

# The Iconography of the Tympanum of the Temptation of Christ at The Cloisters

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A CARVED ROMANESQUE TYMPANUM and lintel (Figure 1) in the Cloisters Collection of The Metropolitan Museum of Art are said to have come from Errondo (also known as Raondo), a small community that lies in ruins nineteen kilometers southeast of Pamplona, Spain, near the village of Unciti. In 1944 José Gudiol attributed these two reliefs to the Cabestany Master, an anonymous sculptor associated with a group of works in Languedoc, Roussillon, Catalonia, and Tuscany.<sup>1</sup> Discussion of the "Errondo" carvings has focused entirely upon their relationship to the oeuvre of this master, whose enigmatic career Léon Pressouyre has convincingly placed within the third quarter of the twelfth century.<sup>2</sup> I would like for the moment to ignore the attribution and chronology of these sculptures and concentrate on the iconography of the tympanum.

It must first be noted, however, that the present arrangement of the tympanum and lintel as a single architectural unit is probably incorrect. Their different dimensions seem to suggest that these sculptures are not from the same portal. The lintel (62 × 198 cm.), approximately three-quarters the height of the tympanum (79 × 160 cm.), is altogether too large for the tympanum, which rests unevenly along its upper edge. The lintel is also much too long for the tympanum, especially if one takes into account that no voussoirs, which would have required the added length of the lintel, have been found at Errondo. Furthermore, the color of the stone differs: the lintel is gold brown, the tympanum almost gray. The stone evidently came from different quarries, although only a petrographic analysis could confirm this.

Gudiol had traced the carvings to Errondo on the basis of an old photograph that showed only the lintel in situ embedded in the wall of a mill. Fr. Fernando de Mendoza first published this photograph in 1924 as an illustration to his article describing in some detail his discovery of the lintel and the site of Errondo, but he made no mention of a tympanum. He suggested that the lintel may have come from the chapel of the fortress of Errondo, of which only a section of wall remains.<sup>3</sup> Having recently examined the site, now reduced to a barren plowed field around the wall of the fortress, I found it impossible to determine the ground plan of either the fortress or a chapel. The stone debris scattered over the hills beyond the immediate site, which occasionally defines rectangular plots, seems to be the vestige of the community. Gudiol, who was apparently unaware of Mendoza's account, was familiar with the photograph of the lintel from its reproduction in a later publication, which again discussed only the lintel and did not refer to a tympanum.<sup>4</sup> The lintel disappeared from Errondo after 1924; in 1941 it turned up combined with the tympanum in the possession of a dealer

1. J. Gudiol Ricart, "Los relieves de la portada de Errondo y el maestro de Cabestany," *Príncipe de Viana* 14 (1944) pp. 9–16.

2. L. Pressouyre, "Une nouvelle oeuvre de maître de Cabestany en Toscane: le pilier sculpté de San Giovanni in Sugana," *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France* (1969) pp. 30–55. This article contains the bibliography, to date, on the Cabestany Master.

3. Fr. F. de Mendoza, "Las ruinas de Errondo. Un relieve interesante," *Verdad y Caridad* (June 1924) pp. 84–90.

4. J. E. Uranga, "El tímpan de la puerta de la ermita de S. Bartolomé en Aguilar de Codés," *Príncipe de Viana* 8 (1942) p. 253.



FIGURE 1

Tympanum of the Temptation of Christ and accompanying lintel. The Cloisters Collection, 65.122.1, 2

in New York. Neither the site nor the disposition of the tympanum at the time of its recovery has ever been reported, and to the present day the original context of the work remains unknown.<sup>5</sup> The Cloisters tympanum and lintel, then, may have even belonged to different monuments. The iconography of the lintel, which is indigenous to northeastern Spain,<sup>6</sup> is not thematically re-

lated to that of the tympanum and will not be considered further, here.

The sequence of events on the tympanum proceeds from right to left, in contrast to the conventional order in narrative relief sculpture. The alternation of three demons with three large cross-nimbed figures of Christ standing on an animal and holding a book in his left

5. It has not been possible to trace the history of the carvings between the date of the publication of the lintel in situ and the date of its arrival in New York. In 1941, James Montllor, Inc. owned the sculptures and sold them a year later to Joseph Brummer, who in turn auctioned them in 1949: *Joseph Brummer Collection III*, sale, Parke-Bernet Galleries, New York, June 9, 1949, p. 122, no. 523. In 1951, the sculptures, which then belonged to Paula de Koenigsberg, were exhibited in Buenos Aires: P. de Koenigsberg, *Exposición de obras maestras: siglos XII al XVII*, exhibition catalogue

(Buenos Aires, 1951) pl. xiv. The Metropolitan Museum purchased the carvings in 1965.

6. A. Séné, "Quelques remarques sur les tympanes romans à chrisme en Aragon et en Navarre," *Mélanges René Crozet I* (Poitiers, 1966) pp. 365–381; J. Uranga, *Arte medieval navarro II* (Pamplona, 1971–73) p. 247 f. The lintel is mentioned in the older study by L. Torres Balbas, "La escultura románica aragonesa y el crismón de los tímpanos de las iglesias de la región pirenaica," *Archivo español de arte y arqueológica* 6 (1926) p. 290.

hand illustrates the Temptation of Christ (Matt. 4:1–11, Luke 4:1–13). On the left side Christ appears a fourth time, but with two small winged figures, the ministering angels who attended him immediately following his temptation (Matt. 4:11, Mark 1:13).<sup>7</sup> The artist has carved the three encounters between Christ and Satan, but has given an identifying prop for only the first trial—the request to transform stones into bread—by rendering the demon with stone in hand (Figure 2). Although this episode is common to both Luke and Matthew, the latter is probably the source here, since it is the only account that both describes three distinct temptations and includes the Ministry of the Angels. The angel to Christ's right bears a platter of fish, while Christ holds a round loaf of bread offered by the angel to his left (Figure 3). Neither scripture nor any commentary to my knowledge names the objects borne in service to Christ.

The Temptation cycle of the Cloisters tympanum is interesting not simply because it is an example of a narrative that occurs infrequently in Romanesque sculpture, but because it is a unique variation of iconographic conventions established in wall painting and manuscript illumination as well as in sculpture. The components of the Cloisters cycle—the series of three confrontations between Christ and Satan, the descriptive detail of the stone, the completion of the cycle with the ministry of angels who bring food to the victor, and the image of Christ treading upon a beast—derive from several distinct traditions within the pictorial reper-

toire of the Temptation. In combining these various traditions the Cloisters cycle deviates from iconographic norms. The fusion of motifs from diverse but familiar traditions may have come about spontaneously through a visual association of related representations. However, it is also plausible that the tympanum makes a statement for which a new pictorial formula had to be created. The theological concept that emerges reflects the influence of Saint Augustine's commentary on the Temptation as contained within the second sermon on Psalm 90 in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, a text especially popular in the twelfth century.<sup>8</sup> In the discussion that follows I shall attempt to identify the various traditions reflected in the Cloisters relief and to clarify the relationship between the imagery and Augustine's ideas.

The Temptation is generally represented in one of two ways: a complete narrative rendition of the three encounters between Christ and Satan, or an abbreviated form in which one episode is selected to represent the whole cycle. In all complete cycles, the trials are clearly distinguished from one another by such scenic devices as a stone, a building, or a mountain, which identify the particular temptation and indicate the relevant passage in Matthew or Luke. Complete renditions appear in Niccolò's lintel in the west façade of the Cathedral of Piacenza, in the reliefs of the southern porch of St-Pierre in Beaulieu (Corrèze), and in those of the southeast pier in the cloister of St-Trophime at Arles, in monumental fresco and mosaic cycles,<sup>9</sup> in many manuscripts,<sup>10</sup> and in four capitals.<sup>11</sup> Whether the three

7. Gudíol Ricart, ("Los relieves de la portada de Errondo," p. 10) mistook the angels for children and wrongly identified the scene as the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes.

8. In 1931, André Wilmart inventoried European libraries for extant manuscripts of the *Enarrationes*. Of the 368 manuscripts surveyed, he judged 147 to be from the twelfth century, 61 from the eleventh century, 24 from the tenth century, 37 from the thirteenth century and 29 from the fourteenth century: A. Wilmart, "La tradition des grands ouvrages de Saint Augustine," *Miscellanea Agostiniana* II (Rome, 1931) pp. 295–315. The preface to the *Enarrationes* in the *Corpus Christianorum*, series Latina 38 (Turnhout, 1956) p. vi, note 4, lists 28 manuscripts not included in Wilmart's survey: 6 from the twelfth century, 5 from the eleventh century, 5 from the ninth century and earlier, 3 from the thirteenth century, and 3 from the fourteenth century. Both inventories overlooked a late twelfth-century manuscript in the Cathedral of Burgo de Osma (Ms. 76) that can perhaps be localized to the abbey of Fitero in Navarre, not far from Pamplona (*L'art roman*, exhibition catalogue [Barcelona, 1961] p. 97, no. 161). The authors of these surveys were

not concerned with manuscripts recorded in the holdings of medieval scriptoria, but now no longer extant. A catalogue of the library of Santa Maria of Seo de Urgell, drawn up in 1148, mentions Augustine's books of the expositions on the psalms (P. Pujol i Tubau, "De la cultura catalana mig-èval: una biblioteca dels temps romànics," *Estudis Universitaris Catalans* 7 (1913) pp. 1–3, and esp. 5 f).

9. Frescoes: Sant' Angelo in Formis, north wall of nave (1070s or 1080s); St-Aignan at Brinay-sur-Cher, south wall of choir (mid-twelfth century), includes only two episodes of the Temptation plus the Ministry of the Angels; section from San Baudelio de Berlanga, Soria province (third or fourth decade of the twelfth century) now at The Cloisters. A fresco of the Temptation, now nearly completely destroyed, once existed in the chapter house of the monastery in Sigüenza, Huesca province (first quarter thirteenth century). Mosaics: San Marco's in Venice, vault of the south crossing (late twelfth or thirteenth century); Cathedral of Monreale, back wall of south transept (1180s).



FIGURE 2 (OPPOSITE PAGE)  
The first and second temptation.  
Detail of Figure 1

FIGURE 3  
The Ministry of the Angels. Detail  
of Figure 1

temptations are strung out horizontally or arranged in a more complex structure, as at Beaulieu,<sup>12</sup> it is the scenic element that identifies the episode, orders the events, and thus provides the full narrative context of the image.

In abbreviated versions, one temptation stands for the entire series. This type appears in several capitals, where one face displays a single confrontation between Christ and Satan, usually the episode of the stones, and the side adjacent to the main scene may occasionally contain an attending angel.<sup>13</sup> The few abbreviated representations in Western manuscripts also focus prima-

10. The Drogo Sacramentary, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. lat. 9428, fol. 41r (in a single historiated initial); the Psalter of St. Bertin, Boulogne-sur-Mer, Bibl. Mun., Ms. 20, fols. 101r, 102r, 102v, 103r (series of consecutive initials); the Gospel Book of Otto, Aachen, Cathedral Treasury, fol. 26v; the Gospel Book of Otto III, Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 4453, fol. 32v; the Gospel Book of Henry III, Escorial, Real Bibl., vit. 17, fol. 26r; the Prayerbook of S. Hildegardis, Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 935, fols. 20v and 21v; Prague University Library, Ms. XIV.A.13, fol. 24r; the Ripoll Bible, Rome, Vatican Library, Ms. lat. 5729, fol. 367; the St. Albans Psalter, Hildesheim, St. Godehard, pp. 33, 34, 35; the Psalter of St. Swithin's Priory, London, Brit. Mus., Cott. Nero C.IV, fol. 18r; psalter, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. lat. 8846, fol. 3r; Holkham Bible, London, Brit. Mus., Add. 47682, fols. 19r and v.

11. In the cloister of Moissac, in the cloister of San Pedro el



Viejo in Huesca, the capital group of the trumeau of the Puerta de la Gloria at Santiago de Compostela, and a French capital of unknown provenance in the Metropolitan Museum (21.21.1). All but the Huesca capital offer variations in the standard setting of building and mountain that normally correspond to the second and third temptations. In the capital at Moissac, for example, the image of the demon grasping hold of Christ represents the third temptation. To illustrate the same episode, the New York capital shows Christ borne on the back of the demon, and in the cycle of the Puerta de la Gloria, both Christ and Satan hold banderoles with inscriptions of their respective lines from scripture. The capital cycle at Compostela further substitutes the image of the demon before the seated Christ for the episode customarily associated with the pinnacle of the Temple. The trials, if not identifiable by standard motifs, are nevertheless differentiated from each other through

compositional variation, and the narrative tradition is thereby maintained.

12. At Beaulieu the first two trials are contained under one arch and the third is isolated in its own. For a full discussion of the sculptural ensemble of the southern porch at Beaulieu: Y. Christe, "Le portail de Beaulieu. Etude iconographique et stylistique," *Bulletin archéologique de comité des travaux historiques et scientifiques*, n.s. 6 (1970) pp. 57-70.

13. Examples of representations of single episodes on twelfth-century capitals occur in the nave of Notre-Dame du Port in Clermont-Ferrand, in the north gallery of the cloister of Sta. Maria in Estany, in the apse of St-Pierre in Chauvigny, in the nave of St-Nectaire, in the naves of Autun and Saulieu, in a capital from St-Pierre de Puymiclan (Lot-et-Garonne) in the Louvre (No. 2382), and in the nave at Plaimpied. Occasionally two encounters



rily upon the first temptation and the Ministry of the Angels.<sup>14</sup>

The best known and most monumental example of the Temptation in Romanesque art appears in a northern Spanish tympanum that predates the Cloisters carving, the reliefs of the left tympanum of the Portal of the Goldsmiths at Santiago de Compostela (Figure 4). This is the only other known instance of the Temptation occurring on a tympanum and also the only other sequence that reads from right to left. The Compostela Temptation is neither a narrative cycle nor an abbreviation. It is instead a conflated representation that telescopes into one scene all the various moments of the narrative. A winged demon perched on the Temple proffers the stone while at the same time a second demon kneels on the rocky surface of a mountain. The foliage of a large tree around which a serpent is entwined<sup>15</sup> separates these demons from the figure of Christ, who faces them, and the ministering angels ap-

are rendered: capitals from the Abbey of La Sauve-Majeure, St-Léonard at Ile-Bouchard (Indre-et-Loire) and the cloister of the Cathedral of Tarragona (thirteenth century).

14. Exultet Roll (1) of Pisa, Museo Civico; Homilies of Bede, Gerona, St. Feliü, fol. 78; psalter, Berlin Kupferstichkab., Ms. 78.A.6, fol. 10v; psalter, Hamburg, Staatsbibliothek, In Scr 84, fol. 12r; psalter, Glasgow, Hunterian Museum, Ms. 229, Sect. 3, fol. 1v; New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, Ms. 44, fol. 5v; Gospel Book of Henry the Lion, Gmunden, Duke of Cumberland, fol. 20v; Bible, Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. lat. 16746, fol. 28v. In Byzantine psalters, the temptation that takes place on the pinnacle of the Temple is represented: Chludoff Psalter, Moscow, Historical Museum, Gr. 129, fol. 92v; Mount Athos, Pantokrator Monastery, Ms. 61, fol. 130v; Rome, Vatican Library, Barb. Gr. 372, fol. 152v; the Bristol Psalter, London, Brit. Mus., Add. 40731, fol. 154r; the Theodore Psalter, London, Brit. Mus., Add. 19352, fol. 123v; the Hamilton Psalter, Berlin, Kupferstichkab., Ms. 78.A.9, fol. 170v.

15. For the significance of the serpent's appearance, M. Schapiro, "The Religious Meaning of the Ruthwell Cross," *The Art Bulletin* 26 (1944) p. 233. The tree appears quite frequently in Temptation cycles, especially in the first episode (for example, in the capitals at Moissac and in the Metropolitan Museum, in the Psalter of St. Bertin, and in the St. Albans Psalter). The serpent, however, is an additional feature, unique, I believe, to the Compostela relief.

FIGURE 4

The Temptation of Christ and Ministry of the Angels. Left tympanum of the Portal of the Goldsmiths, Santiago de Compostela (photo: Mas)



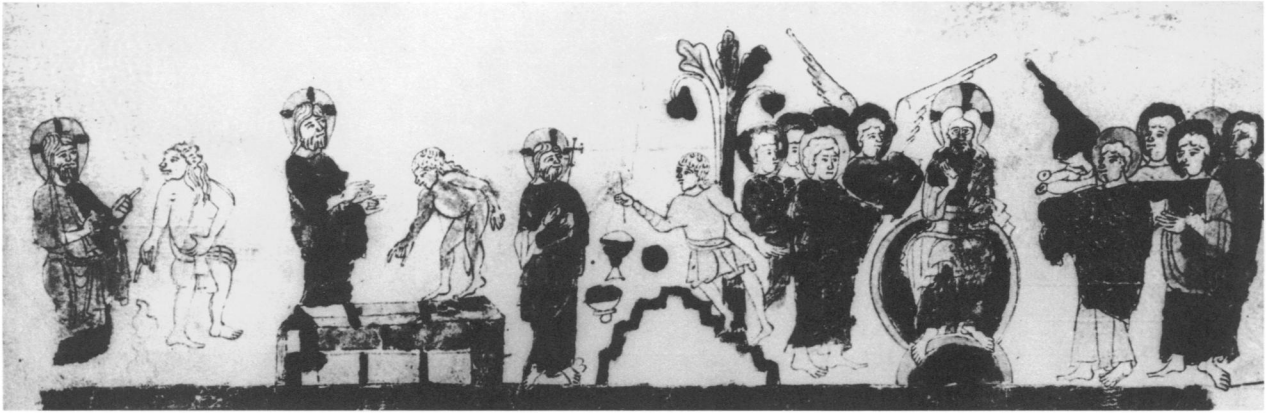


FIGURE 5

The Temptation of Christ and Ministry of the Angels. Ripoll Bible, Rome, Vatican Library, Ms. lat. 5729, fol. 367 (photo: Mas)

pear in the very midst of the encounter. This arrangement induced the author of the Pilgrim's Guide to describe a complete narrative cycle, which in his mind consisted of three groups of demons corresponding to three temptations.<sup>16</sup>

The Temptation cycle of the Cloisters tympanum is unique in combining the narrative and abbreviated modes. All three episodes of Christ and the demon appear, but the fact that only the first is specified by an identifying prop is typical of the abbreviated mode. The disregard for the clarification of episodes through scenic elements and the repetition of the compositional relationship between Christ and Satan at the expense of elaborated description have resulted in a simplification of the narrative. At the same time, the Cloisters cycle includes the Ministry of the Angels, a scene that frequently appears in representations of the Temptation but is absent from the otherwise complete sculptural cycles at Piacenza, Beaulieu, and Arles. The sculptor has supplied the Ministry of Angels with the curious and unusual feature of bread and fish, whereas in the preceding sequence of scenes he held descriptive detail to a minimum.

The most common type of representation of the Ministry shows the angels in various attitudes of adoration, sometimes bowing or gesturing in recognition of Christ, but most often with empty, though perhaps, veiled, hands.<sup>17</sup> When the angels bear objects in service to Christ, these are usually of a liturgical nature.<sup>18</sup> The

scene of the Ministry in the Temptation cycle of the Ripoll Bible (Figure 5), a Catalonian work of the first half of the eleventh century, is the only other representation in which angels offer bread and fish to Christ. What might the bread and fish signify in this context? Popular devotion may have inspired the notion that the angels provided Jesus with a meal after his long fast in the wilderness. Bread and fish, the common foodstuff, could have been incorporated into illustrations of such a legend, which did in fact circulate through the Medi-

16. *Le Guide du Pèlerin*, trans. and ed. J. Viellard, 4th ed. (Mâcon, 1969) p. 100.

17. For example, in the Gospel Books of Otto and Otto III, the Exultet Roll of Pisa, the Gerona Homilies, Paris lat. 8846, and Prague XIV.A.13, in the frescoes of Brinay and San Baudelio, in the mosaic cycle of San Marco's in Venice, and in the last panel of the Temptation cycle in the ceiling of the nave of St. Martin's in Zillis.

18. For example, *bread and vessel*: Psalter of St. Bertin; *bread and cloth or vestment*: capital at Moissac; *vessel and cloth*: Holkham Bible; *liturgical vessels*: Gospel of Henry the Lion, mosaic cycle of the Cathedral of Monreale (angel holds chalice); *censers*: Morgan Ms. 44, a thirteenth-century psalter in Philadelphia (Free Library, Lewis 185, fol. 9r), left tympanum of Portal of Goldsmiths at Compostela, nave capital of Notre-Dame du Port in Clermont-Ferrand. Non-liturgical objects borne by ministering angels: *globe*: Stuttgart Psalter (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Ms. Bibl. fols. 23, 107v); *cross-surmounted staff*: Gospel Book of Matilda of Tuscany (New York, Morgan Library, Ms. 492, fol. 43r) and capital No. 2382 in the Louvre; *swords*: shaft of the candlestick of the Cathedral of Gaeta. In the capital at Ile-Bouchard and in the Avila Bible (Madrid, Bibl. Nac., E.R.8, fol. 323r) the angels grasp Christ's shoulder.

tations on the Life of Christ, written in the second half of the thirteenth century by an anonymous monk now referred to as the Pseudo-Bonaventure. Except for a fourteenth-century recension of the *Meditations* (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. ital. 115), which preserves a cycle of abundant and detailed literal illustrations, this text did not inspire contemporary representations of ministering angels bearing bread and fish.<sup>19</sup> Carolingian illustrations of the Ministry in the Soissons Gospels (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. lat. 8850, fol. 82) and the Drogo Sacramentary (Paris, Bibl. Nat., Ms. lat. 9428, fol. 41r) show angels attending Christ with a meal,<sup>20</sup> but in contrast to the Ripoll and Cloisters representations, the nature of the meal is not specified.

The choice of bread and fish clearly recalls the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes, which the Gospel of John (6:22–59) sets forth as the prefiguration of the Eucharist. Such eucharistic associations account for the appearance of the loaf and fish in Last Supper scenes.<sup>21</sup> In the Ripoll scene, the angels bear two fish and five loaves in accordance with the specific descriptions of the Miracle by John (6:9) and Luke (9:13, 16). Since the sculptor of the Cloisters tympanum tends to reduce descriptive detail, it is likely that the single loaf and fish are nevertheless meant to recall the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes. In both the Cloisters and Ripoll scenes of the Ministry, the loaf and fish refer to the ideas expounded in Augustine's *Enarratio* on Psalm 90, discussed below, in which he associates the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes with the episodes of the Temptation. That the detail of the loaf and fish is common to both the Ripoll and Cloisters Temptation cycles reaffirms the Catalan background of the master or atelier responsible for the tympanum.<sup>22</sup>

The sculptor of the Cloisters tympanum gave the scene of the Ministry a significant arrangement within the design of the Temptation cycle. The near frontal pose of the fourth figure of Christ visually resolves the diagonal progression of the heads (in three-quarter pose) and extended hands of the first three figures of Christ. Raising his right hand in a gesture of benediction and floating above the angels in an ascension-like image, the last figure of Christ assumes a majestic posture that celebrates the victory he achieved over Satan in the previous scenes.

The theme of victory, however, is chiefly conveyed in the Cloisters relief by the repeated motif of Christ

upon an animal. The image here of Christ standing on a single beast seems to be a reduction of the traditional motif symbolic of triumph, which shows Christ astride two, or sometimes four, confronted beasts. The motif of Christ "super aspidem" derives from Psalm 90 verse 13: "Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon." This psalm is textually related to the Temptation in that during the second trial Satan quotes verses 11 and 12 from the psalm but leaves out the following verse that prefigures his defeat. The textual link between the Temptation and Psalm 90 would be a matter of common knowledge to anyone familiar with scripture and was, in fact, reinforced by the liturgy of the mass for the first Sunday in Lent, which coordi-

19. In the *Meditations on the Life of Christ*, Christ bids the angels bring him a meal of bread and fish prepared by his mother. Paris Bibl. Nat., Ms. ital. 115, fol. 71r, 71v, shows the angels obtaining the food from the Virgin and spreading a banquet on the ground. According to I. Ragusa and R. B. Green (*Meditations on the Life of Christ, an Illuminated Manuscript of the Fourteenth century* [Princeton, 1961] p. 427, figs. 103, 104), the illustrations accompanying the text are unique to this manuscript and appear not to derive from earlier iconographic tradition. The tale itself, however, seems to derive from a combination of earlier medieval literary sources. In the following passage (p. 123 in the Ragusa and Green translation) the author mentions the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes in connection with the Temptation, as does Augustine in his commentary on the Temptation in the *Enarratio* on Psalm 90 (as I shall discuss below): "And I ask what food the angels laid before Him after so long a fast. Scripture does not mention it, but we can suppose the victor to eat in any way we wish. And surely if we consider His power, the question arises of His obtaining anything He wished or of creating it according to the decision of His Will. But we shall not discover that He made use of this power for Himself or His disciples, but for the multitudes, whom He fed twice, with a few loaves for great numbers."

20. For reproductions: W. Koehler, *Die Karolingischen Miniaturen* (Berlin, 1960) II, pl. 84; III, pl. 83a. An Armenian Gospel Book, dated c. 1262, in the Walters Art Gallery (Ms. 539, fol. 24v) preserves the only Eastern example known to me of the ministering angels bearing a meal: Serapie Der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery* (Baltimore, 1973) pl. 46, fig. 62.

21. L. Wehrhahn-Stauch, "Christliche Fischsymbolik von den Anfängen bis zum hohen Mittelalter," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 35 (1972) pp. 29–36.

22. M. Durliat, *La sculpture romane en Roussillon IV* (Perpignan, 1954) pp. 6–49, esp. pp. 14–27; Durliat, "Du nouveau sur le maître de Cabestany," *Bulletin monumental*, 1971, pp. 193–198; Durliat, "Le maître de Cabestany," *Les Cahiers de St-Michel-de-Cuxa* 4 (1973) pp. 116–127. R. Crozet, "A propos du maître de Cabestany: note sur un chapiteau de Sant Pere de Roda au Musée de Worcester," *Annales du Midi* 84 (1972) pp. 77–80.



nated the psalm as the gradual verse with the recitation of the story of the Temptation.<sup>23</sup> In several psalters a scene of the Temptation replaces or even appears in conjunction with the standard illustration to Psalm 90, which consists simply of the motif of Christ “super aspidem.”<sup>24</sup> The rare instances, however, in which the image of Christ upon beasts occurs in representations of the Temptation outside the psalter are found in sculpture—in the Temptation cycles of the Cloisters tympanum and at Beaulieu and in the single temptation scene on a capital at Plaimpied. The Cloisters Temptation, then, is directly connected with the imagery of the psalm. In contrast to the Beaulieu sculptures where the motif of Christ upon beasts follows the last confrontation with Satan and thus appears as an outcome, the motif of victory in the Cloisters cycle appears simultaneously with each of the temptations and therefore as a sign of Christ’s unchallenged omnipotence in a dynamic process of the divine overcoming evil.

Although the components of the Cloisters Temptation derive from established pictorial formulas, the image that emerges from the combination and reorganization of these elements has no artistic precedent. The merging of the abbreviated and narrative modes of representation, the unusual feature of angels bearing bread and fish, and the intrusion into the Temptation of imagery associated with Psalm 90 have resulted in the transformation of conventional iconographic types. Since standardized imagery cannot undergo transformation in form without a concurrent transformation in content, we must carefully examine the message of the Cloisters tympanum.

Saint Augustine’s exposition on Psalm 90 (divided into two sermons) in the *Enarrationes in Psalmos* contains his most elaborate and highly charged commentary on the Temptation of Christ.<sup>25</sup> His main concern lies in relating this event in Christ’s life to the spiritual life of the practicing Christian. The experience of temptation was not necessary to Christ, but he undertook to confront the demon so that through the example of his answers the Christian might also overcome temptation. In the second sermon, Augustine develops this idea with regard to the first two episodes of the Temptation as given by Matthew. Christ could have transformed the stones into bread as Satan requested, but by refraining he conquered the demon with the humility of his response. Christ indeed had the capacity to perform

such a miracle, for he could feed many thousands from five loaves; he chose, however, to offer humanity a spiritual truth: “Not by bread alone does man live, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

He was hungry: and then the tempter said, “If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” Was it a great thing for our Lord Jesus Christ to make bread out of stones, when He satisfied so many thousands with five loaves? He made bread out of nothing. For whence came that quantity of food, which could satisfy so many thousands? The sources of that bread are in the Lord’s hands. This is nothing wonderful; for He Himself made out of five loaves of bread enough for so many thousands, who also every day out of a few seeds raised upon earth immense harvests. These are the miracles of our Lord: but from their constant operation they are disregarded. What then my brethren, was it impossible for the Lord to create bread out of stones? He made men even out of stones, in the words of John the Baptist himself, “God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.” Why then did He not so? That He might teach thee how to answer the tempter, so that if thou was a Christian and belongest to Christ, would He desert thee now? . . . Listen to our Lord: “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”<sup>26</sup>

23. J. Squilbeck, “La tentation du Christ au désert et la Beliger Insignis,” *Bulletin des musées royaux d’art et d’histoire*, séries 4, 38–39 (1966–67) p. 136.

24. In several Byzantine psalters (see note 14) a representation of the Temptation accompanies the psalm as a marginal illustration. A scene of the Temptation occurs in conjunction with the motif of Christ upon beasts in two Western psalters: the St. Bertin and the Stuttgart. In the latter, the devil is shown fleeing after his defeat. For specific examples of the motif of Christ upon beasts: J. J. G. Alexander, *Norman Illumination at Mont-St-Michel* 966–1100 (Oxford, 1970) p. 148 note 3, p. 149 note 11; also Christie, “Le portail de Beaulieu,” p. 64 note 12.

25. The Latin text quoted in the following notes comes from the *Corpus Christianorum*, series Latina 39 (Turnhout, 1956) pp. 1254–78, but can also be found in *Patrologia Latina* XXXIX, cols. 1150–71. The English translation I use can be found in *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers* VIII, ed. P. Schaff (Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1956) pp. 446–452. The abbreviations CC and NPNF are used in the following notes.

26. NPNF, p. 450. CC, p. 1271 f.: Esurivit; et iam tentator: Dic lapidibus istis ut panes fiant, si Filius Dei es. Quid magnum erat Domino Iesu Christo de lapidibus panem facere, qui de quinque panibus tot milia saturavit? De nihilo fecit panem. Tanta enim multido escae, quae saturaret tot milia, unde processit? Fontes panis erant in manibus Domini. Non est mirum; nam ipse fecit de quinque panibus multum panis unde saturaret tot milia, qui facit quotidie in terra de paucis granis messes ingentes. Ipsa enim sunt miracula Domini; sed assiduitate viluerunt. Quid ergo, fratres, impossibile erat Domino de lapidibus panes facere?

Just as Augustine dwells upon the transformation of stones into bread, so too does the sculptor of the Cloisters relief choose only to describe the first temptation, distinguishing this episode from the following two and calling to mind ideas associated with the miraculous creation of bread. Augustine's insistence upon Christ's divine power is reflected in the tympanum in the scene of the Ministry, where Christ displays a large round loaf in his hand as if to confirm his capacity to materialize the bread. The image almost echoes the phrase, "The sources of that bread are in the Lord's hands." The combination of bread and fish recalls the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes to which Augustine also repeatedly refers. Augustine further asks:

Dost thou think the word of God bread? If the word of God, through which all things were made, were not bread, He would not say, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."<sup>27</sup>

The tympanum illustrates Augustine's equation of the word of God with bread—the book held in Christ's left hand throughout the scenes of the Temptation becomes the loaf held in the same hand in the final scene.

The imagery in the tympanum primarily corresponds to Augustine's discussion of the first temptation. Augustine also incorporates the second episode into his argument, since it is during this episode that Satan quotes verses 11 and 12 from the psalm. His explication of the latter verse, however, relates to the Ministry of the Angels rather than to the episodes of the Temptation:

Christ was raised up in the hands of Angels, when He was taken up into heaven: not that, if Angels had not sustained Him, He would have fallen: but because they were attending on their King. Say not, those who sustained Him are better than He who was sustained. Are then cattle better than men, because they sustain the weaknesses of men? . . . Thus also in this Psalm we

may understand it of the service of the Angels: it does not pertain to any infirmity in our Lord, but to the honour they pay, and to their service.<sup>28</sup>

The phrase "Christ was raised up in the hands of Angels" seems to have motivated the ascension-like image of the Ministry, where Christ rises above the small angels who support him.

It was noted earlier that the Temptation cycle of the Ripoll Bible is the only other work to contain a direct reference to the Miracle of the Loaves and Fishes within the context of the Ministry. Included within this scene is yet another feature that seems to correspond to a passage from Augustine's sermon on Psalm 90. The words concerned with the Ministry, "His head is in heaven, His feet on earth," may have inspired here the representation of Christ enthroned on a type of figure-eight configuration in which the lower ring symbolizes the earth as the Lord's footstool.

Both the Cloisters and Ripoll Temptation cycles are related to Augustine's commentary through their common allusion to the Miracle of Loaves and Fishes. In the Ripoll cycle the features derived from Augustine's tract appear incidental to the otherwise fully conventional narrative presentation. In the Cloisters carving, however, Augustinian ideas dominate and give meaning to the total image. The threefold repetition of the motif of Christ "super aspidem" not only lends to the relief "a primitive, incantatory character," to quote Meyer Schapiro's apt description of the tympanum,<sup>29</sup> but also creates a homiletic quality that captures the rhetorical force of Augustine's text. The carving sacrifices narrative effect for moral impact.

The link between Augustine's exposition on Psalm 90 and the Cloisters tympanum seems too striking to be coincidental. We cannot be certain whether the text exerted a direct influence upon the sculpture or whether the influence of the text was transmitted

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Homines fecit de lapidibus, dicente ipso Iohanne Baptista: Potens est Deus de lapidibus istis suscitare filios Abrahae. Quare ergo non fecit? Ut te doceret respondere tentatori, ut si forte in aliqua angustia positus fueris, et suggesserit tibi tentator: Si christianus esses et ad Christum pertineres, deseret te modo? non tibi misisset auxilium? . . . Audi Dominum: Non in solo pane vivit homo, sed in omni verbi Dei.

27. NPNF, p. 450. CC, p. 1272: Putasne verbum Dei panem? Si non esset panis Verbum Dei per quod facta sunt omnia, non diceret: Ego sum panis vivus, qui de caelo descendi.

28. NPNF, p. 451. CC, p. 1273 f.: Sublatus est Christus in manibus angelorum, quando assumptus est in caelum; non quia, si non portarent angeli, ruiturus erat; sed quia obsequebantur regi. Ne forte dicatis: Meliores sunt qui portabant, quam ille qui portabatur. Ergo meliora sunt iumenta quam homines? Sed quia infirmitatem hominum portant iumenta. . . . Sic ergo et de obsequio angelorum in hoc psalmo intellegere poterimus, non ad infirmitatem Domini pertinet, sed ad illorum honorificentiam, ad illorum servitutem.

29. Schapiro, "The Religious Meaning," p. 234.

through its illustration in recensions of the *Enarrationes*. In all probability, however, the text itself served as the source of the imagery, since none of the manuscripts known to me contains illustrations relevant to the specific passages of the *Enarratio* quoted in this study. Artists responsible for the illustration of psalters were apparently well acquainted with the *Enarrationes in Psalmos*. Much that is unique in the iconography of the historiated initials of the St. Albans Psalter, for example, has been attributed directly to Augustine's text rather than to illustrations of that text.<sup>30</sup> Although I could not detect a long-standing tradition of associa-

tion between the sermon and the Temptation in artistic representations, the example of the Ripoll Bible may indicate a pattern along these lines in Catalonia, where the Cabestany Master was mainly active.

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30. C. R. Dodwell in O. Pächt, *The Saint Albans Psalter* (London, 1960) p. 183 ff.