותשובות הרמב"ם): "These Karaites, who live here in Alexandria, Cairo, Damascus, and other places in the lands of Islam, should be approached with respect and treated with sincerity and friendliness...as we are advised to do even with pagans."[44] Given that intermarriage with "pagans" was strictly forbidden among devout Jews,

[40] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 19.
[41] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," 19.
[42] Sacha Stern, *The Jewish Calendar Controversy of 921/2 CE* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 3.
[43] Cohen, "The Cairo Genizah."
[44] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 5*, 367.

the hybrid marriages I examine suggest that the Rabbanite Jews of the time went far beyond the level of "friendliness" advised by Maimonides.[45]

The *ketubbot* in this study are not the only evidence of hybrid marriages in medieval Fustat. The Genizah also holds a formulary (MS heb. d.66/49-50) that lays out the general structure and wording of Karaite *ketubbot* in Fustat as an aid to Karaite scribes. This document devotes an entire section to expounding on the additional clauses necessary in a *ketubbah* for a hybrid marriage. This passage in the formulary is extraordinarily revealing, as it suggests that hybrid marriages were common enough to warrant creating a special formula devoted to their *ketubbot* and transmitting said formula to Karaite scribes.[46] If the Karaite community was intent on eliminating—or even merely limiting—these unions, surely it would not have devised a set of rules governing them and made them widely available to the specialists responsible for drafting the legal documentation surrounding them.

These *ketubbot* also reveal that this openness to mingling between the *madhahib* extended outwards from the bride and groom to the community as a whole. According to Rustow, marriages involved not only the individuals who were wed and their immediate relatives but also much wider groups. Families and broader community networks helped to organize betrothals and chose pairings with individuals and families with whom they wished to build networks and partnerships. Practically, the whole family unit was involved. The family's females often chose the match, while the males—either the father or maternal uncle, in some cases—served as the bride's legal proxy in the betrothal process. In Rustow's words,

> marriages were not stories of star-crossed lovers. Betrothals were hard work, the results of neither romantic love nor individual choice but agreements contracted between families and entire communities on considerations of formal friendship, business partnership, and social station.[47]

Marriages were thus conscious communal decisions, not individual ones taken lightly by those involved.

WHAT THE *KETUBBOT* SAY ABOUT THE KARAITES' PLACE IN SOCIETY

The trousseau lists and vocation information in a number of the hybrid *ketubbot* reveal that Karaites occupied high-status positions and married into equally elevated Rabbanite families. According to Rustow, "the tendency of the elites to seek affiliations across a broad variety of social

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[45] It is important to note that even Maimonides recognized the legal legitimacy of hybrid-marriages in his book of responsa, *Teshuvot HaRambam*. According to him, a *get* (divorce agreement) was necessary in the case of a hybrid marriage, even if the *ketubbah* was drawn up by Karaites. See Fred Astren, "Some Notes on Intermarriage among Rabbanites and Karaites in the Middle Ages and Its Subsequent Prohibition," *The Journal of the Association of Graduate Near Eastern Students* 1, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 46.

[46] MS heb. d.66/49-50, FGP translation and transcription.

[47] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 239.

networks created conditions conducive to Karaite-Rabbanite intimacy."[48] Multiple hybrid *ketubbot* tell the stories of unions between prominent families of both *madhahib*, suggesting exactly what Rustow argues: wealthy individuals sought out marriages that would grow their wealth, no matter the *madhahib* of their prospective spouse.

The *ketubbah* of the Rabbanite groom Yehya ben (the son of) Abraham and Karaite bride Rayyisa, the couple discussed earlier, is a case in point. Their 1117 union was the second marriage between the two and Rayyisa's third marriage overall, as she was widowed prior.[49] According to their *ketubbah* (MS heb. a.3/42), Yahya was a highly educated physician from an educated family, as evidenced by the fact that his father, too, practiced medicine. For her part, Rayyisa brought a hefty dowry—719 dinars—to the marriage. To give a sense of what this number meant in practical terms, a month's rent for a middle-class family was around half a dinar, and an artisan's monthly wage was approximately 2 dinars.[50] Rayyisa's elaborate trousseau list confirms her patrician status. It includes multiple golden rings, a pearl one, a silver jewel box, and lavish furniture like a silk mattress and a large chandelier. Rayyisa's *ketubbah* reveals that Karaites could accumulate significant wealth. According to Olszowy-Schlanger, when compared, the trousseau lists written in *Karaite* and Rabbanite ketubbot suggest that Karaites had a higher economic status than Rabbanites.[51]

In another hybrid *ketubbah* (TS 24.1), Karaite bride Nasiyya bat (the daughter of) Moses ha-Kohen, married the Rabbanite groom, David *ha-Nasi* ben Daniel *ha-Nasi*,[52] *Rosh Yeshiva* (head of the rabbinical academy) *Ge'on Yaakov*.[53] This marriage was one of two individuals from prominent families, as Nasiyya was the daughter of a Karaite notable and David was the son of a *geon* in a yeshiva in Jerusalem.[54] It is striking that a man deeply embedded in the world of rabbinical scholarship (a *geon*) allowed his son to marry a Karaite. Evidently, not only laymen but also Rabbanite leaders were open to intermingling. Nasiyya's father, Moses ha-Kohen, was likely an influential courtier, according to Olszowy-Schlanger. Further, in other genizah documents, ha-Kohen is referred to as "the mighty prince" and "the ruler of our time," revealing him to be a respected member of the Jewish community in the eyes of his contemporaries.[55] As ha-Kohen's position suggests, Karaites assumed positions of importance in Caliphal Egyptian society and were recognized as such within Fustat's Jewish community.[56] Far from being on the periphery, Karaites

[48] Rustow, "Rabbanite-Karaite Relations in Fatimid Egypt and Syria," abstract.

[49] MS heb. a.3/42, Friedberg Genizah Project (FGP) transcription and translation.

[50] Oded Zinger, "Women, Gender and Law: Marital Disputes According to Documents of the Cairo Geniza" (PhD diss., Princeton University, 2014), 164; Robert I. Burns, "Geniza Wills," in *Jews in the Notarial Culture: Latinate Wills in Mediterranean Spain, 1250–1350* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1996).

[51] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents From the Cairo Geniza*, 61.

[52] According to Solomon Schechter, "both a Nasi David and a Nasi Daniel occur in the list of the Nisiim...or heads of the exile in Babylon. See Solomon Schechter, "Geniza Specimens. A Marriage Settlement," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 13, no. 2 (1901): 219.

[53] TS 24.1, Cambridge University Digital Library (CUDL) translation.

[54] TS 24.1, CUDL translation.

[55] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 63.

[56] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 64.

were capable of being prominent and affluent members of society, just like Rabbanite Jews. Nasiyya's large dowry, over 1,100 gold dinars, attests to this.[57] The fact that both Karaites and Rabbanites forged relationships with other priorities, such as social status and wealth, more in mind than *madhhab* membership, suggests that neither group valued insularity above all; intermingling was worth it to achieve other, more top-of-mind priorities.

MS heb. e.98/60 is a Rabbanite court document containing a copy of a hybrid *ketubbah* between Abu l-Fadl Ibn Shaya and Sitt al-Dalal.[58] Like David and Yehya, Abu l-Fadl was another Karaite groom married to a Rabbanite bride who achieved high social status. He was from the prominent Ibn Shaya family of bankers, traders, and government functionaries, and he possessed wide-reaching connections within the Muslim government, according to a letter written by Karaites who fled to Egypt in 1099 when the Franks invaded Palestine.[59] They describe Abu l-Fadl as someone with his "hand [i.e., influence and patronage]...spread over Alexandria" and say that "his word is heeded" by the top echelons of society. Moreover, the letter confirms that he had "dealings with the government" and praises him for attempting to negotiate ransoms for Jews taken captive by the Franks.[60] Abu l-Fadl's work was part of a larger effort taken on by Egyptian Jews to help refugees, ransom captives, and save Jewish books.[61] According to Rustow, Abu l-Fadl primarily lived in Fustat (or possibly Cairo). He was only in Palestine at the time of Jewish captivity under the Franks because he was pursuing a marriage to Sitt al-Dalal, a Rabbanite who resided there. As in other hybrid marriages examined above, the Rabbanite family involved was prominent as well. Sitt al-Dalal's father was a government official.[62] Evidently, this was a union built between two distinguished families. Sitt and Abu l-Fadl's hybrid marriage is not the only one in the distinguished Ibn Shaya claim mentioned in the Cairo Genizah. In the late eleventh century (the exact date is not visible on the document), Karaite groom Abu Said Dawud Ben Abu Nasr Ben Shaya married a Rabbanite bride (TS 13J6.33). Though little is known about his bride, Abu Said Dawud clearly came from a high-status background, given that he was a member of the prominent mercantile Ibn Shaya family.[63]

In addition to pragmatic considerations surrounding wealth, limited marriage optionality within the Karaite community because of its stringent incest laws may have also contributed to the formation of hybrid marriages. The Karaites took the verse, "Therefore shall a man ... cleave unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh," literally. This meant that upon marriage, each spouse took on

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[57] TS 24.1, CUDL translation.

[58] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 342 and 120.

[59] There were a few decades of political turmoil under the Fatimids, which led the Franks to send crusading armies through Syria—which they conquered—and Palestine in the twelfth century. Many Jews were taken captive during the siege of Jerusalem. See Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 323–346.

[60] Translation by Marina Rustow. See Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 341.

[61] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 340.

[62] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 342.

[63] The name of the bride is not visible on this fragmentary document, though we do know that her father's name was Amram. TS 13J6.33, CUDL translation and Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 252.

the blood-relative status of the other in regards to incest.[64] For example, the groom's sister was considered as if she were the bride's sister by blood, his mother, her mother, and so on. Upon divorce, that network of familial connections continued to widen, severely limiting marital options in the Karaite community. Because of the detrimental effects of this "catenary (chain reaction)" theory governing marriage law, anti-catenary reformers arose in the tenth century.[65] By the eleventh century, the anticatenary movement was successful in loosening the provisions of Karaite incest law to eliminate the chain reaction prohibitions. For example, in the case of the stepsister and stepbrother mentioned earlier, she would no longer be considered his legal sister, and the two could therefore marry without violating Karaite law. Despite this reform, Karaite incest laws were still stricter than their Rabbanite counterparts in the case of siblings. A widower was still prohibited from marrying his sister-in-law upon the death of his wife, and two sisters were still prohibited from marrying two brothers.[66] It is very possible that this practical constraint contributed to the decision of some Karaites to seek out Rabbanite spouses.

In addition to revealing the wealth and social status Karaites were able to achieve, many *ketubbot* contain language that suggests respect and a kind of egalitarianism between Karaites and Rabbanites. Hybrid *ketubbot* written according to the Karaite formula and signed by Karaite notaries (what I will refer to as Karaite hybrid ketubbot for concision from here onwards) praise Rabbanite individuals, and the same is true of Karaites in *ketubbot* composed by Rabbanites (Rabbanite hybrid *ketubbot*). The language of praise directed at both parties is balanced in Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah*. It refers to Yehya's father as "his Glory, the esteemed physician," and to Rayyisa's as "the esteemed and respected elder."[67] Even the language of esteem is paralleled in the case of their respective fathers—despite the short note about Rayyisa's father as a leader within the Karaite community. *Chashuv* ("חשוב"), often translated as important or esteemed, is used to describe both fathers.[68] This reveals that the Karaite notaries and witnesses involved were respectful of some Rabbanites. That being said, the balance tilts somewhat in favor of Rayyisa's father, as the document refers to him not only as "esteemed" but also as "his Glory our Lord and Master."[69] Fascinatingly, however, the additional language of reverence showered on this Karaite elder comes from Yehya, a Rabbanite, further underscoring a warm relationship between the two families despite their religious differences.[70]

Just as the Karaite court afforded respect to a Rabbanite in Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah*, in Nasiyya and David's, the Rabbanite court showed a level of respect to a male Karaite. Though produced by Rabbanites, Nasiyya and David's *ketubbah* (TS 24.1) refers to Nasiyya's Karaite father

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[64] Leon Nemoy, "Two Controversial Points in the Karaite Law of Incest," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 49 (1978): 247–65; Genesis 2:24.

[65] Nemoy, "Two Controversial Points in the Karaite Law of Incest," 247.

[66] Nemoy, "Two Controversial Points in the Karaite Law of Incest," 248–250.

[67] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.

[68] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.

[69] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.

[70] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.

as "the honourable, great, holy, our master and teacher, our lord, our noble, Moses ha-Kohen, Banner of the Jews" ("כבוד גדולת קדשת מרנו ורבנו אדוננו נשיאנו...דגל היהודים").[71] According to Solomon Schechter's examination of Egyptian records at the time, describing a Karaite in praiseworthy terms like "מר" (Mr.) and "רב" (Rabbi) conferred no "official" status on Nasiyya's father. That being said, this language still offers an important insight because it closely parallels another section of the *ketubbah*.[72] As in Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah*, the language of respect is used not just for one father but for both. In fact, the document uses the *exact* same words for each.[73] Thus, while the words may not have conferred any official legal status upon their Karaite subject, they did say something about his social status—about how the Rabbanite court regarded him. They revealed that Rabbanites regarded him with just as much respect as the Rabbanite male ancestor mentioned. Nasiyya and David's *ketubbah* is not the only instance of a Rabbanite ketubbah demonstrating respect for a Karaite. In Abu l-Fadl and Sitt's *ketubbah*, Abu l-Fadl is deferentially referred to as "Prince of the house of Israel" ("שר בית ישראל" in Hebrew) by the Rabbanite drafter of the document throughout the *ketubbah*.[74]

Rayyisa and Yehya's *ketubbah* affirmed that "Rayyisa accepted the words of our dear Yehya and wished to return to him and to be his wife and companion in purity and holiness; to obey and esteem...[respect and help him, and to do in his house *all* that the pure daughters] of Israel do in the house of their husbands (emphasis added)."[75] While this may appear as simply a statement that Rayyisa accepted this legal arrangement by Yehya, the language used by the court demonstrates a feeling of unity and cohesiveness among all of the Jewish people, regardless of whether they were Rabbanites or Karaites. Rayyisa was to behave towards her husband as *all* Jewish wives behaved towards their husbands—Karaite and Rabbanite. The Karaites evidently did not see a Rabbanite groom as deserving any less than a Karaite one.

LEGAL FORMULAE OF THE HYBRID GENIZAH

Rabbanite hybrid *ketubbot* contain some elements characteristic of Karaite *ketubbot*, providing further evidence of the strength of Karaite influence and the intermingling of the two *madhahib*. This is all the more striking since the two types of ketubah differed in multiple ways. We will begin by establishing broader patterns that differentiate the two types of *ketubbot*. They differed in language, structure, dating system, and the elements of marriage they chose to discuss.

The most easily discernible distinction between Karaite and Rabbanite *ketubbot* lies in the respective language each of them employed. Karaite ketubbot are generally in Hebrew, as Karaites stridently opposed the use of non-Hebrew languages in marriage and divorce documents.[76] As

[71] T-S 24.1, CUDL translation.
[72] Schechter, "Geniza Specimens. A Marriage Settlement," 219.
[73] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation; TS 24.1, CUDL translation.
[74] Bodl. MS heb. e 98/60, Princeton Genizah Project transcription.
[75] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.
[76] Judith Olszowy-Schlanger, "Karaite Legal Documents," in *Karaite Judaism* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 255–73.

twelfth-century Karaite author Jehuda Hadassi wrote, "It is not proper for them [letters of divorce, *ketubbot,* and other legal contracts] to be written in a language other than *Your language*...for our language is the language our God spoke on Mount Sinai in front of all Israel, His people, and through His prophets."[77] In addition to Hebrew being the language of the Bible, which scripturalist Karaites valued, its use also separated the Karaites from the language of the oral law followed by the Rabbanites. The Karaites rejected the Rabbanite's oral tradition and thus did not want to use Aramaic, the language of Rabbinic Judaism's central text: the Talmud.[78] Rabbanite legal documents, in contrast to Karaite ones, were primarily written in Aramaic, the vernacular language of the Jews in the Near East.[79] Rabbanites believed that Hebrew was a divine language meant exclusively for religious matters rather than secular ones like legal documents.[80]

In addition to the language distinction, the dating of the *ketubbot* of the different *madhahib* also differed. Rabbanite documents in the Genizah primarily use the dating system of the Seleucid Era, marked by the reconquest of Mesopotamia by the Macedonian Greek general Seleucus I Nicator in 312–11 BCE.[81] While the majority of Karaite documents are also dated according to the Seleucid Era, they used a different designation of the era than the Rabbanites. The Karaites dated their documents with the phrase *ke-mispar yewanim* (era of the Greeks), while the Rabbanites referred to it as either *minyan shetarot* (the computation of documents), *li-shetarot* (of documents), or 'the era according to which we use to count.'"[82]

Alongside language and dating deviations, the two types of *ketubbot* were also distinct in their structures. Karaite *ketubbot* were largely written in the form of a dialogue between the witnesses and groom (and sometimes other parties), during which the groom a) summoned witnesses to perform the transaction, b) affirmed his free will in completing the said transaction, c) named the bride, d) proclaimed that the marriage transaction has successfully occurred, and e) listed the obligations that he promised to fulfill in his marriage. In the final element, the groom focused on topics ranging from financial obligations to his bride and pledges regarding the status of polygamy in their union to religious pledges. In these religious stipulations, Karaite grooms promised to adhere to the Karaite calendar, kashruth practices, and other customs of the *madhhah*.[83]

In addition to their distinctive narrative form, Karaite *ketubbot* "were particularly explicit as to the content and scope of companionship" and mutuality in marriage, whereas in "those written by Rabbanite notaries...[t]he usual obligations are expressed in the shortest way," according to

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[77] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 87.

[78] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 91.

[79] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 89.

[80] Olszowy-Schlanger, *Karaite Marriage Documents from the Cairo Geniza*, 92.

[81] Jewish documents marked the beginning of the Seleucid Era with the first day of the Jewish month of Tishri (תשרי in Hebrew) in 312 BCE. "Glossary," *Princeton Geniza Project*.

[82] Olszowy-Schlanger, "Karaite Legal Documents," 268; MS heb. d.66/49, FGP translation.

[83] Olszowy-Schlanger, "Karaite Legal Documents," 269–270.

Goitein.[84] He describes the "mutual relationship" outlined by many Karaite *ketubbot* as containing four key elements: 1) the husband promised to attend to his wife's needs and support her while she ran the household; 2) both spouses promised to fulfill their sexual obligations to one another; 3) the husband pledged "love and affection," and the wife "love and consideration"[85]; and 4) the wife affirmed that she would listen to her husband and remain subject to his authority.[86] In direct contrast, Rabbanite *ketubbot* hardly ever expounded upon the emotional responsibilities of marriage (#3), and the concept of love was "never" used, according to Goitein. The documents usually limited themselves to discussing the most basic duties of the husband, such as providing food, clothing, and conjugal time. As for the duties of the woman, "she simply declares her willingness to become his wife."[87]

Of the nine hybrid marriage documents examined, five were produced by Rabbanites, and four were produced by Karaites.[88] Of these nine, eight follow the *madhhah* of the wife.[89] In addition, the section regarding hybrid marriages in the Karaite formulary discussed earlier (MS heb. d.66/49-50) is written for the case of a marriage between a Karaite woman and a Rabbanite man.[90] This suggests that a Karaite notary would deal largely with the case of a Karaite woman marrying a Rabbanite man rather than the other way around. A 1052 CE ketubah between Rabbanite bride Sarah and Karaite groom Yosef (TS Misc. 3513) outright states that the document is a "Rabbanite ketubba," affirming this bridal pattern.[91] This pattern of following the bride's practices suggests an established legal custom in the case of hybrid marriages, meaning that there were enough of these unions that both communities agreed on this legal compromise.

While other *ketubbot* did not directly state which *madhhah* drafted the document as Sarah and Yosef's did, their characteristics make clear their origin. For example, Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah* is mostly in Hebrew, typical of Karaite *ketubbot*, and it orders the calendar in terms of the "era of the Greeks" ("מספר יונים") in typical Karaite fashion. In addition, it is formulated as a dialogue between the male parties involved in the formulaic Karaite style. Yehya a) summoned his witnesses to perform the *qinyan* ("Be my witnesses and perform...the *qinyan*"), b) affirmed that he performed this legally binding arrangement of free will ("I am not coerced...and under no

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[84] S. D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society: The Jewish Communities of the Arab World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza Family, Vol. 3: The Family* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), 50–51.

[85] Goitein says that what he translates as "consideration" is often translated as compassion or pity, which he takes to mean that the wife is promising to exercise patience with her husband throughout the course of their marriage. See Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 3*, 51.

[86] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 3*, 51.

[87] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society, Vol. 3*, 51–52.

[88] See below for a chart I made (exhibit A), designating the form of each marriage document discussed, as well as the *madhhah* of each spouse.

[89] TS 24.1 is in the Rabbanite form, as evidenced by its lack of the characteristic Karaite elements and its primary use of Aramaic as the language of choice. Given that the bride was a Karaite, this breaks the otherwise intact pattern of hybrid *ketubbot* being drafted in the court of the bride's *madhhah* (TS 24.1 translation by Ben Outhwaite, CUDL).

[90] MS heb.66/50, FGP translation and transcription.

[91] T-S Misc. 35.13, Princeton Genizah Project.

compulsion"), c) named his bride, and d) stated that the legal arrangement successfully occurred ("[and I married], performed the *qinyan* and betrothed her by *mohar*, writ, sexual intercourse, witnesses and the *qiddushim*, according to the law of Moses").[92] The document also includes e) a list of obligations that Yehya owed to his wife ("[I shall dress, clothe and] support her…"). Further adhering to the Karaite *ketubbah* formula and providing more evidence that this document was completed according to Karaite style in the Karaite courts is the mention of the Nasi at the start of the document: "Hizkiyahu, the Great Nasi, the head of all the exile of Israel" (in Hebrew: "יחזקיהו הנשיא הגדול ראש הגולה").[93]

In addition to including obligation lists, many hybrid *Ketubbot* discussed the "content and scope of companionship" in their respective marriages in the Karaite tradition by including pledges between the two spouses regarding love, honesty, and other emotional commitments.[94] The Rabbanite Yehya promised to "be with her [Rayyisa] in truth, justice, love, pity, [honesty and faithfulness…]" and affirmed that all wives among "the children of Israel" are "owe[d]…faithfulness [and honesty…]." Though his words were part of a Karaite hybrid *ketubbah*, it is notable that a Rabbanite man would focus on the emotional elements of a marriage, even though his own *madhhab did* not do so in marriage agreements. In addition to establishing that a Rabbanite took on this Karaite characteristic, the *ketubbah* reveals a reciprocity in this focus on companionship. Rayyisa "accepted the words of our dear Yehya and wished to return to him and to be his wife and companion in purity and holiness, to obey, esteem [respect and help him…]" and promised to "behave towards him in love, compassion, honesty and faithfulness."[95]

In addition to the pattern of following the custom of the brides and the inclusion of emotionally coded language, the hybrid *ketubbot* share another common element: they all incorporate lists of obligations in the Karaite tradition, regardless of whether they were composed by Karaites. Unlike the traditional Karaite list of the groom's obligations, the lists of stipulations in the hybrid *ketubbot* were modified to outline a union of mutual commitment; both the bride and groom agreed to respect their partner's practices and not force them to adhere to their own customs. This phenomenon will be discussed further in the section below.

STIPULATIONS: A REFLECTION OF RESPECT FOR RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

[92] Qiddushin (קידושין in Hebrew) is the betrothal ceremony required by Jewish law, during which the groom gives the bride an object of monetary value. This object transfer signifies that the woman is holy (קדוש) and therefore set apart from others and designated for her husband alone. The Rabbanites expounded upon this process, requiring the groom to say the following to the bride in front of witnesses when transferring ownership of the object in order to complete *qiddushin*: "Behold, thou art consecrated unto me, with this ring, according to the law of Moses [inherited tradition) and of Israel [sanction of community]." See Blu Greenberg, "Marriage in the Jewish Tradition," *Journal of Ecumenical Studies* 22, no. 1 (1985): 3–20.

[93] I translated this section of MS heb. a.3/42 using my own Hebrew language knowledge and consultation of the formulas used in other Karaite *ketubbot*, namely T-S 16.67.

[94] As discussed earlier, Goitein noted that Karaite ketubbot focused on the "content and scope of companionship" in ways Rabbanite *ketubbot* did not. See Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society Vol. 3*, 50–51.

[95] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP translation and transcription.

As mentioned briefly above, regardless of whether they were composed by Rabbanites or Karaites, hybrid *ketubbot* adopted an altered version of the stipulation section found in Karaite *ketubbot*. In this section, both parties promised to abide by a certain degree of religious tolerance for one another—as will be clear when we set these promises into their context, the formidable disagreements in practice between the two groups. Karaite Sabbath observance differed significantly from that of the Rabbanites. The former refused to benefit from heating or light on the Sabbath, meaning that they did not consume warm food or light their homes. In addition, Karaites refused to engage in sex on the Sabbath, an act which many rabbinic sources actually encouraged on the holy day.[96] Further, where the Rabbanites operated according to an astronomical calendar, Karaites ordered their calendar by observation. When they saw a new moon, they would declare the start of a new month and begin counting the days. Accordingly, Karaites and Rabbanites often observed holidays on different days. In constructing a picture of discord between the two *madhahib*, Goitein evokes two emblematic instances where the two calendars could cause conflict: "Imagine an observant Karaite keeping his store open on the Rabbanite Day of Atonement, when any activity other than prayer was unthinkable; or a Rabbanite baker offering regular bread for sale on a Karaite Passover, the feast of unleavened matzos."[97] In addition, Karaites did not celebrate holidays not mentioned in the Bible, such as Hanukkah and Purim.[98]

Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah* includes a typical—and therefore extremely revealing—example of these stipulations. In the document, Yehya promised not to make his wife violate her Karaite beliefs, and he was even willing to stake money on the sanctity of this pledge. According to the document, if he broke his promise, "he shall have to pay one hundred dinars to the poor of the Karaites and the poor of the Rabbani[ties] *in equal shares*" (emphasis added).[99] The fact that the punishment of a Rabbanite by order of a Karaite legal document included charity to *both* Karaites and Rabbanites is notable. It was written against the backdrop of a community chest for the Jewish poor in Fustat, an organization in which Karaites turned to Rabbanites for charity and vice versa.[100] This reciprocity in the Jewish charity operation in Fustat only adds to a picture of mutuality and cooperation between the two groups. Even more remarkable is the existence of the same stipulation in other hybrid marriage documents. The betrothal agreement of Karaite groom Abu Said Dawud Ben Abu Nasr Ben Shaya mentioned earlier (TS 13J6.33) stipulates that "[t]here will be no way for him [the groom] to take a second wife or keep a slave-girl as a concubine."[101] The document declares that "[i]f he disregards this, he will be obligated to pay 100 dinars dedicated to

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[96] This held true even if the food was kept warm using a method that did not require fire. See Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society Vol. 5* and Talmud *Ketubot* 62b.

[97] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society Vol. 5,* 366.

[98] Aton Holzer, "Tu Bi- or Not Tu BiShevat? A Festal Rabbanite Response to the Karaite Question," *Revue Des Études Juives* 182, no. 1–2 (January–June 2023): 29.

[99] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP translation.

[100] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community,* 256

[101] TS 13J6.33 translation; Mordechai A. Friedman, "Cases of Polygamy," *Genizah Fragments: The Newsletter of Cambridge University's Taylor-Schechter Genizah Research Unit at Cambridge University Library*, no. 12 (1986).

the Rabbanite and Karaite poor."[102] Yet another *ketubbah* holds the same charity stipulation; the *ketubbah* of Rabbanite groom al-Rayyis Abu Ali Yefet ha-Kohen and Karaite Sitt Yaman (better known as Najiya) (ENA 2728.2a) stipulated that 30 dinars would be paid to the poor—to be split "between the two parties," presumably the Rabbanites and Karaites—if either spouse violated the terms of their contract and disrespected one anothers' practices.[103] Even though these two *ketubbot* were written by Rabbanites, unlike the prior *ketubbah* discussed, the punishment for violating the terms of this contract is the same: charity to both communities.

Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah* also highlights a level of religious tolerance between the two *madhahib*. In it, Karaite beliefs are protected alongside Rabbanite ones. The Karaite customs safeguarded by the document surround the following topics: kindling fire on the Sabbath, Kashruth laws, and Rosh Chodesh dating (declaring of the new month):

> [D]ear Yehya stipulated according to his will and resolved...that he shall not profane against his aforementioned wife [the festivals of the Lord] according to the sighting of the Moon, and that he shall not light the Sabbath candles against her, and not force her in her food and drink.[104]

In addition to Yehya's pledge, Rayyisa promised not to "profane against" her husband and make him violate his festivals and kashrut laws. Yet another *ketubbah*, TS 12.621, contains a similar stipulation. The legible phrases of this Karaite *ketubbah* between Karaite bride Sara bat Sahlawayh b. Ḥayyim and Rabbanite groom Ḥesed—who Goitein[105] believed to be Abu Nasr al-Tustari—match a portion of the Karaite formulary discussed earlier.[106] The formulary says of the groom: "He will not force her to profane the festivals of the Lord of the Hosts, according to the sighting of the Moon *and the finding of the* aviv *in the Land of Israel*, because she is from the Karaites and *belongs to their customs*" (emphasis added).[107] Meanwhile, a fragment of Sara and Hesed's ketubbah reads: "*[and the finding] of the aviv in the Land of Israel*, and *according to their custom*" (emphasis added).[108] These parallels suggest that when the document was whole, it prohibited Hesed from making his wife celebrate the holidays according to the Rabbanite calendar. In a similar exhibition of religious tolerance, the few fragments of Abu Ali Yefet and Najiya's

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[102] TS 13J6.33 translation; Friedman, "Cases of Polygamy,"

[103] ENA 2728.2a, translated by Goitein, quoted in Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 251.

[104] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP translation.

[105] Goitein cataloged more than 26,000 genizah fragments on index cards, including TS 12.621, and the Princeton Genizah Lab has digitized the cards and included them on the web pages discussing their respective fragments. See "Goitein's Index Cards," Geniza Lab, Princeton University, https://genizalab.princeton.edu/resources/goiteins-index-cards.

[106] FGP translation; Goitein's TS 12.621 index card, "Goitein's Index Cards," *Princeton Genizah Lab*.

[107] MS heb. d.66/49-50, FGP translation. Italics added to highlight the similarities between the *ketubbah* and formulary.

[108] TS 12.621, FGP translation. Italics added to highlight the similarities between the *ketubbah* and formulary.

ketubbah reveal that both parties agreed to respect the practices of the other, specifically in regards to the celebration of "festiva[ls...]," "food," and calendar ("intercalation").[109]

Though ENA NS 18.37, a *ketubbah* from the 1030s, is fragmentary, it still offers valuable insights into the religious tolerance present in hybrid marriages.[110] The Rabbanite groom (whose name is unable to be made out on the document) promised "[...not to force] her [his wife] to profane" her festival practices, allowing her to follow the Karaite practices of not lighting fire or engaging in sexual relations on the Sabbath. He also vowed to abstain from lighting fire or initiating sexual relations on the Sabbath, though perhaps there were more vows in the areas of the document that have withered away with time and are no longer legible. More than simply pledging to abide by one or two Rabbanite laws, he "came with her to the religion of the Lord which is the rite of the Karaites," presumably accepting upon himself the Karaite tradition.[111] This clause is similar to one in Yehya and Rayyisa's *ketubbah*, in which both parties "took upon themselves...to behave according to the custom of the Karaites." Despite the spirit of cooperation present throughout the rest of the *Ketubbah*, this *ketubbah* did seem to favor Karaite festivals to some degree. While Rayyisa was legally forbidden to force Yehya to violate Rabbanite festivals, he pledged to celebrate the festivals according to the calendar of the Karaites.[112] This stipulation may reveal the standard pragmatic solution to the problem of trying to fulfill different—and sometimes directly contradictory—practices under one roof. Without this stipulation, would one spouse celebrate Yom Kippur and fast for 25 hours, and the other go about their normal day if their *madhhah's* calendar did not declare the holiday to be until the next week? According to Fred Astren, a specialist on the Karaites, it is possible that some households celebrated holidays "on both their Karaite and Rabbanite dates" as a compromise.[113] However, finding common ground on some of the other religious differences may have been more challenging. If one spouse ate warm food on the Sabbath and the other did not, would they each eat separately? What about lighting and warming the home on the Sabbath? Would some rooms be lit and heated and others kept in the darkness and cold?

Though the Karaite partiality visible in the two *ketubbot* discussed above could signal a level of discord between the two groups, the spirit of cooperation and respect evident in the rest of the stipulations within this document and the others I discuss seem to undermine this interpretation or at least construct a picture of Fustat whereby that discord was fairly limited.[114] TS 8.223, whose

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[109] ENA 2728.2a, PGP document description and transcription, translated by Goitin, quoted in Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 251.

[110] ENA NS 18.37 is yet another case of a Karaite *ketubbah* for a hybrid marriage with a Karaite bride, adhering to the pattern discussed earlier of the ketubbah favoring the bride's *madhhah*.

[111] ENA NS 18.37, FGP translation.

[112] MS heb. a.3/42, FGP transcription and translation.

[113] Astren, "Some Notes on Intermarriage among Rabbanites and Karaites in the Middle Ages," 47.

[114] Putting aside the question of tension, this slight partiality—even in just a few documents—points to a level of authority held by the Karaites, challenging the prevailing narrative of the obsolescence and relative powerlessness of the Karaite community compared to their Rabbanite brethren.

verso holds the end of *ketubbah* drafted for the marriage of a Karaite groom and Rabbanite bride in Fustat sometime between 1128 and 1135 CE, is emblematic of this religious tolerance.[115] Through this document, which is even more fragmentary than ENA NS 18.37 such that only a few lines can be made out, the Rabbanite bride pledges to allow her Karaite husband to keep Rabbanite festivals and not to force him to eat meat not slaughtered according to Rabbanite rules.[116]

In addition to the religious tolerance revealed in TS 8.223 and ENA NS 18.37, the existence of slight partiality in the other direction—in favor of Rabbanites—in other documents nuances the picture. David and Nasiyya's *ketubbah* is a case in point of the existence of documentation prioritizing Rabbanite rituals. In it, David "agreed not to force this Nasiyya, his wife, to sit with him in the light of the Sabbath, nor to eat the fat (of the sheep's) tail, nor to profane her own festivals," revealing that theirs was a relationship in which the Rabbanite party respected Karaite practices.[117] That being said, Nasiyya gained this respect for her tradition only "on condition that she observe with him [David] the festivals" of the Rabbanites.[118] This reveals that while they had something of a balanced relationship, it inclined slightly in favor of the Rabbanite *madhhab*. Despite her Karaite heritage, Nasiyya had to join her husband in the celebration of his holidays. The fact that not all of the *ketubbot* favored either the Karaites or the Rabbanites is telling. While some marriage contracts may have slightly favored a particular *madhhab* over the other, others did the opposite.

While this phenomenon of *ketubbot* specifying that one spouse personally took on some of the practices of the other's *madhhab* existed in both the Karaite and Rabbanite hybrid ketubbot examined, its presence in Karaite *ketubbot* is especially striking. The *ketubbot* which established that a Rabbanite husband followed the practices of his Karaite wife (ENA NS 18.37 and MS heb. a.3/42) reveal these Rabbanites' willingness to not only allow but actively take on their wives' practices. The formulary of hybrid marriages discussed earlier (MS heb. d.66/50) further supports this argument. It says that a Rabbanite husband would take on the Karaite practice not to benefit from fire on the Sabbath, stating: "He will not light a candle on Sabbath nights, and there will not be fire in his house on Sabbath days."[119] If he breached the terms of the ketubbah, including his promise to adopt certain Karaite practices, his wife would have the grounds to request and receive a divorce from him.[120] The compromise that many Rabbanite husbands chose to pursue helps to explain how—at least some of—the practical difficulties that Goitein believed caused tension between the *madhahib* were resolved.[121] Admittedly, some areas of Jewish practice probably

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[115] Rustow, *Heresy and the Politics of Community*, 250.

[116] ENA NS 18.37, CUDL.

[117] Rabbanites eat the fat from a sheep's tail, while Karaites do not. See Nachmanides' commentary on Leviticus 3:9.

[118] TS 24.1, translated by Ben Outhwaite, CUDL.

[119] MS heb. d.66/50, my translation of Jacob Mann's transcription. See Jacob Mann, *Texts and Studies in Jewish History and Literature*, vol. 2 (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1972), 173.

[120] MS heb. d.66/50, FGP transcription and translation.

[121] See a quote of Goitein's views accompanied by footnote 97.

presented more difficulty than others. For instance, a Rabbanite sitting in the dark with his Karaite wife on the Sabbath was likely easier than deciding to accept the Karaite date for Yom Kippur and reject the Rabbanite calendar.

CONCLUSION

The marriage documents examined throughout this paper remained hidden in the Ben Ezra synagogue for centuries, its custodians reluctant to disclose the cache's existence to outsiders, perhaps out of shame over the deposit's disorderly condition. When these manuscripts finally came to light, they opened up a window into the world of medieval Egyptian Jewry. As Rustow seems to suggest, religious terms and concepts drawn from the Christian tradition, like church and sect have been universalized and applied to Jewish groups. This may stem from a historical tendency to assume that theology (theory) ruled lives in religious environments rather than to look at how people lived in practice. As such, historians have long viewed medieval Judaism as a tradition in which the rabbis ruled and average Jews obediently followed their interpretation of biblical commandments and their extrapolations from the Talmud regarding how to deal with so-called heretics like the Karaites.

Examining Karaite self-understandings of their own tradition may have helped to prevent this incomplete historical analysis. Fred Astren, a historian devoted to studying the Karaites, argues that Karaism cannot merely be looked at as the manifestation of a "list of halakhic and doctrinal deviations" from mainstream Rabbinic Judaism. To do so would be to construct "a static representation of the multi-faceted relationship" between Karaites and Rabbanites throughout the centuries.[122] Because there was not much in their own texts to help craft a sense of self-identity and a firm historical consciousness, Karaites "often turned to rabbinic literature to reconstruct the past" and define their own notions of tradition and legal authority.[123] This meant that, while they defined themselves as scripturalists, Karaites did sometimes turn to the oral tradition of the rabbis as a model for how to approach their own legal questions. For instance, though they differed in many ways, Karaite *ketubbot* drew their basic structures from Rabbanite *ketubbot*. The Hebrew Bible did not include a structure for creating these types of documents, so the Karaites found it helpful to look to an already existing model as a starting point for creating their own. This willingness to turn to Rabbanite documents may partly help to explain the readiness of many Karaites to foster intimate and tolerant relations with Rabbanites.

In an attempt to follow in Astren's footsteps, this paper focuses on the social realities of a Jewish tradition so often perceived to be defined by its laws and rules. It reveals a practice astonishingly different from law and theory, in which pragmatic consideration, rather than legal prescriptions, reigned supreme. Because of its restrictive incest laws and the small size of its

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[122] Fred Astren, "History, Historicization, and Historical Claims in Karaite Jewish Literature" (PhD diss., University of California, Berkeley, 1993), 194, Proquest (9430374).

[123] Fred Astren, "Karaite Historiography and Historical Consciousness," in *Karaite Judaism: A Guide to Its History and Literary Sources, Vol. 73*, ed. Meira Polliack (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 26, 28.

community, many Karaites were disposed to pursue marriages to Rabbanites. Moreover, both Karaites and Rabbanites sought alliances to secure their respective social position and economic statuses, regardless of *madhhah*. The hybrid marriage documents reveal that a lot of strategy went into creating marital unions beyond questions of religious affiliation. The pragmatic considerations behind these unions left both *madhahib* open to fostering hybrid marriages built on mutual sacrifice and tolerance.

Just as these documents focus on practice as well as theory, they also give a voice to characters whose perspectives are not always reflected in medieval Jewish sources. Just as the polemical treatises of both *madhahib* give later generations a glimpse into the medieval Jewish way of life, so does the legal history recorded in these marriage documents. What makes these documents unique is that they give a voice to a population that is silent in polemical literature. No matter how tolerant the responsa of both groups were, they did not reflect the thinking of Jewish women. In contrast, the entire familial structure was involved in arranged Jewish marriages. The bride was not the only woman speaking in a particular *ketubbah*. We also hear echoes of what her mother, aunts, grandmothers, and other female figures in her life expected. This is a wholly different perspective than that of a particular rabbi in Babylon—a perspective that helps to construct a richer and more diverse historical picture of medieval Judaism.

Exhibit A

Shelfmark	**Document Type**	**Bride *Madhhab***	**Groom *Madhhab***
MS heb. a.3/42	Karaite	Karaite	Rabbanite
ENA NS 18.37	Karaite	Karaite	Rabbanite
TS 8.223	Rabbanite	Rabbanite	Karaite
TS 12.621	Karaite	Karaite	Rabbanite
TS Misc. 35.13	Rabbanite	Rabbanite	Karaite
TS 24.1	*Rabbanite	*Karaite	Rabbanite
TS 13J6.33	Rabbanite	Rabbanite	Karaite
MS heb. e.98/60	Rabbanite	Rabbanite	Karaite
ENA 2728.2a	Karaite	Karaite	Rabbanite

**TS 24.1 is the only document examined that breaks the pattern of the ketubbah format and court of origin not following the madhhab of the bride.*

I. Primary Sources: Genizah Documents

Bodleian Libraries, Oxford University

MS heb. a.3/42
MS heb. e.98/60
MS heb. d.66/49
MS heb. d.66/50

Jewish Theological Seminary

ENA NS 18.37
ENA 2728.2a

Taylor-Schechter Cairo Genizah Collection, Cambridge University

TS 8.223
TS Misc.35.13
TS 24.1
TS 13J6.33
TS 12.621

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Waldere's Challenge and The Day of Battle: A Translation of the Waldere Fragments

Creagh Factor
Stanford University '27

Waldere's Challenge (Waldere B)

"...a better blade
except for that alone, I also have,
in a stone-case, silently concealed.
I know that Theodric thought of it for Widia,
to send it himself and also much treasure,
spoils with the sword, many another with it
garnished with gold. As recompense, he received it,
because from captivity Nithhad's kinsman,
Weland's child, Widia, released him.
Through the monsters' realm he hurried forth,"
Waldere declared, the strength-stout warrior.

He had it in hand, the battle-support,
the war sword, in his grasp, voiced these words:
"So! You indeed deemed, friend of the Burgundians,
that Hagena's hand in attack advanced on me,
and divided the foot-combat. Fetch, if you should dare,
thus from the war-weary a hoary corslet.

Here stands on my shoulders Aelfhere's legacy,
good and curve-faced, gloriously gilded,
entirely unblemished, a prince's garment
to possess, whenever his hand safeguards
his spirit-hoard from its foes. Nor is it adverse to me
when Nifela's kinsmen again attempt,
confront me with blades, as you did to me.

However, he may grant victory, he who always is
prompt and firm in purpose, in each right.
Whoever himself in that holy one trusts for help,
consolation from God, he there readily finds it,
if these rewards he first contemplates.

Then might the proud ones dispense prosperity,
command possessions, that is..."

The Day of Battle (Waldere A)

One fortified him, earnestly:
"Surely, Weland's work does not betray
of men any of those who can
hard Mimming hold; often by fighting fell,
wetly stained and sword-wounded, one warrior after another.
Aetla's point-fighter, let not your valor now
fail today, nor your dignity fall.

... Now is that day, come,
such that you shall have entirely one of the two:
to lose your life, or long-lasting acclaim
to obtain amongst men, Aelfhere's son.

Never could I, you, my friend, with words chide
that I may have seen you at sword-play

disgracefully from any man's
battle escape or to the wall flee
to preserve your body, even as many hostiles
hewed at your corslet with blades.

But you always further fighting sought,
a bit beyond the boundary. I for you dreaded the Creator,
that you too savagely combat sought
at the position of another man's battle-plan.

Dignify yourself with good deeds, while God cares for you.
Mourn not yourself by the blade! To you was the best of treasures
given as an aid, with which you shall
bring down Guthere's boast, because he this slaughter began,
unrighteously, earlier to seek.

Forsook he that sword and the precious vessels,
a multitude of rings; now must he, bereft of both,
turn from this battle, the lord to seek
the old homeland, or here, earlier, to sleep in death
if he that…"

Translator's Note

Waldere is composed of two fragments, which likely formed part of a larger Old English poem about the story of Walter of Aquitaine. E.C. Werlauff discovered them in the Royal Library of Copenhagen, on the back of two partially damaged pages of unknown origin. Jonathan Himes describes how the poem contains "quite an array of textual oddities and unexplained idiosyncrasies," perhaps due to "the dilapidated state of the manuscript which has holes, scuffs, and ambiguously corrected letters."[1] The manuscript contains some unconventional spellings for some Old English words, leaving multiple possibilities for their meaning. For example George Stephens, who found the manuscript, read a word describing Mimming as "hearne" and thus translated it as "pale-shiny" or

[1] Jonathan Himes, *The Old English Epic of Waldere* (Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), 11.

alternately "hoary"[2] while Peter Baker suggests it is instead "heardne" meaning "hard."[3] When there was no consensus, I generally followed Peter Baker's version of the text and took inspiration from Benjamin Slade's translation.[4]

The characters and plot of *Waldere* reoccur across a large set of stories from the Germanic-heroic tradition, surrounding Walter of Aquitaine, making it easier to piece together the likely narrative in these fragments. Indeed, the little of *Waldere* that survives hints at the extent of Old English heroic poetry which has since been lost. George Stephens suggests that Waldere may have been part of a lay "on an extensive scale, some 6 or 8,000 lines" and "points back to the existence of Old-English Edda Songs" of which Beowulf was only "one of many."[5] Similar characters appear in other Old English texts, showing they were part of an oral tradition that would have been known to the listeners and readers of these stories. John Newell Sanborn describes how *Beowulf* also contains a character called Aelfhere, who is similarly "connected with family and with swords" and Wiglaf's bringing of a sword to Beowulf may have "triggered the response to the Weland-made Mimming" for its audience.[6] Though only these fragments of the original Old English poem survive, they likely would have been part of a well-known, much longer epic poem.

While characters such as Walter, Hagen, Hildegund, Weland and Attila are featured in other sources, including *Þiðreks saga*, the *Niebelungenlied, Chronicon Novaliciense*, and *Walterus Robustus*, it is the Latin epic poem *Waltharius* that contains the most detailed and complete narrative about the events referenced in *Waldere*.[7] In *Waltharius*, Walter of Aquitaine and Hagen of the Franks are given as hostages to Attila, and fight on his behalf.[8] Walter and Hildegund, the Burgundian princess whom Attila took captive, conspire to flee together. Gunther, a Frankish prince, finds out about their escape and leads his army to unsuccessfully battle Walter; in these fights, Hagen's nephew is killed. Walter and Hagen then fight, both suffering injuries, until they decide to make peace. The fragment *Waldere A* then may be a speech from Hildegund to Walter, encouraging him in his battle against Gunther's army, while *Waldere B* is likely a dialogue between Gunther and Walter before they fight, but after his battle with Hagen.

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[2] George Stephens, *Two Leaves of King Waldere's Lay: From the Originals in the Great National Library Cheapinghaven*, Denmark (Cheapinghaven and London, 1860), 44.

[3] Peter Baker, "Waldere," line 4, Old English Aerobics, https://www.oldenglishaerobics.net/waldere.php

[4] See Benjamin Slade, "Waldere [two fragments]," Beowulf on Steorarume, revised August 25, 2002, https://heorot.dk/waldere.html.

[5] Stephens, King Waldere's Lay, x–xi.

[6] John Newell Sanborn, "A Possible Anglo-Saxon Poetic Framework: An Alternative to an Emendation," Modern Philology 70, no. 1 (1972): 48. http://www.jstor.org/stable/436503.

[7] Marion Dexter Learned, "Versions of the Walther Saga," *PMLA* 7, no. 1 (1892): 1. https://doi.org/10.2307/456224.

[8] Himes, *The Old English Epic of Waldere*, 7–8.

However, *Waldere* also differs from *Waltharius* in many key respects, revealing the dangers of using *Waltharius* and other sources to speculate about the story of *Waldere*. J.D. Pheifer argues that there has been an over-reliance on using the story of *Waltharius* to understand *Waldere,* making scholars "unwilling to accept the meaning of the text as it stands."[9] A key point of emphasis in *Waldere* absent in *Waltharius* is Waldere's possession of the sword Mimming, made by the famed smith Weland, who appears in *Deor*, King Alfred's *Boethius*, Frank's Casket, and the Old Norse *Völundarkviða*.[10] Similarly, Waldere seems to fight Guthere and Hagena separately rather than together. George Stephens suggests that "Walter bears the character of a man no longer young" and that the fight between Guthere and Waldere may take place later on in the narrative, after his marriage to Hildegund.[11] To avoid proscribing these interpretations, I avoided assumptions about the names and genders of speakers in the poem, using the pronoun "one" for the speaker at the beginning of *Waldere A*, often taken to be Hildegund.[12]

Thus, while *Waltharius* and other sources suggest likely plot elements of *Waldere*, the poem's fragmentary form invites interpretive flexibility, which I tried to preserve in my translation. In translating Waldere, I tried generally to take a proximate, quite literal approach to the text. I kept the word order roughly similar to the original text, refraining from changing the structure of the lines as much as possible. Similarly, in naming the characters, rather than modernizing them or using the names from *Waltharius*, I chose to keep them as transliterated versions of the Old English names. If etymological descendents of the Old English words were available, such as "unrighteous" for "unryhte,"[13] "good" for "god,"[14] or "fighting" for "feohtan,"[15] I gladly used them, but otherwise resorted to finding those with as similar a meaning as possible. For example, the word "hyrde"[16] can imply physical hardening as well as encouragement, so I chose the word "fortified" to preserve this double meaning.

While I originally tried to structure the lines according to the manuscript, this format ended up feeling somewhat fragmented and confusing. I thus decided to structure the poem instead according to the verse line structure, adding extra spacing between some sections to break up the text. To denote sections that were fragmentary or unknown, I added ellipses.

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[9] J.D. Pheifer, "Waldere I. 29-31", *The Review of English Studies* 11, no. 42 (1960): 183. http://www.jstor.org/stable/511505.

[10] H. R. Ellis Davidson, "Weland the Smith," *Folklore* 69, no. 3 (1958): 145–59. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1258855.

[11] Stephens, King Waldere's Lay, 20-21.

[12] "Waldere," line 1, Old English Aerobics.

[13] "Waldere", line 27, Old English Aerobics.

[14] "Waldere", lines 24 and 51, Old English Aerobics.

[15] "Waldere", lines 18 and 20, Old English Aerobics.

[16] "Waldere", line 1, Old English Aerobics. See Bosworth Toller Dictionary, "hyrdan."

Creating new compound words allowed me to maintain ambiguity in how I translated words that had multiple likely meanings. While "swatfag" likely implies being stained with blood, "swat" can also mean "sweat" or "other moisture that comes from the body."[17] By translating "swatfag" as "wetly stained," I tried to keep the implication of being stained with blood while still leaving a sense of ambiguity in this phrasing as to the type of moisture. "Ordwyga" is another compound word that presented some difficulty.[18] While "wiga" means "warrior" or "soldier", "ord" is a relatively open word that could mean "point" or "spear," or "chief" or "front."[19] "Ordwyga" might thus mean a warrior who fights with points or spears, or one who fights at the front or in an important role, so I chose to use the compound word "point-fighter" to suggest someone who might fight with pointed blades or in an important role. Similarly, Murray Dahm suggests that "máel ofer mearce" might mean beyond "a reasonable or sensible distance from his own shield-wall" rather than a distance beyond the boundary of a region or border.[20] By translating "mearce" as "boundary," I tried to preserve this possibility in addition to the more common meaning of a territorial limit. Constructing these compound words, I thus tried to keep open multiple interpretive possibilities.

As the first translator of the manuscript, George Stephens, described, "not only is it difficult to give a title to a short ancient fragment, it is often no less hazardous to translate it."[21] The question of what to title this translation was somewhat difficult, but I ended up trying to give both fragments straightforward titles that described the broad arc of their narrative. *Waldere B* contains boasts and challenges from Waldere to an unknown speaker, so I titled it *Waldere's Challenge* while *Waldere A* was a passionate speech, presumably by Hildegund, urging him to fight bravely that day, so I titled it *The Day of Battle.* These titles were not very creative, but I hope they serve to anchor the reader in the narrative of each fragment, while not presuming the identity of unknown characters or the order of plot elements. While most versions place the *Waldere A* fragment ahead of *Waldere B*, the order of these fragments is not necessarily clear. While I think the A–B order is understandable and likely correct, I placed *Waldere B* first since I felt it created an interesting dialogue between the two fragments, with the first fragment (B) showing Waldere's challenge to an unknown speaker, and the second (A) describing a speech urging him on in battle and referencing Guthere's boast that had driven him to battle. To translate a text as fragmentary and fascinating as *Waldere*, I thus tried as much as possible to hew closely to the literal meaning of words while also leaving space for the reader to creatively interpret and respond to the poem.

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[17] Bosworth Toller Dictionary, "swat."

[18] "Waldere," line 6, Old English Aerobics.

[19] Bosworth Toller Dictionary, "wiga" and "ord."

[20] "The Shield-Wall of Waldere: New Evidence for Anglo-Saxon Tactics," *Medieval Warfare* 5, no. 1 (2015): 52. https://www.jstor.org/stable/48578418.

[21] Stephens, King Waldere's Lay, 21.

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Enhancements and Embellishments: Poetic Compounds in the Old English *Whale*

Tenaya Fottrell
Smith College '25

As a major feature of Old English linguistic and literary convention, poetic compounds play a significant role in the Old English *Physiologus*. The vernacular text is derived from the Latin *Physiologus B* as the next in a long chain of historic translation and transformations to the work's catalogue of animals, their behaviors, and their allegorical significance. With its linguistic roots in Greek, likely in the city of Alexandria in the third or fourth century, the *Physiologus* is a text that very much embodies its multicultural past, bringing Indian, Hebrew, Egyptian, Greek, and Roman legends of the natural world into the early Christian world. Somewhere between the fourth and sixth centuries, the Greek exemplar was adapted into Latin among other languages, and in this form entered into Europe where its allegories and fantastic descriptions made it a popular candidate for educational and homiletic contexts.[1] With the widespread popularity of the Latin *Physiologus*, translation projects began adapting the text into vernaculars, including Old English, in the late tenth century. These translations not only transposed the *Physiologus* into further languages but also adapted them to popular exegetical frameworks to allow for as many layers of meaning and interpretation as possible. As the earliest of these European vernacular re-renderings, the Old English *Physiologus* "both expands and contracts its source" in order to make use of native diction and thus further assert its message. [2] One of the areas in which this expansion is most obvious and effective is the *Whale*, in which the anonymous Old English poet draws out his allegorical description significantly to present an evocative image of the deceitful

[1] Michael J. Curley, *Physiologus* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009), xxviii.

[2] Megan Cavell, *The Medieval Bestiary in English: Texts and Translations of the Old and Middle English Physiologus* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2022), 36.

nature both of the animal and of Satan. The use of poetic compounds throughout the *Whale* serves to embellish the *Physiologus* poem and strengthen the piece's connection to the Old English vernacular literary tradition and its own allegorical message.

The precise definition of the term *kenning* in reference to Old English poetics has long been the subject of scholarly debate, with claims of overapplication and overly-exacting criteria both flying about academic circles since the earliest days of the study of skaldic literature and its influences.[3] The term itself is Old Norse, expressed via example only in the prose *Edda* of Snorri Sturluson, and while the poet offers many paradigms in his native tongue, these prove of little use in expanding the classification to encompass Old English poetic compounds of the same form and function given the lack of an explicit definition. Despite oppositional interpretations, major scholars from Rudolf Meissner to Andreas Heusler agree that the *kenning* is in essence "a two-part figure consisting in a metaphorical base and an associative determinant," in the words of Thomas Gardner.[4] Ultimately, however, I find that the constraints set on any one definition of *kenning* create too narrow a field of compounds of interest for examination, as inevitably cleaving to those terms which specifically possess genitive modifiers or headwords with no synecdochic connection to their referents, a restriction that would preclude the study of many terms which merit investigation. I here use the term "poetic compound" to refer to those Old English words composed of two parts with specific qualifiers individually and as a unit and frame their referents in periphrastic terms. The primary component of such a word is its head, a term which may stand on its own as a simplex and is not identical to the referent of the compound, although the two may share some qualities. The head of a poetic compound generally takes second position in the complete term and determines the lexical category of the new compound and thus its inflectional pattern. The secondary component of a poetic compound is the modifier, which usually precedes the head and can also function as a separate word in simplex form. The modifier provides an associative or contextualizing link between the headword and the compound's referent. For example, a poetic compound with the sun as its referent might be the word *heofoncandel* [heaven-candle] where *candel* [candle] acts as the head—the sun is not literally a candle but shares some of its illuminating—and *heofon* [heaven] is its modifier; the sun may be understood as the candle of heaven, shining brightly and on a grand scale from its place in the sky. It is important to note that this paper does not discuss every poetic compound word present in the Old English *Whale*, but rather that every poetic compound discussed meets the qualifications I have laid out, albeit some more distinctly than others.

[3] Thomas Gardner, "The Application of the Term 'Kenning,'" *Neophilologus* 56, no. 4 (October 1, 1972): 464–68.

[4] Thomas Gardner, "The Old English Kenning: A Characteristic Feature of Germanic Poetical Diction?" *Modern Philology* 67, no. 2 (1969): 109–17, https://doi.org/10.1086/390147.

The compounds *sæmeara* [sea-horse][5] and *yðmeara* [wave-horse] serve as prime examples of effective translatorial application of poetic compounds, gesturing towards the broader literary and linguistic tradition from which they descend while also underscoring the poem's seafaring focus by drawing attention to the vehicle through which humans interact with the whale itself. Both of these compounds refer to the unfortunate ships which encounter the whale as it pretends to be an island, with the former appearing line 15 as the speaker describes the way in which the sailors "setlaþ sæmearas sundes æt ende" [settle the sea-steeds at the edge of the water].[6] This line is not a direct translation of any portion of the original Latin text. Not only is the term "sea-steeds" a poetic elaboration upon the previously-stated referent-base "scipu" but also the entire phrase within which it sits is an expansion upon the very concise "applicant nauem suam iuxta eam," one of four poetic restatements of what occupies just two phrases of the Latin *Physiologus*.[7] Later in the poem, *yðmeara* appears in a similarly expanded context: where the original bears only the phrase "et nauem secum trahit in profundum maris,"[8] the Old English lists "se þe bisenceð sæliþende / eorlas ond yðmearas" in lines 48–49a,[9] positioned at the end of a 20-line exegesis of the figure of the whale as the devil. The substitution of the novel "wave-steeds" for the repeated use of *navis, navis* [ship] perfectly demonstrates the function of the poetic compound as a device inheriting the *kenning* tradition—it serves to "vary the more ordinary designation of the referent" as well as to offer a riddle-like periphrasis that opens the door for the more extended chains of metaphor pivotal to the skaldic poetic tradition.[10]

Not only do the compounds *sæmeara* and *yðmeara* exemplify the literary function of their compound class, but together they provide key linguistic information about the landscape of nautical Old English literature. Separated from one another by several distinct synonyms for the word "ship," it is significant that both employ the headword *mearh* [horse] in their construction. *Mearh* and other synonyms for "steed" are quite commonly used in poetic compounds for boats throughout the Old English corpus,[11] easily marked even by modern readers. The double instance of *mearh*-based compounds in the Old English *Whale* mirrors a case study from Britt Mize on *kennings* for hail sharing the form "*q*-est of grains." Mize concludes that, for such direct mimesis to occur across texts, there must be a socially-understood phraseological formula at its core.[12] While, as with Mize's hail

[5] All translations of individual compounds are original, based on the work of Andy Orchard and the Bosworth-Toller Anglo-Saxon Dictionary. Translations of longer passages of Old English and Latin drawn from and credited to Megan Cavell and Michael Curley respectively.

[6] Cavell, *The Medieval Bestiary in English*, 62.

[7] Francis J. Carmody, *Physiologus latinus: éditions préliminaires versio B* (Paris: Librairie E. Droz, 1939), 41.

[8] Carmody, *Physiologus latinus*, 42.

[9] Cavell, *Medieval Bestiary in English*, 63.

[10] Bright, *Bright's Old English Grammar & Reader*, 269.

[11] Gardner, "Old English Kenning," 113.

[12] Britt Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities: The Old English Poetics of Mentality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 87.

compounds, *sæmeara* and *yðmeara* have several featural differences, the words' shared headword means that they "share a number of properties which in aggregate make them immediately recognizable as actualizations of a single underlying formal template,"[13] thus linking *The Whale* to an established cultural lexicon and thereby highlighting the importance of ships. In these instances, the poetic compounds highlight the way in which ships facilitate sea travel and thus encounters with the whale itself. Furthermore, using *mearh* as the base of the compounds implies that the boats are alive and can thus die, for the compounds appear at pivotal moments in both the literal and allegorical narratives: the landing of the ships—giving in to the temptation to let one's guard down—and their sinking—death and subsequent descent into hell.

In a similar way, the poetic compounds *wæterþisa* [water-rusher] and *mereweard* [ocean-guardian] both describe the whale, co-opting base words with decidedly non-evil connotations in compound contexts; *þisa* [rusher] is generally associated with ships and *weard* [guardian] with God.[14] These deceptive compounds reflect the deceitful nature of their referent, bolstering the negative associations with the whale and locating it firmly within the poem's allegory as the central devil figure. The first of these poetic compounds serves as an elaboration upon the original Latin text, just as the kennings for ships do. Lines 49b–50 of the Old English—"He hafað oþre gecynd, / wæterþisa wlonc, wrætlicran gien,"[15] [It has another trait, the proud water-traveller, more wondrous still]— take the place of the simpler "Secunda eius beluae natura haec est" [The second nature of the monster is this] from the older Latin *Physiologus*.[16] Here, *wæterþisa* acts as the first metrical foot of the first half-line, thus establishing the alliterative pattern for the rest of the line and calling attention to itself in doing so. The compound also affords far greater poeticism and even specificity than does "eius beluae" while avoiding a direct restatement, conveying more characteristic information through the figure "water-rusher" than a plain synonym. The same pattern of elaboration in direct translation is visible to an even greater degree with *mereweard*, for the whale is nothing more than an implied subject in the Latin "mergit se in aquam" [it plunges itself in the water], not specifically named anywhere in the sentence.[17] In contrast to this, the Old English poet includes several pieces of figurative language as functional glosses to the phrase "ðonne se mereweard muð ontyneð" [then the ocean-guardian opens its mouth] in line 53,[18] directing attention to the insidious "ocean-guardian" as the focal point for the

[13] Mize, *Traditional Subjectivities*, 92.

[14] Notably, there are no attested uses of the word *þis/þys* in a simplex form, but it is unlikely that its appearance in the Old English *Whale* is mere scribal error, as it is prominent in descriptions of boats, to which the speaker compares the whale. See Ann Squires, ed., *The Old English Physiologus*, Durham Medieval Texts 5 (New Elvet, United Kingdom: Durham Medieval Texts, 1988), 83.

[15] Cavell, *Medieval Bestiary in English*, 64.

[16] Carmody, *Physiologus latinus*, 44.

[17] Carmody, *Physiologus latinus*, 44.

[18] Cavell, *Medieval Bestiary in English*, 65.

second part of the allegory where previously emphasis had been upon the sailor-victims. Where traditional Latin diction embraces ellipsis to maintain a concise sentence structure, Old English aesthetics prize layers of "complex verbal designs" in large part because the use of poetic synonyms acts as one standard by which it is possible to judge the skill of a singer or speaker working ex tempore.[19] Thus, the addition of poetic compounds to a more substantive-sparse Latin text acts as a means of asserting one's artistic skill, hence the prominence of terms like *wæterþisa* and *mereweard*.

When looking more closely at this pair of compounds, however, it is once again the headwords rather than the characterizing modifiers that are of primary literary interest. Throughout the Old English corpus, the word *þisa* as a noun appears almost exclusively in compounds related to ships in the forms *brimþisa* and *wæterþisa*—its instance in line 50 of *The Whale* being one of just two total exceptions to this rule and also being atypical in that it contains a reference to the ocean but does not refer to a boat.[20] This unexpected referent aligns perfectly with the primary theme of the first section of the poem's allegory, centering deception both in the form of the word and its function within the text. Just as the sailors are doomed because they believe the whale to be an island, so too might a reader at first be confused because *wæterþisa* seems as if it ought to refer to a ship when taken out of context, but does not in one of only two total recorded uses, leading to significant ambiguity within even its most authoritative definitions.[21] The headword of *mereweard*, *weard* [guardian] is far more common in Old English, but this does not lead to greater clarity as, in the majority of its instances in all of vernacular literature, it either is associated with positive figures or refers directly to God.[22] Once again, the disparity between base connotation and referent is especially stark in light of the allegory at play in the poem, where the eponymous whale stands as an obvious Satan figure, leading unsuspecting souls to hell with false promises. This misleading through a potential conflation of God with the devil directly maps onto typical Old English portrayals of Satan, for "unclassifiability points to the danger [Satan] poses in a culture and poetics so concerned with order" as Cavell notes.[23] In this way, the fact that the poetic compounds *wæterþisa* and *mereweard* do not immediately register as referring to the evil whale when viewed in isolation—or even within limited context—serves as a prime example of the way in which the compounds serve to advance the poem's allegorical message through the most basic level of their construction.

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[19] John Miles Foley, *The Theory of Oral Composition: History and Methodology* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1988), 76, https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/3/oa_monograph/book/84689.

[20] Angus Cameron, Ashley Crandell Amos, and Antonette diPaolo Healey, eds, "Brimþisa," in *Dictionary of Old English: A to Le* (Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Dictionary of Old English Project, 2024).

[21] Joseph Bosworth, "Wæter-Þísa," in *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller, Christ Sean, and Ondřej Tichy (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University, 2014). https://bosworthtoller.com/34544.

[22] Joseph Bosworth, "Weard." in *An Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online*, ed. Thomas Northcote Toller, Christ Sean, and Ondřej Tichy (Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University, 2014). https://bosworthtoller.com/34829.

[23] Megan Cavell, *Weaving Words and Binding Bodies: The Poetics of Human Experience in Old English Literature* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016), 140.

Between ship- and whale-referent terms, Old English poetic compounds serve a variety of functions within *The Whale*. These four words, *sæmearh*, *yðmearh*, *wæterþisa*, and *mereweard*, act as significant expansions upon the *Physiologus*' Latin text, both forming integral parts of added flourishes not found in the original and acting as noteworthy embellishments in areas of more direct phrase-for-phrase translation. While all four compound modifiers fit into the same category of synonyms for water, the shifts or lack thereof in headwords actively further the two components of the Old English *Whale*'s allegory by highlighting the role of human complicity in sin and the deceitful nature of the devil. These four words make up a fraction of the Old English *Whale* and an even smaller portion of the *Physiologus* text as a whole, but it is clear that the work's poetic compounds truly enhance as well as embellish the piece both through and because of their connection to Old English linguistic traditions writ large.

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A Watercolor Recreation of the Ludwig Psalter, Folio 3R

Anna Shapovalova
St. Olaf College '25

Artist's Note

This is a watercolor recreation of fol. 3r of the Ludwig Psalter, a psalter made between 825 and 850 at the Abbey of Saint Bertin for King Louis II, grandson of Charlemagne and the first ruler of East Francia. I chose to recreate a leaf of this manuscript to explore and commemorate two major points: the interconnectedness of different countries and the flow of ideas and artistic styles during the Early Middle Ages, and the central role of the psalter in the medieval court.

Looking at this full-page illumination of the first words of the Psalms, one may be struck by the distinctly Insular design of the page with its complex interlacing patterns and characteristic birds' and dragons' heads in the corners. These foreign designs continue throughout the whole manuscript alongside the distinctly Frankish element of the Carolingian minuscule. This synthesis of the Insular and Frankish artistic traditions is the direct result of the process begun by Louis' grandfather Charlemagne, known as the Carolingian Renaissance, which aimed to revive education and high Christian morals amongst the people. Great thinkers, clergymen, and artists were drawn from afar to Charlemagne's court, including the Irish monks who had until then been the main preservers of Latin and spreaders of Christianity.

During the Early Middle Ages kings would often look towards their Old Testament counterparts as exemplars, and regularly reading commentaries on these Biblical stories became popular amongst Charlemagne's descendants. While the Books of Hours dominated the High Middle Ages, the Early period was a "psalmodic culture," with everyone, from the clergy to the laity, being encouraged to use the Psalter as the basis of their personal prayer. The text of the psalms was often used to teach students to read, with "psalteratus" being the term to denote someone who was literate. The words of King David served as the model for kings to achieve and enact piety. It is hence no wonder that such lavish decorations were bestowed on the Psalters. Consequently, these rich manuscripts

became a form of diplomatic gift to ecclesiastical institutions that solidified the monarch's ties to God and the Church while also showcasing his wealth (Adamska 2013).[1] It also played into the Carolingian ideal of standardizing the liturgy and correcting the corrupted Latin by spreading new manuscripts with corrected spellings and a clear, legible text written in the specially-developed Carolingian miniscule.

The Psalter, therefore, can be seen as a symbol for King Louis' rule. Even though he had been termed "the German" since the eighteenth century, he himself did not perceive himself as being anything but a ruler of Eastern Francia, an heir to Charlemagne. He ruled not over Germans, but over a loose collection of various peoples, including the never-before united Francs and Slavs. The synthesis of different artistic styles in the Ludwig Psalter stands as an emblem for this diversity. The care with which it was made shows him as an heir not only to Charlemagne's lands, but also to his ideals. And the vibrant miniatures found on each page would have served as a contemporary sign of his power as the Psalter would be read aloud to him in the presence of his court.

Since my goal with this project was to explore how the visual arts fit into and inform their historical and cultural context, I made the choice to use modern materials rather than historically-accurate dyes and inks in order to concentrate on the design rather than the production techniques.

[1] Anna Adamska, "A Book in All Royal Hands: How Medieval Rulers Read the Psalter," *Polish Libraries* 1 (2013): 186–209.


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A Case of Reattribution and Potential Collaboration: The Madonna and Child Altar Panel Formerly Attributed to [Follower of] Pietro Lorenzetti

Haydin K. Davis
Baylor University '25

Author's Note

Abbreviations used for Armstrong Browning Library Curatorial Files are ABL Curatorial Files. Baylor panel refers to the Kress Collection *Madonna and Child with Christ's Blessing* housed in Baylor University's Armstrong Browning Library.

INTRODUCTION

This research assists in reattributing the *Madonna and Child with Christ Blessing* altar panel in the Armstrong Browning Library at Baylor University (Fig. 1). This work has been traditionally attributed to the Sienese master, Pietro Lorenzetti, or a subsequent follower. My argument is based on previous connoisseur opinions, research conducted by Baylor student Nathaniel Eberlein in 2015, as well as my investigation into comparative works, artist biographies, and repeated motifs by mechanical

tools called *punches*.[1] Based on substantial stylistic and typological parallels, a case is made for a new attribution to the Sienese painters and followers of the Lorenzetti, Niccolò di ser Sozzo and Luca di Tommé, with a proposed date range of 1350–1362.

The following research has been completed as the main element of an upper-level art history seminar on connoisseurship taught by Dr. Heidi J. Hornik-Parsons, chair of the Art and Art History department and professor of Italian Renaissance and Baroque Art History. The project was intended to allow students to complete independent scholarly research using the ABL curatorial files. As the project evolved, I decided to continue to investigate the Baylor panel as a subject of study in my honors thesis. The research conducted here forms the preliminary stage of my thesis project, which seeks to reassess the origins and artistic identity of the complete altarpiece.

INTRODUCTION TO THE PAINTING

The Curatorial Files

Attributions given to the *Madonna and Child* make the distinction that the painting was completed by a figure working within the Sienese tradition, yet abstain from making the attribution to a specific artist. Several scholars, including Bernard Berenson, Giuseppe Fiocco, and Raimond van Marle, assign the piece to the School of the Lorenzetti in handwritten statements on the back of photographs in the ABL curatorial files.[2] Most notably, in a letter written to a count in May 1928, Roberto Longhi designates the work as being created by an "intermediary personality between the first followers of Duccio and Pietro Lorenzetti," situating it within the Sienese school around 1340–50.[3] Adolfo Venturi describes it as the work of a master "who sharpens, refines the forms of the Lorenzetti."[4] Mason Perkins concurs with Venturi's opinion, referring to it as an anonymous Sienese piece, influenced by Pietro Lorenzetti from the second half of the fourteenth century.[5] More distantly

[1] Nathaniel Eberlein, "A Case for the Attribution behind the "Madonna and Child" (Connoisseurship seminar paper, Baylor University, 2015), ABL Curatorial Files.

[2] ABL Curatorial Files, Bernard Berenson (signed), signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50. "School of Lorenzetti... gut?;" Giuseppe Fiocco (signed), Signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50. "Very fine painting by School of Lorenzetti;" Raimond van Marle (signed), Signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340/50. "A beautiful picture by a Sienese master who strongly feels the influence of the Lorenzetti, but who is yet unidentified."

[3] ABL Curatorial Files, Roberto Longhi (signed), handwritten letter, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50, dated May 1928, Rome. Translation by Heidi J. Hornik, Baylor University, 23 January 2015: "... one might easily be led to associate this work with the intermediary personality between the first followers of Duccio and Pietro Lorenzetti, who, on account of his historical position has been provisionally given by Berenson the temporary name of Ugolino Lorenzetti. ...lead us to suspend a definite decision and attribute this noteworthy painting to the Sienese school, towards 1340-50."

[4] ABL Curatorial Files, Adolfo Venturi (signed), signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50. "Work of a master who sharpens, refines the forms of the Lorenzetti."

[5] ABL Curatorial Files, F. F. Mason Perkins (signed), Signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50. "Anonymous Sienese, influenced by Pietro Lorenzetti, second half of XIV cty..."

related attributions were made, such as Dorothy C. Shorr's designation within *The Christ Child in Devotional Images* that the painting was completed by a follower of the Lorenzetti.[6] Additionally, William Suida points to "Ugolino Lorenzetti," a pseudonym representing a collection of several Sienese works that bear the influence of Ugolino de Nerio and Pietro Lorenzetti.[7] All attributions note the strong influence of Pietro Lorenzetti, yet do not formally proclaim him as the creator.

Secondary Source Material

The attribution of the work has also been the subject of secondary literature. According to the Samuel H. Kress Catalog, the painting shows "strong reminiscences of the Simone Martini and Lippo Memmi tradition," with a follower of the Lorenzetti as an identified artist.[8] An entry in *The Baylor Line* magazine describes the work as "one of the most valuable paintings" in the Kress Collection group at Baylor.[9] It attributes the panel to "Pietro Lorenzetti or a follower in the Sienese school 1280–1348." Roberts' *Corpus of Early Italian Paintings* makes the painting's designation to the Sienese school in the fourteenth century and also claims that the panel belonged to an altarpiece, "most probably a triptych."[10] Finally, the loan exhibition catalog from the Kress Collection traveling exhibition (1932–1935) attributes the work to the "School of Lorenzetti" with a date range of 1306–1348.[11]

Past Student Opinion

Baylor student Nathaniel Eberlein's scholarly contribution to the ABL curatorial files in 2015 dealt mostly with identifying the punches present on the surface of the panel. Punches were created by hitting a mallet against a metal tool with a motif engraved on the other end (Fig. 2). Their purpose was to decorate the panel with impressions into the gold background typically found in altar panels of the period. Art historians Mojmir Frinta and Erling Skaug dedicated their work to cataloging the appearance and variety of punches present on late medieval Florentine and Sienese panel paintings. Though their conclusions about the nature of the diffusion of punch tools differ, their classifications

[6] Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy* (New York: George Wittenborn Inc., 1957), 57.

[7] ABL Curatorial Files, William Suida (signed), signed photograph, *Madonna and Child* by School of Lorenzetti, Sienese, about 1340–50, dated August 1935, Florence. Translation by Heidi J. Hornik, Baylor University, 23 January 2015: "This fine Sienese Madonna near to the art of Pietro Lorenzetti belongs to the group of pictures ascribed to the unidentified artist bearing the pseudonym of Ugolino Lorenzetti."

[8] Fern Rusk Shapley, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection: Italian Schools* (London: Phaidon P. for the Samuel H. Kress Foundation, 1966), 52.

[9] *The Baylor Line Magazine,* "Old Paintings Find a New Home at Baylor." January–February 1962, 3.

[10] Perri Lee Roberts, *Corpus of Early Italian Paintings in North American Public Collections* (Athens, GA: University of Georgia, 2009), 760.

[11] ABL Curatorial Files, In Loan Exhibition- Ist and And Catalogues - Atlanta, Ga., Oct. 1932 through Charlotte, N.C. June 1935.

for punches proved to be far more illuminating. Eberlein communicated via email with Erling Skaug and asked for his help in attributing the punches to those found in his catalog. These identifications, which will be discussed in a subsequent section, led Eberlein to conclude his 2015 paper with a reattribution of the piece to the workshop of Pietro Lorenzetti, as the term *follower* seemed unrepresentative of the probable artist.[12]

However, Eberlin's research took on a slightly different tone when he reexamined the piece again in his 2017 honors thesis. He communicated again with Skaug in a new email thread to examine the punches further. According to Skaug's examination, he did not have matches in his catalog for many of the punches present in the piece, but noted some similarities to the punches found in works by mid-century artists Bartolommeo Bulgarini and Niccolò di Tomasso.[13] Additionally, he seemed to agree that the figural type of the Madonna and Child figures present in the painting were Lorenzettian in nature, although his observance of the working of gold leaf seemed more common in works by late fourteenth-century artists.[14] Furthermore, Eberlein concluded that the *Madonna and Child* could be "a post-plague Trencento work imitating an older painterly style."[15]

Iconography of the Painting

Conducting a visual analysis of the painting is essential when making informed comparisons with other securely attributed works. In the main image, Mary stands in a three-quarter view with the baby Jesus in her arms. Mary looks directly at the viewer with a solemn expression on her lips. The slender quality of each figure can be noted. The mantle of the Madonna is adorned with two stars, one on the right shoulder and the other in front of her veil, though the latter is slightly less apparent due to aging and debris. The stars signify her identity as the Stella Maris, a mistranslation of her Hebrew name, "Miryam."[16] She was known as the "star of the sea," and served to lead the Church to Christ as a star would guide a ship home.[17] She is robed in blue, colors signifying purity and royalty, but due to age, the paint has turned a grayish hue. To theorize about the pigment present in the paint, it is likely that azurite, a basic copper carbonate, was used to paint the Madonna's mantle.[18] When azurite is

[12] Eberlein, "A Case for the Attribution behind the *Madonna and Child*," 19.

[13] Nathaniel Eberlein, "Art Object and Holy Image: The Attribution and Contextualization of the Madonna and Child by a Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti" (Honors thesis, Baylor University, 2017), 74, ABL Curatorial Files, Appendix B.

[14] Eberlein, "Art Object and Holy Image," 74.

[15] Eberlein "Art Object and Holy Image," 58.

[16] Brian K. Reynolds, *Gateway to Heaven* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2012), 133.

[17] Reynolds, *Gateway to Heaven*, 133.

[18] Cathleen Hoeniger, "The Identification of Blue Pigments in Early Sienese Paintings by Color Infrared Photography," *Journal of the American Institute for Conservation* 30, no. 2 (1991): 115–124, JAIC Online, https://cool.culturalheritage.org/jaic/articles/jaic30-02-001.html.

ground too finely, the product will eventually turn gray.[19] This less expensive blue pigment was found in works by Duccio and his followers beginning around 1285.[20] Another blue pigment otherwise used in Sienese panel painting is ultramarine, a costly indigo made of vegetable dye.[21] Although used widely in the works of Guido da Siena and his circle from around 1260 to 1280, it has been documented as being used only in the most expensive and significant projects in the fourteenth century.[22] A documented period in mid-fifteenth-century Florence notes ultramarine as costing 10 to 15 times more than azurite.[23] Due to its cheaper cost, the appearance of azurite pigment in works throughout the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries was perhaps more common than that of ultramarine. The painting's conservation report from 1985 confirms that the work is executed in egg tempera over a white gesso ground.[24] This identification of a painting technique typical of the Sienese school, along with the evidence of the pigments from above, can assist in placing the date of the painting before the end of the fourteenth century.

Above the pointed arch, an adult Christ stands in a half view with one hand holding the Bible and another forming an attitude of blessing. His right hand makes the peace gesture in which the thumb touches the ring finger, symbolizing the Incarnation and the Trinity. The two fingers of the hand that touch together signify the two natures in Christ (Incarnation, the union of human and divine), while the other three fingers pointing upward signify the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit).[25] He is robed in blue and red, colors which again refer to the dual sense of humanity and divinity. Curiously, an undated photograph in the ABL curatorial files depicts the Christ figure with His eyes open (Fig. 3). This photograph is authentic, and not a falsification, although all other images of the work (online and in the ABL files) depict Christ with his eyes closed. As there is no way of being certain about when the change was made with the documentation available, only theorization about the reasoning behind a restorer's decision to close the adult Christ's eyes can occur.

Background

Growing out of the Byzantine tradition, Sienese art was characterized by its naturalistic and monumental images. Due to the occupation of Constantinople by western Europeans from 1204 to

[19] Hoeniger, 115–124.
[20] Hoeniger, 115–124.
[21] Hoeniger, 115–124.
[22] Hoeniger, 115–124.
[23] Hoeniger, 115–124.
[24] ABL Curatorial Files, Examination Report, Baylor University Libraries, 12 February 1985.
[25] Jaroslav Pelikan, *Jesus through the Centuries; Mary through the Centuries* (History Book Club, 2005), 93.

1261, Byzantine art forms made their way into the character of Italian art.[26] There seemed to be a summoning of Greek artists to Florence by the government "for no other purpose than the revival of painting," as Giorgio Vasari noted.[27] Artists such as Cimabue of Florence and Giotto di Bondone blended classicism and Gothic naturalism in a manner unique to the Greek workshop training they had received.[28] Nearby in the bustling city center of Siena, a military rival with Florence, Duccio di Buoninsegna directed another influential workshop.[29] A victory against Florence in 1260 caused the Virgin Mary to be formally considered as the city's protector and patron.[30] Because of a new acknowledgement of Marian devotion in the city, many works depicting the Virgin as the main subject were commissioned for cathedrals throughout Siena.[31]

An understanding of the artists present during the Trecento is necessary to attribute the altar panel. Duccio di Buoninsegna, the founder of the Sienese school, was active from 1278 to his death in 1319.[32] Known for his works on wood panel painted in egg tempera, Duccio began to divest from the sharp lines characteristic of Byzantine art. He used an inviting color palette and softened modeling to render the figure's hands, faces, and feet. His documented followers included Segna di Bonaventura, Bartolomeo Bulgarini, Ugolino di Nerio, Simone Martini, Lorenzetti brothers, and others.[33] However, the notable works of Pietro Lorenzetti led scholars to recognize him outside of the realm of a "follower." Pietro was active from 1305 to 1348 when he died, presumably of plague, between ages 60 and 65.[34] His brother, Ambrogio Lorenzetti, active from 1319 to 1348, was taught by Pietro and was likely influenced by Giovanni Pisano and Giotto.[35] Together, the brothers founded the Lorenzetti School in the first half of the fourteenth century in Siena. Works in the Lorenzetti tradition possess a "deeply devotional character, classic dignity of expression, impressive composition, and rich, warm coloring."[36]

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[26] Penelope J.E. Davies et. al, *Janson's History of Art. Janson's History of Art: The Western Tradition,* 8th ed. (Boston: Pearson, 2010), 449.

[27] Davies, 449.

[28] Davies, 449–450.

[29] Davies, 454.

[30] Davies, 453.

[31] Davies, 453–4.

[32] Duccio (di Buoninsegna), Oxford Art Online, *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, 12 June 2023. https://doi.org/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.article.T023857.

[33] Duccio (di Buoninsegna), Oxford Art Online.

[34] Pietro Lorenzetti, Oxford Art Online, *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, 28 April 2015. https://doi.org/10.1093/benz/9780199773787.article.B00111629.

[35] ABL. Curatorial File. Loan Exhibition - 1st and 2nd Catalogs.

[36] ABL. Curatorial File. Loan Exhibition - 1st and 2nd Catalogs.

After the Black Plague had significantly decimated the population of painters working in Siena, a basis for a "corporate mentality" soon formed, culminating in the Post-1350 Collaboration.[37] Historical documentation provides a record of the collaborative craft practices that flourished due to an "explosion in patronage" near the end of the thirteenth century.[38] Outbreaks of the Black Death ran through medieval cities, devastating populations of artists. Therefore, collaboration was "essential to satisfy a high demand," requiring the pooling of shared resources and labor.[39] Defined by art historian Benjamin David, collaborative relationships during this period are called *compagnia*. These alliances often took various forms, such as assistantships, and flexible or formal working relationships between artists of equal or lesser status.[40] Some completed artworks were signed by multiple parties; however, other artists working collaboratively did not sign their names because they did not expect viewers to notice a difference in their hands.[41]

A flexible compagnia alliance between the plague outbreaks of 1348 and 1363 may have created the *Madonna and Child*.[42] Judith Steinhoff's identification places the group after the deaths of Pietro Lorenzetti and other prominent artists in 1348, caused by the Black Death. After Sienese artists from the first half of the fourteenth century passed away, it seems that the remaining members united under Bartolommeo Bulgarini.[43] Steinhoff suggests, given the overlap in punches and the compositional similarities, that "Bulgarini's shop may have been the physical location of much of the joint activity," perhaps due to its size or location.[44] In 1354 or 1354, Niccolò di ser Sozzo seemingly affiliated with Buglarini and then with Luca di Tommé.[45] Niccolò and Luca formed a close partnership, most evidenced by their 1362 collaborative polyptych in the Pinacoteca Nazionale (Fig. 4). The altarpiece, depicting the *Virgin and Child Enthroned with Sts. John the Baptist, Thomas, Benedict, and Stephen,* was one of the largest altarpieces made in Siena during the third quarter of the fourteenth century. An inscription was found on the decorative molding beneath the Virgin and Child in 1932: NICCHOLAUS SER SOCCII ET LUCAS TOMAS DE SENIS HOC HOPOS PINSERU(N)T

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[37] Hayden B.J. Maginnis, *The World of the Early Sienese Painter* (University Park, PA: Penn State University Press, 2003), 91.

[38] Benjamin David, "Past and Present in Sienese Painting: 1350–1550," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics,* no. 40 (2001): 83–85. http://www.jstor.org/stable/20167539.

[39] David, 83–85.

[40] David, 83–85.

[41] David, 83–85.

[42] Judith Steinhoff, "Artistic working relationships after the Black Death," *Renaissance Studies* 14, no. 1 (2008): 9. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/229594507_Artistic_working_relationships_after_the_Black_Death_a_Sienese_compagnia_c_1350-_1363f.

[43] Steinhoff, "Artistic working relationships after the Black Death," 9.

[44] Steinhoff, "Artistic working relationships after the Black Death," 9.

[45] Steinhoff, "Artistic working relationships after the Black Death," 9.

ANNI MCCCLXII.[46] This discovery proved undoubtedly that the piece had been created by two artists, although its creator had previously been thought to be an individual.[47]

The work of two artists from Bulgarini's compagnia alliance, Niccolò di ser Sozzo (Tegliacci) and Luca di Tommé, are most comparable stylistically to the *Madonna and Child* altar painting. Succeeding the notable Sienese masters Duccio, Simone Martini, and the Lorenzetti, Niccolò di ser Sozzo and Luca di Tommé continued to render figures in a Ducciesque manner similar to their predecessors. The first known document referring to the career of the older artist, Niccolò, is from 1348, the year of the Lorenzetti brothers' death.[48] He likely trained in Lorenzettian shops due to the presence of similar punches in his panel painting. Tegliacci enrolled in the Sienese painters' guild in 1363 but then died later that year, most likely of the plague.[49] Luca, however, is recorded as a member of the painters' guild in 1356.[50] More than fifty works are attributed to him, unlike Niccolò's much smaller oeuvre.[51] Both artists' figural types are linked to Simone Martini and Pietro Lorenzetti as their compositions reflect a refined sense of movement, frontal compositions, and figures grounded in naturalistic proportions. Many works by Niccolò and Luca have been attributed to each other by various authorities, as the connections between these artists were not considered until the discovery of the signatures on the 1362 polyptych.[52]

COMPARATIVE VISUAL SOURCES

Duccio di Buoninsegna

As founder of the Sienese school, Duccio's works established an artistic foundation that other painters would follow. As evidenced by his renowned *Maèsta* polyptych, Duccio's Virgin often does not smile and looks quite melancholy (Fig. 5). It depicts the Madonna turned slightly to her left with the Christ Child resting distantly on her knee. However, similarities in the languid quality of the subjects can be noted in both the *Maèsta* and Baylor panels, specifically regarding the elongated fingers of the Madonna. The feet of the Christ Child are also completed similarly across both works. The

[46] Sherman A. Fehm, *The Collaboration of Niccolò Tegliacci and Luca di Tommè* (Los Angeles: Anderson, Ritchie & Simon, 1973), 7. https://www.getty.edu/publications/resources/virtuallibrary/0892360593.pdf.

[47] Fehm, *The Collaboration of Niccolò Tegliacci and Luca di Tommè*, 7.

[48] Erling Skaug, "Notes on the Chronology of Ambrogio Lorenzetti," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 20 (1976): 314.

[49] Valerie Wainwright, "Niccolò di ser Sozzo," *Grove Art Online* (2003), accessed 31 Oct. 2024. https://www-oxfordartonline-com.ezproxy.baylor.edu/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oao-9781884446054-e-7000062314.

[50] Carola Hicks, "Luca di Tommè," *Grove Art Online,* (2003), accessed 31 Oct. 2024. https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oao-9781884446054-e-7000052266.

[51] Hicks, "Luca di Tommè."

[52] Fehm, *The Collaboration of Niccolò Tegliacci and Luca di Tommè*, 6.

same can be said of the hands and feet present in Duccio's *Madonna and Child with Six Angels* in the National Gallery in Perugia (Fig. 6). Also in this work, a layer of green underpainting and the slender depiction of the Madonna's face mirrors the Baylor panel. The Kunst Museum *Madonna and Child* renders a child touching His face closely to the Madonna as He wraps his arm around the back of her neck, encircling her in an embrace (Fig. 7). Like the Baylor panel, the Kunst *Madonna* provides an appropriate example of Dorothy C. Shorr's Christ Child *Type 8: He Presses His Cheek To The Virgin's Face And Caresses Her Chin*. The pose is of "provincial Byzantine, possibly of Balkan" origin which then led into the Southern Renaissance in Italy.[53]

Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti

Possibly the most significant work Pietro Lorenzetti created was the *Pieve Altarpiece,* also called the *Arezzo Polyptych,* a monumental structure created for the church of Santa Maria della Pieve in 1320 (Fig. 8). The connection between Madonna and Christ Child is amplified by their gaze toward each other. The brightly patterned mantel that Mary wears is much more playful than what is typically depicted in his other paintings, showcasing the artist's range of ability to work with color. The creation of the piece is well-documented, making it an excellent baseline by which to assign comparisons. Likewise, other secure attributions for Pietro exist. The National Gallery of Art triptych depicting the Madonna and Child with Sts. Mary Magdalene and Catherine, created in 1340, bears the signature "[PETRUS] L[A]URENTII DE SENIS [ME] PI[N]XIT [ANNO] D[OMI]NI MCCCX...I" (Fig. 9). The inscription, which translates to "Pietro Lorenzetti painted me in 1340" allows a definitive statement to be made about the piece's authorship. Despite the overall compositional likeness and the facial resemblance of the Madonna, the Christ Child differs almost entirely from the Baylor panel. Full faces and realistically depicted hands and feet are qualities consistently established by Pietro that are unlike those found in the Baylor panel.

Works by Ambrogio Lorenzetti depart further from the figural type of the Madonna and the Child found in the Baylor panel. His *Virgin and Child* at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston depicts a facially rounded Madonna with upturned eyes looking toward an unusually styled child (Fig. 10). Although providing another expression of Shorr's *Type 8,* there are minimal similarities to be found between it and the Baylor panel. Ambrogio's *Madonna of Milk,* found in the Oratory of San Bernardino, also showcases the figures in an intimate setting, this time with the Madonna in the act of feeding her Child (Fig. 11). The painting, which departs almost completely from rigid Byzantine frontalism, is notable for its depiction of a caring relationship between mother and son. In the panel, the upturned eyes of the Madonna gaze down at her Child, who looks out, almost uncomfortably, to the viewer.

[53] Dorothy C. Shorr, *The Christ Child in Devotional Images in Italy During the XIV Century* (New York: George Wittenborn Inc., 1954). https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015015253928&seq=70.

Niccolò di ser Sozzo (Tegliacci)

In the investigation of artists behind the creation of the Baylor panel, the works of Niccolò di ser Sozzo (Tegliacci) (b?, doc. 1348–d. 1363) should be carefully considered. The Getty *Madonna and Child* echoes the facial modeling and shading found in the Baylor panel (Fig. 12). The figures in the Getty painting are fully frontal, but if their faces were turned in profile, , they would closely resemble the near-set eyes, thin nose, and closed mouth expression of the Baylor panel. The child figure is also quite similar, especially with regard to the rendering of the hair. A *Madonna and Child* found at the University of Arizona, also in the Kress Collection, offers a close match of the Christ Child found in the Baylor panel (Fig. 13). The waved golden locks of hair and the full face chart a resemblance. Only the positioning of the Child on His mother's lap and the patterned garment He wears differ.

Luca di Tommé

A look at the oeuvre of Luca di Tommé (fl. 1356–89) also provides a substantial comparison. The altarpiece depicting St. Anne with the Virgin and Child and Saints at the Pinacoteca Nazionale offers a glimpse at the artist's ability to finely detail female facial features and elongated limbs (Fig. 14). In close likeness to the Madonna in Baylor's panel, the female faces are modeled carefully with regard to the soft shape of eyes, nose, and close-mouthed expression. Of closest comparability is the left-most panel showcasing Saint Catherine of Alexandria. Luca's *Assumption of the Virgin* at Yale showcases similar subject matter to Baylor's panel with respect to the Christ figure at the pinnacle (Fig. 15). The detail of the Virgin's face proves to bear a close resemblance to the ABL panel's Madonna, although frontal. Finally, a *Christ's Blessing* in the Kress Collection at the North Carolina Museum of Art depicts the same subject matter as that of the figure in the point of the Baylor panel (Fig. 16). Similar facial modeling is found across both paintings, especially in regard to the pre-restoration open-eyed Christ image in the curatorial file (Fig. 3). Christ holds His hand in the blessing sign and repetitive fabric draping and coloring is found in both panels.

Potential Companion Panels

During the beginning stages of my research, I discovered Trinity College's *Saint John the Baptist* by a Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti in my search of the Kress Collection database (Fig. 17). Along with various information, the page also contained a link to a 2020 essay by Annika Finne, a student at the Institute of Fine Arts Conservation Center, NYU.[54] Along with being struck by the almost identical carpentry to that of the Baylor panel present in the molding of the arch, the panel's

[54] Annika Finne, "Trinity College's Saint John the Baptist by Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti," Kress Sponsored Research at the Institute for Fine Arts, NYU Conservation Center, https://bmmweb.blob.core.windows.net/kressmedia/media/kpc/media/resources/student%20papers/finne_trinity-baptist-essay.pdf.

figural type seemed to fit into a category all its own. Additionally, the panel shared the compositional similarities of the main figure and another smaller figure in the pinnacle with the Baylor panel. Finne's essay also identified a companion *Saint Peter* panel at the Courtauld Institute in London, an attribution first made by Erling Skaug in 1976 (Fig. 18).[55] This panel was formally attributed to Niccolò di ser Sozzo (Tegliacci) in its Artstor entry. Finne, along with making stylistic comparisons, discussed the treatment the panel received in 2011 by painting conservators Sophie Scully, Dianne Dwyer Modestini, and Nica Gutman Rieppi, noting its unusual paint layering technique.[56] She identifies several methods for future inquiry, explaining that X-radiography and photographs of the back and side edges of the Trinity and Courtauld panels could more securely reveal their relationship to each other. [57]

A few issues complicate the case made for attribution. The Courtauld panel is slightly shorter than the Trinity panel, but this margin of difference is explained by the presence of the gabled, or cut-off, top.[58] Additionally, a comparison of the punches present on the Baylor, Trinity, and Courtauld panels has yet to be made. A *Saint Catherine* panel could potentially fit into the reconstructed polyptych grouping, but it is currently in a private collection (Fig. 19). Sold in 2001, the last images of the panel are found on Artnet's database and in the Frederico Zeri photo archive. However, due to the lack of information about the *Saint Catherine* panel, discussion of its similarity to the other panels will be suspended for the present moment.

To begin to present a case for the proposed altarpiece panels, a comparable sense of elongation is found in the faces, hands, and bodies of each figure. Although there are some differences concerning the wood molding, the same upper arch is reflected throughout each panel. Additionally, at the pinnacle point of each panel, the figure is holding a book, a repeated motif. The most promising among the evidence to support their designation together is their measurements. The Trinity (42 3/4 x 17 in.) and Courtauld (41 7/50 x 17 11/25 in.) panels are close in dimension, with only minimal differences in size, likely due to the trimming of each. When digitally placed together to scale, the center panel is slightly larger than the two, a feature typical of altarpiece construction (Fig. 20). The ABL panel (53 x 24 1/2 in.) is around 11 inches taller than both side panels, a reasonable margin of difference for a center panel. The saints in both panels are full-length, while the Madonna is three-quarter length; this arrangement can be found in other polyptychs. The convention of painting saints in full-length was still new in the mid-Trencento. Pietro Lorenzetti's altarpiece for the church of San Niccolò del Carmine, painted in 1329, has been cited as the earliest example of full-length flanking

[55] Skaug, "Notes on the Chronology of Ambrogio Lorenzetti," 314.
[56] Finne, "Trinity College's Saint John the Baptist by Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti," 8–9.
[57] Finne, "Trinity College's Saint John the Baptist by Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti," 9.
[58] Finne, "Trinity College's Saint John the Baptist by Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti," 3.

saints, one being a *John the Baptist* in the Norton Simon Museum (Fig. 21).[59] It is less common, but not impossible for this arrangement to appear, making the association of the three panels together possible.

As a collaborative work by Niccolò and Luca, the figures in the polyptych depicting the Virgin and Child with Saints in the Pinacoteca Nazionale should also be examined for the connection they could have to the proposed reconstruction of the Baylor, Trinity, and Courtauld panels (Fig. 20). Though the creator of each saint figure is sometimes disputed among scholars, most agree that three of the four saints (Thomas, Benedict, and Stephen) seem to be characteristic of Niccolò's work.[60] The Baptist panel, however, is closely reminiscent of Luca's *St. John the Baptist* found at the Getty (Fig. 22).

TECHNICAL EVIDENCE

Goals for Identification

Following the discovery of a potential attribution to Niccoló and Luca, it seemed necessary to reassess the judgments made about the punches present on the surface of the ABL panel. Punch marks can often be difficult to discern, with errors in measurements, the execution of tooling, and surface distortion acting as main components for variability. My goal for the reidentification of punches was to focus on the unique markings (flowers, diamonds, clover motifs) and avoid identifying the circle or dot shapes, which can be easily mistaken for each other. Like Eberlein, I have utilized the punch mark catalogs of art historians Mojmir Frinta and Erling Skaug to identify the pouches present on the Baylor panel. I am also supplementing the few images I have of the punches with drawings by a student, Patrick Millegan, who drew the shape of each punch in detail.

Re-Identification of Punch Marks

My reassessment of the punch marks found on the Baylor panel provides supporting evidence for the reattribution of the painting to Niccolò and Luca. It is my opinion that errors were made in the initial identification of the punches. Skaug provides a key for reading his charts at the beginning of the section titled "Workshops in the order of Chapters 5-10, Volume I." He notes that he includes "life-size drawings on top of the page," referring to the top of his dispersion charts.[61] Furthermore, Skaug also notes at the bottom of a table in his 1976 article that the "drawings of the punch marks are in

[59] Henk van Os, *Sienese Altarpieces, 1215–1460: Form, Content, Function* (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhuis, 1984), 91.

[60] Fehm, *The Collaboration of Niccolò Tegliacci and Luca di Tommè*, 20.

[61] Erling S. Skaug, *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico: Attribution, Chronology, and Workshop Relationships in Tuscan Panel Painting; with Particular Consideration to Florence, c. 1300–1430, vol. 2* (Oslo: IIC-Nordic Group, 1994).

life-size."[62] The photographs that Skaug includes in his work are usually magnified to some degree while his drawings stay in a consistent 1:1 ratio.

Beginning with the oblong punch measuring 11mm by 7mm, Frinta's catalog has an entry for punch EE7 unique to the Baylor panel where he identifies the punch as Sienese (Fig. 23). Skaug's email with Eberlein identifies his no. 28 tracing to Bartolommeo Bulgarini as a close resemblance but not an exact type, as it is missing the two enclosed dots (Fig. 23). Upon my identification, the diamond punch (2 mm by 4 mm) looked closest to Skaug's nos. 48 or 49, referring to either Niccolò di Segna or Ugolino di Nerio but the small size of the punch makes it difficult to discern (Fig. 24).

Concerning the small six-petal flower (5 mm across), no. 447 (Niccolò di Tommaso) or nos. 516–521 (Niccolò di ser Sozzo, Luca di Tommé, Lorenzetti brothers, etc.) are possible depending on the type of impression made on the panel (Fig. 25). The large six-petal flower within the halo of the Madonna (15 mm across) reflects nos. 547 (Luca di Tommé) and 609 (Bartolommeo Bulgarini passed to Niccolò di ser Sozzo) in Skaug's catalog (Fig. 26). Finally, the seven-petal flower present in the adult Christ's halo (5 mm across) narrows the identification further. As the only seven-petal flower listed in Skaug's catalog, no. 623 traces its lineage to Bulgarini and Niccolò (Fig. 27). The flower is extremely small, but if indeed it has seven petals, the identification is most illuminating. Eberlein's supposition that the Baylor panel could be a "post-plague Trencento work imitating an older painterly style" ties in well with the post-1348 typological parallels identified in connection to my attribution.[63]

CONCLUSION

After the research I have conducted thus far, a case can be made for the reattribution of the Baylor *Madonna and Child* altar panel to Niccolò di ser Sozzo and Luca di Tommé. The attribution is stylistically supported with comparisons and typologically supported by punch mark identification. Skaug noted post-1350 typological parallels in punchwork in email correspondence with Eberlein, and my re-identification of punches supports the thesis of attribution. Additionally, a case can be made for a date range of 1350 to 1362 for Baylor's panel. Niccolò's career is documented from 1348 to 1363, while Luca flourished from 1356 to 1389. If the two collaborated on the proposed altarpiece, this range would be most appropriate as the date of the signed polyptych in 1362 and Niccolò's death in 1363 provide the absolute latest date that is possible.

A more solid attribution requires future investigation. Particularly, the punches could be examined by removing the panel from its location on the wall to make a more definitive decision about each of their types. Details from the Trinity panel reveal floral punches that could match those of the Baylor panel (Fig. 28). However, the measurements of the Trinity panel punches are not currently

[62] Skaug, "Notes on the Chronology of Ambrogio Lorenzetti," 310.

[63] Eberlein, "Art Object and Holy Image," 55.

available. Any information about the punches on the Courtauld panel would also prove to be elucidating.

Figure 1: [Follower of] Pietro Lorenzetti. *Madonna and Child.* Fourteenth century. Egg and tempera on panel. 53 in x 24.5 in. Armstrong Browning Library, Baylor University. Photo Credit: Bob Smith.

27. A set of punches once belonging to Federico Joni. Italy, private collection. The Table, Fig. 26, shows punch motifs 1-66 in life size, and Figs. 28-42 show punches in 2-3x enlargement.

Figure 2: Surviving punches of Frederico Joni, excerpt from Erling Skaug's *Punch Marks from Giotto to Fra Angelico:* Volume 1.

Figure 3: Undated photograph and corresponding detail in the ABL curatorial file depicting the adult Christ's eyes as open.

Figure 4: Luca di Tommé and Niccolò di ser Sozzo. *Virgin and Child with Saints.* 1362. Tempera on panel. Pinacoteca Nazionale, Siena. Photo Credit: Web Gallery of Art.

Figure 5: Duccio di Buoninsegna. Detail from *Maestá*. 1308–1311. Tempera on panel. Museo dell'Opera del Duomo, Siena. Photo Credit: Smarthistory.

Figure 6: Duccio di Buoninsegna. *Madonna and Child with Six Angels.* 1300–1305. Tempera on panel. Galleria Nazionale dell'Umbria, Perugia. Photo Credit: Web Gallery of Art.

Figure 7: Duccio di Buoninsegna. *Madonna and Child Enthroned with Six Angels.* 1319. Tempera on panel. Kunst Museum. Photo Credit: Artstor.

Figure 8: Pietro Lorenzetti. Detail from *Arezzo Polyptych.* 1320. Tempera on panel. Santa Maria della Pieve in Arezzo, Italy. Photo Credit: Wikipedia.

Figure 9: Pietro Lorenzetti. *Madonna and Child with the Blessing Christ, and Saints Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Alexandria with Angels*. 1340. Tempera on panel transferred to canvas. National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. Photo Credit: National Gallery of Art.

Figure 10: Ambrogio Lorenzetti. *Virgin and Child*. Late 1330s–early 1340s. Tempera on panel. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. Photo Credit: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Figure 11: Ambrogio Lorenzetti. *Madonna of Milk.* Circa 1325–1348. Tempera on panel. Siena, Oratory of San Bernardino and Diocesan Sacred Art Museum. Photo Credit: Google Arts and Culture.

Figure 12: Niccolò di ser Sozzo. *Madonna and Child with Two Angels.* 1350. Tempera on panel. The J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center. Photo Credit: Getty Museum.

Figure 13: Niccolò di ser Sozzo. Madonna and Child with Angels. Circa 1360. Tempera on wood. University of Arizona Museum of Art, Kress Collection. Photo Credit: University of Arizona.

Figure 14: Luca di Tommé. Altarpiece: S. Anne with the Virgin and Child, main image (above) and Saint Catherine of Alexandria detail (below). 1367. Tempera on panel. Pinacoteca Nazionale di Siena. Photo Credit: Web Gallery of Art.

Figure 15: Luca di Tommé. Detail from *The Assumption of the Virgin*. 1362. Tempera and gold on panel. Yale University Art Gallery. Photo Credit: Yale University.

Figure 16: Luca di Tommé. *Christ Blessing*. Circa 1362–1365. Tempera on wood panel.
North Carolina Museum of Art, Kress Collection.
Photo Credit: North Carolina Museum of Art.

Figure 17: Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti (possibly Tegliacci). *Saint John the Baptist.* Before 1362. Tempera and gold on panel. 42.75 x 17 in. Trinity College, Hartford, CT. Kress Collection. Photo Credit: Artstor.

Figure 18: Niccolò di ser Sozzo. *Saint Peter.* 1329–1331. Tempera on panel. 41.14 x 17.44 in.
The Courtauld Gallery, London. Photo Credit: Artstor.

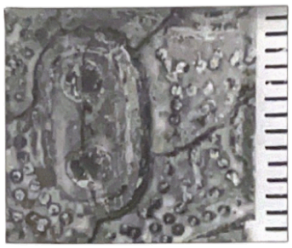
Figure 19: Niccolò di ser Sozzo Tegliacci (attr.), *St. Catherine of Alexandria.* Circa 1350–1363. 44 x 14.48 in. Unknown private collection (last sold May 16, 2001). Photo Credit: (left) artnet.com and (right) Federico Zeri photo archive no. 6834.

Figure 20: The author's altarpiece reconstruction. Image to scale.

Figure 21: Pietro Lorenzetti. *Saint John the Baptist.* 1329. Tempera on panel. Norton Simon Museum. Photo Credit: Norton Simon Museum.

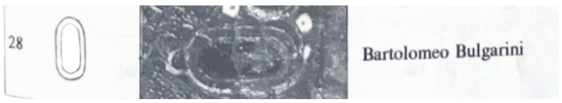
Figure 22: Luca di Tommè. *Saint John the Baptist.* Late fourteenth century. Tempera on panel. The J. Paul Getty Museum at the Getty Center. Photo Credit: Getty Museum.

FRINTA IDENTIFICATION:



EE7 7×12 SIENESE. Mad., Waco, Baylor Univ., K157

SKAUG IDENTIFICATION:



MILLEGAN DRAWING:

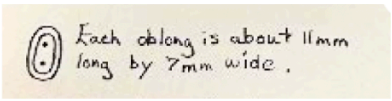
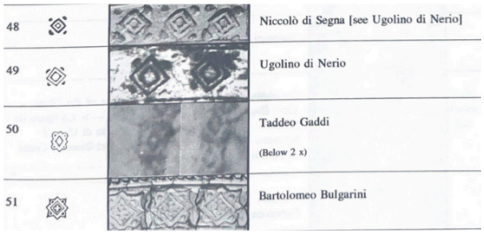


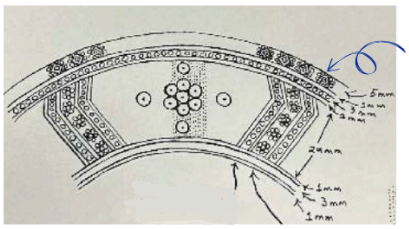
Figure 23: The oblong punch identification from Frinta and Skaug, and the corresponding drawing by Millegan.

Figure 24: Oblong punch in its position in the Madonna's halo.

SKAUG IDENTIFICATION:



PLACEMENT IN HALO:



MILLEGAN DRAWING:

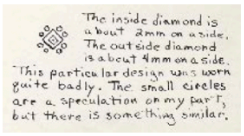
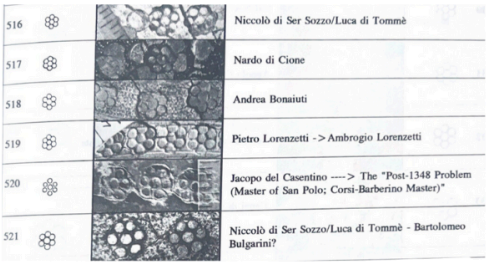


Figure 25: The diamond punch identification from Skaug and corresponding drawings by Millegan.

SKAUG EMAIL EXCHANGE:

SKAUG IDENTIFICATION:



MILLEGAN DRAWING:

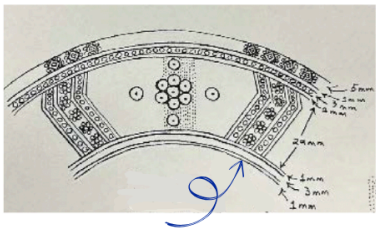


Figure 26: The small six-petal flower punch identification from Skaug (email and book identification), and corresponding drawing by Millegan.

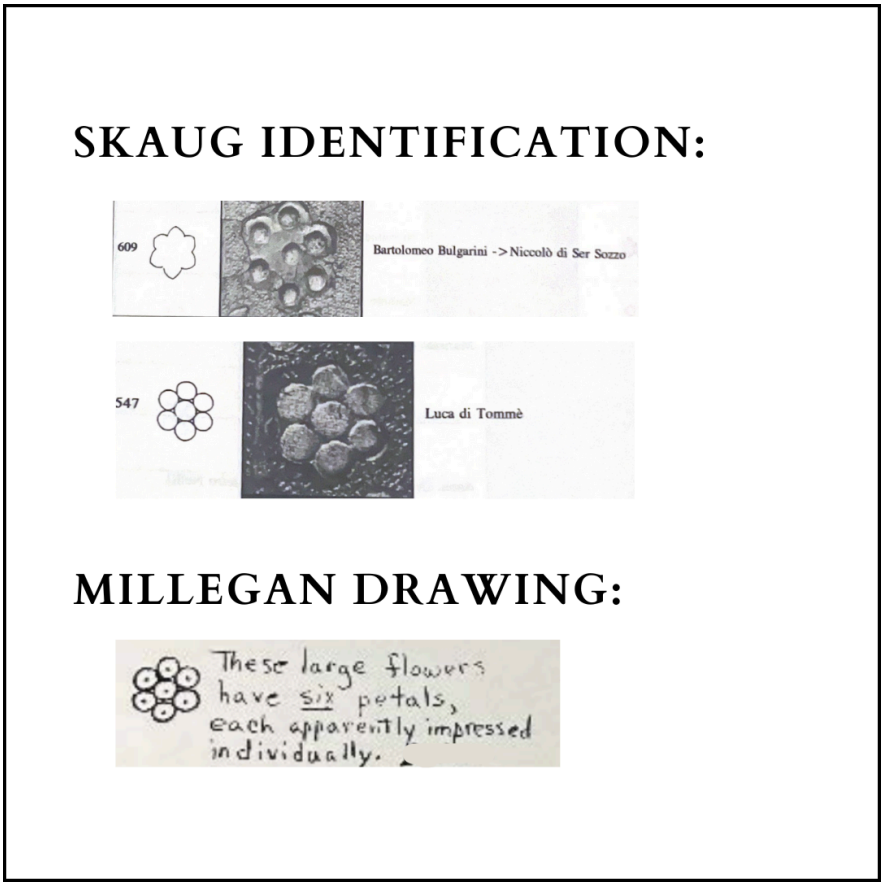


Figure 27: The large six-petal flower punch identification from Skaug, and corresponding drawing by Millegan.

Figure 28: Six-petal flower punch with its position in the Christ Child's halo. Photo Credit: Nathaniel Eberlein.

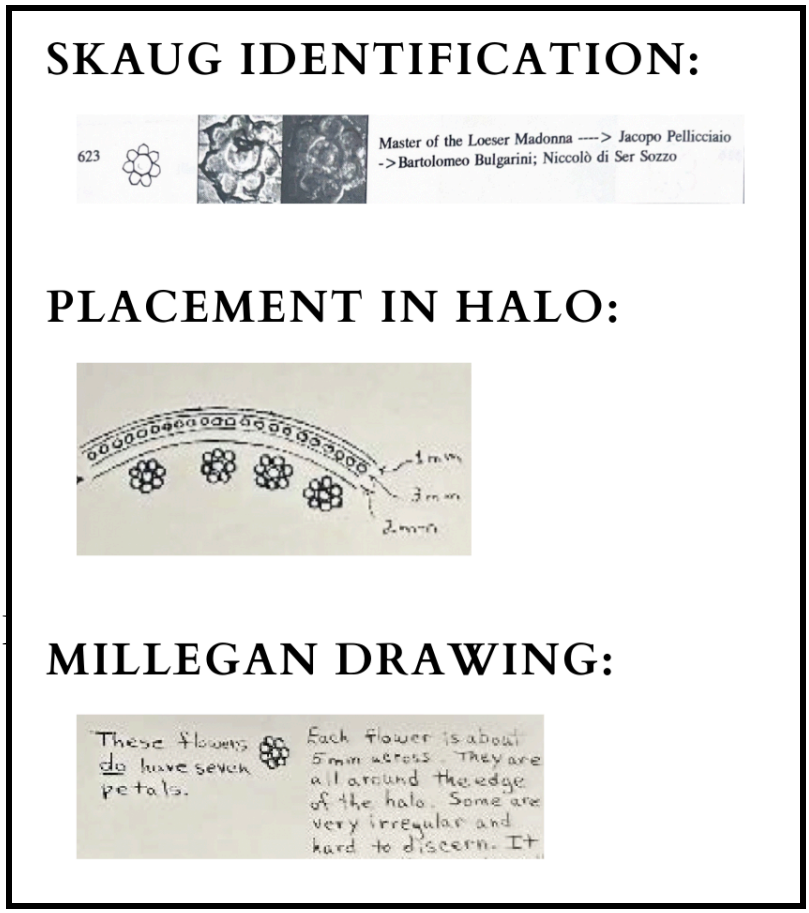


Figure 29: The seven-petal flower punch identification from Skaug, and corresponding drawing by Millegan.

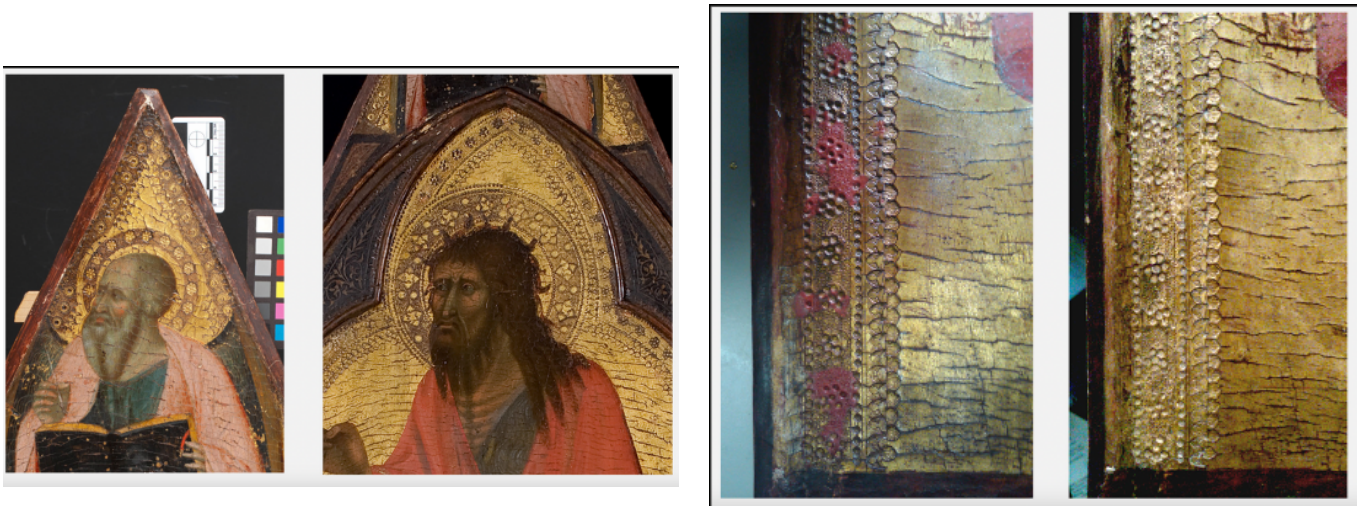


Figure 30: Detail of punch marks from Follower of Pietro Lorenzetti. *Saint John the Baptist.* Before 1362. 42.75 x 17 in. Tempera and gold on panel. Trinity College, Hartford, CT. Kress Collection. Photo Credit: Trinity College.

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