A Literary Aspect of the Bury St. Edmunds Cross

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THE INTEGRATION of religious art and literature found expression in unlimited ways during the Middle Ages. A good example of the harmonious combination of poetry and pictures is the beautiful ninth-century Utrecht Psalter,[1] where we see the simplest of the many ways of combination, namely the illustration, alongside the words, of the events described in the Psalms. A more subtle and involved fusion was the application on works of art of particular and unusual texts chosen for their instructive meaning. The curious Latin distich that is carved in majuscules down the sides of the late twelfth-century[2] ivory cross in the Cloisters Collection (Figures 1, 2), belongs in this category:

> CHAM RIDET DUM NUDA VIDET PUDIBUNDA PARENTIS
> IUDEI RISERE DEI PENAM MOR[IENTIS]
> (Cham laughed when he saw the shameful nakedness of his parent;
> The Jews laughed at the pain of the dying God.)

This inscription is intriguing for three reasons. First, although the ultimate source appears to be obscure, the first half of the verse is recorded as having existed in slightly altered form on a now-destroyed choir screen of roughly the same date as the cross; this is the only other known example of its occurrence on a work of art. Second, the complete couplet is found, with small changes in the wording but not in the basic structure, in numerous medieval texts of varying date; through most of these texts it can be traced to a single author, who, however, still does not represent the earliest stage of its use. The third cause for the singular interest of the inscription lies in its content: a study of the Christian writings from which it derived, and of the texts that actually contain it, shows that medieval theologians found an allegory, and also several moral meanings, in the scene of Noah's drunkenness to which it alludes.

The remarkable fact that a verse extremely close to the first line of the cross inscription once existed on the painted choir screen, made around 1181, in the abbey church at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, has been a strong reason for attributing the cross to that monastery.[3] The

1. Utrecht, University Library MS. 32.

2. The most plausible date is the decade 1180–1190. See Thomas P. F. Hoving, "The Bury St. Edmunds Cross," *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 22 (1964) pp. 317–340, especially p. 339.

3. Hoving, "Bury Cross," p. 338.

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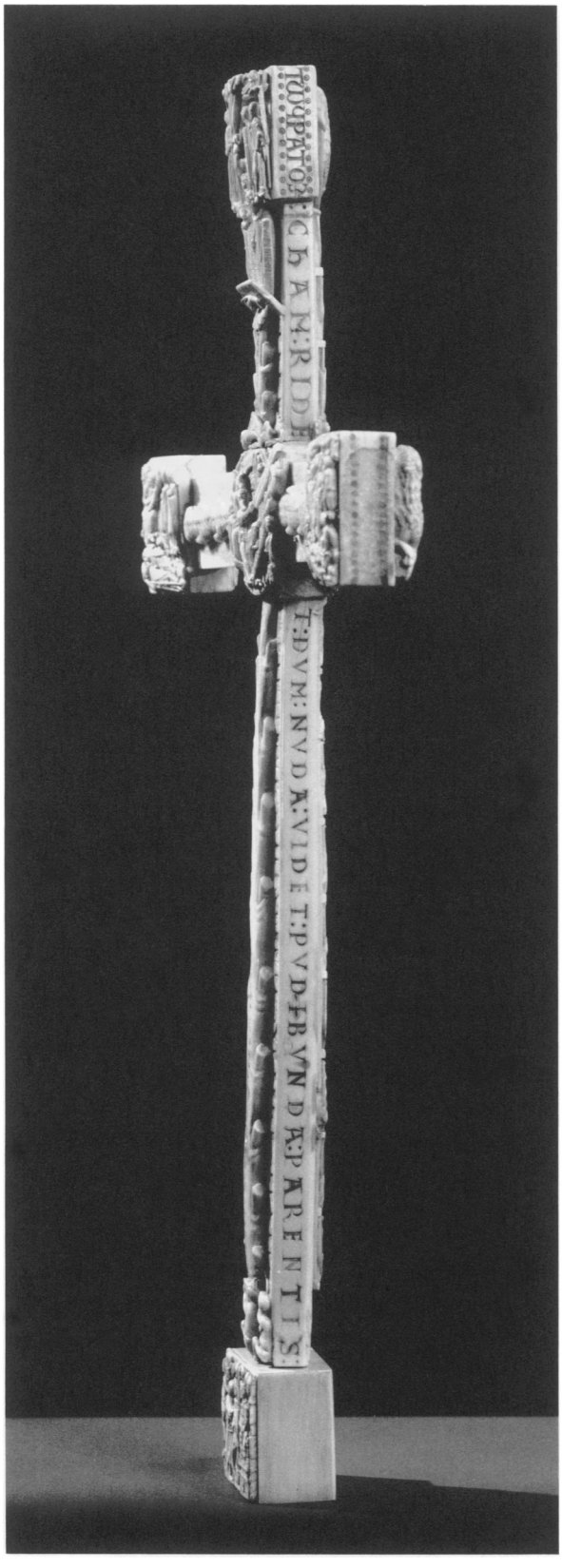


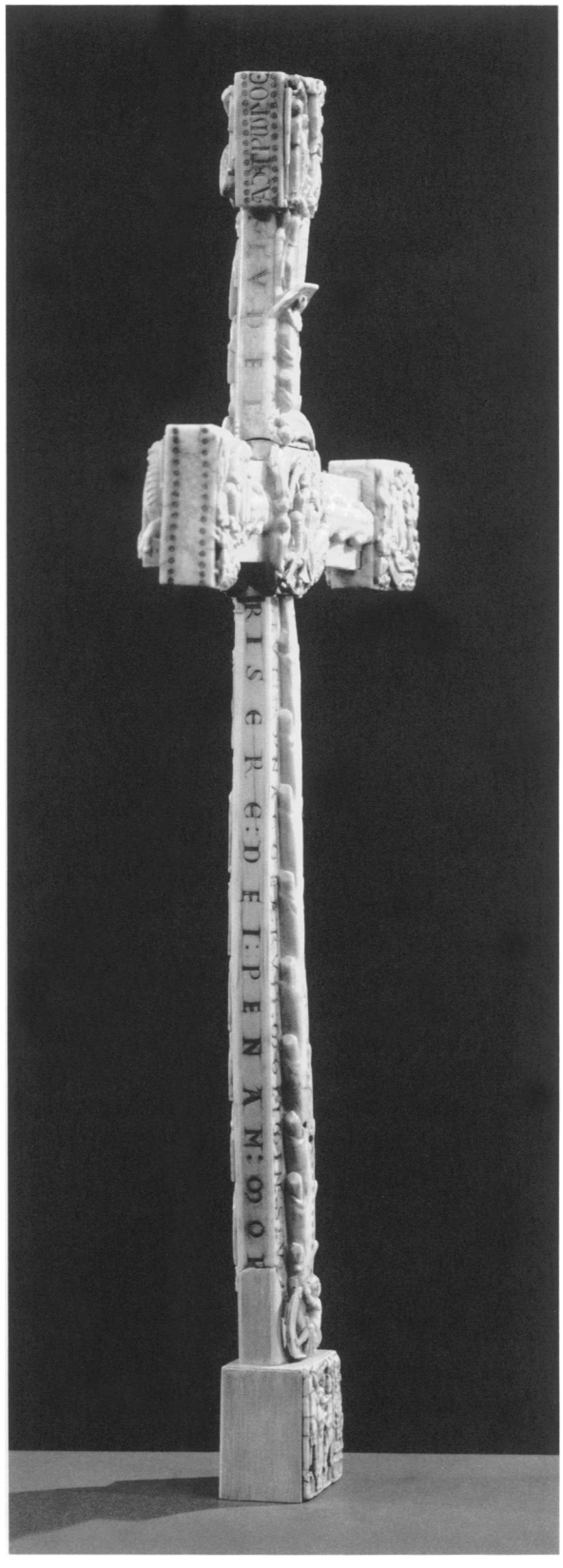


FIGURE 1

Cross, English, probably about 1180–1190. Walrus ivory, 22⅝ × 14¼ inches. Side view from the right, showing the first line of the *Cham ridet* inscription on the shaft sides. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Cloisters Collection, 63.12 and 63.127

FIGURE 2

Side view of the Cloisters cross from the left, showing the second line of the inscription on the shaft sides

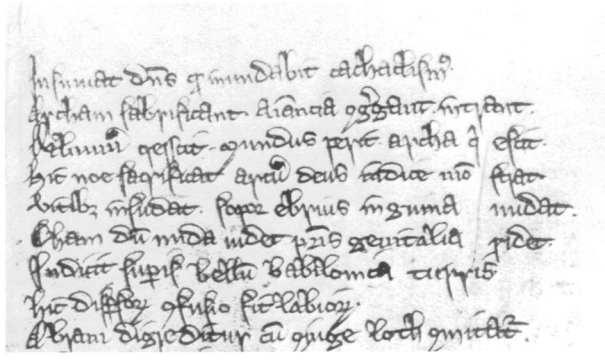


FIGURE 3

Leonine hexameters, lines 12–20 of a set of ninety verses based on Genesis. In a volume from Bury St. Edmunds Abbey, copied about 1300. Thought to be the "elegiac verses" arranged by Abbot Samson for his painted choir in 1181. College of Arms, London, Arundel MS. XXX, detail of fol. 212 recto. By permission of the Chapter of the College of Arms

verse, which reads "Cham dum nuda videt patris genitalia ridet,"[4] is found in a manuscript written for the Abbey of St. Edmund, which left the abbey library at the Dissolution and is now Arundel MS. XXX in the College of Arms, London (Figure 3). Among the miscellaneous contents of this volume,[5] all copied down in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is a mass of verses and inscriptions, which some industrious person transcribed, probably around 1300, from decoration schemes in various English churches. Most of these verses were copied from stained-glass windows, altarpieces, tapestries, sculptures, and wall paintings in the abbey church and the conventual buildings at Bury. They were studied and described in detail by the late Montague Rhodes James,[6] who considered that the list of ninety Genesis subjects headed *in choro et circa*, found on folios 211 verso–212 verso, represents the set of scenes and verses that was put together for the decoration of the choir screen.[7] Each subject in the list is described by a leonine hexameter like the one quoted above (Figure 3); it is the seventeenth verse in the set, and falls between one on Noah's vintage and one on the Tower of Babel.[8]

The actual choir screen or *pulpitum*, almost certainly of stone, was built by Hugo the Sacrist about 1180.[9] M. R. James thought that, as well as separating the choir from the nave, it must have extended east to enclose the choir itself on the north and south (see below). It was destroyed or fell into ruin, along with the church, after the dissolution of the monastery in 1539; fortunately Jocelin of Brakelond, who entered the convent of Bury in 1173, tells us about its adornment in his famous *Chronicle*. He writes: "In diebus illis chorus noster fuit erectus, Samsone procurante, historias picture ordinante, et versus elegiacos dictante." ("In those days our choir was built under the direction of Samson, who arranged the painted stories from the Bible and composed the elegiac verses.")[10]

4. "When Cham sees the naked genitals of his father he laughs."

5. The MS. is described by W. H. Black, *Catalogue of the Arundel Manuscripts in the Library of the College of Arms* (1829, privately printed) pp. 44–57. Also by Antonia Gransden, ed. and trans., *The Chronicle of Bury St. Edmunds 1212–1301* (London, 1964) pp. xxxviii–xlii.

6. M. R. James, "On the Abbey Church of S. Edmund at Bury," *Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 8vo Publications*, no. 28 (1895) pp. 126–127, 131, 186–203.

7. James, "S. Edmund at Bury," pp. 130–132, 202.

8. Verse 16: "Vitibus insudat. Sopor ebrius inguina nudat." ("He toils at the vines. Drunken sleep lays bare his loins.") Verse 18: "Indicit superis bellum Babilonica turris." ("The tower of Babel declares war on the gods.")

9. The rood, or crucifix, which surmounted the screen, and its accompanying figures were also put up by Hugo. See James, "S. Edmund at Bury," p. 130; also p. 153: ". . . dominus Hugo sacrista . . . Pulpitum in ecclesia aedificavit, magna cruce erecta, cum imaginibus . . . Marie et S. Johannis sibi allaterantibus." Extract from *Gesta Sacristarum* (*Memorials of St. Edmund's Abbey*, ed. T. Arnold, Rolls Series (1890–1896) II, p. 289).

10. *The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond*, ed. & trans. H. E. Butler (Oxford, 1949) p. 9 and note 2.

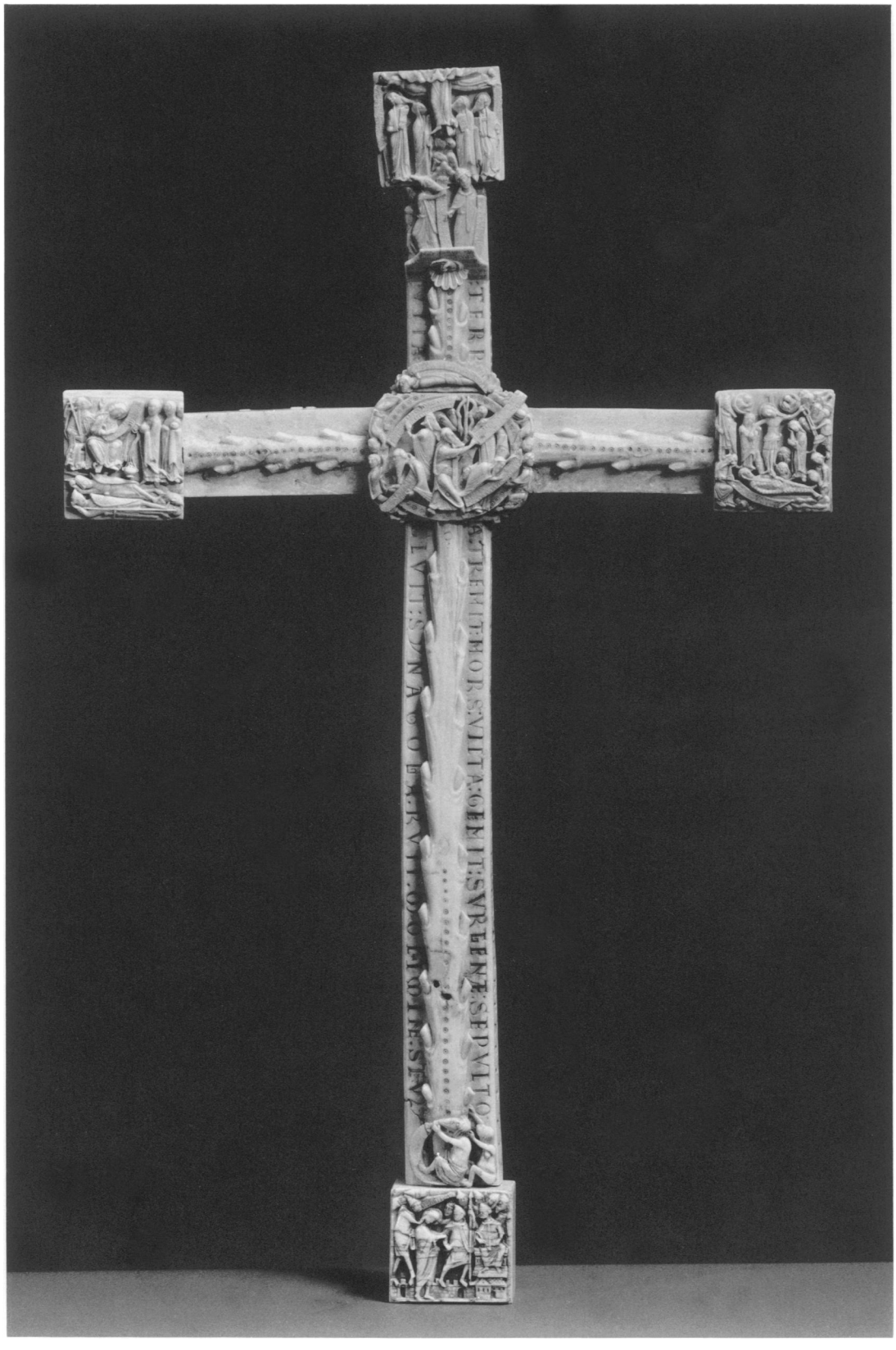


FIGURE 4
Front view of the Cloisters cross, showing the *Terra tremit* inscription on the front of the shaft

"In those days" refers to 1181, the year of vacancy between Abbot Hugh's death in November 1180 and Samson's election in late February 1182. Before becoming abbot at the age of forty-seven (he was born around 1135), the energetic and forcible Samson was the sub-sacrist, and as such was in charge of the workmen (*magister super operarios*). He continued to rule the abbey as abbot until his death in 1214; it is most likely, therefore, that he did at least select the "elegiac verses" that Jocelin speaks of, but whether Jocelin is correct in saying that he actually wrote them is arguable and will be discussed below.

M. R. James believed that the Arundel verses did accompany Samson's paintings and that they decorated the north and south outer wall of the extended choir screen (or more aptly, the choir enclosure), forming a backing to the choir stalls. Further, he was "inclined to believe" that the verses do represent Samson's work, despite the fact that they are leonine hexameters, whereas Jocelin calls them, "elegiac verses."

In addition to describing an elegiac couplet (a dactylic hexameter and a pentameter), the term *elegiac* can also be used to refer to verses that are mournful in character (from the Greek *elegos*, "mournful poem"), or to mean simply "poetic." It is doubtful whether Jocelin the chronicler, who was a delightful but somewhat naïve writer and storyteller rather than a great scholar, was using the word in any strict sense beyond meaning poetic verses of a serious nature. These the Arundel verses certainly are, describing ninety subjects from the Book of Genesis that adorned the most sacred part of the church, the choir. We can thus accept them as Jocelin's "elegiac verses." The important question remains. Would Samson (or anyone) have composed them and the cross distich as well? It should be mentioned at this point that there is another couplet with the same meter and rhyme scheme[11] inscribed in majuscules down the front of the Cloisters cross (Figure 4):

11. Dactylic hexameters with two-syllabled internal and tail rhymes. The tail rhyme was a strictly medieval practice; both it and the internal rhyme of two syllables were used from the eleventh century onward.

– ∪ ∪ | – – | – ∪ ∪ | – –| – ∪
TERRA TREMIT MORS VICTA GEMIT SURGENTE
∪| – –
SEPULTO
– ∪ ∪ |– ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪|– – |– ∪∪| – –
VITA CLUIT SYNAGOGA RUIT MOLIMINE STULT[O].

(Earth trembles, and defeated death moans as He that was buried arises;
Life hears herself called while the Synagogue falls by its own foolish efforts.)[12]

Both couplets were obviously either composed or chosen by the same man:

– –| – – | – ∪ ∪| – ∪ ∪| – ∪ ∪| – –
CHAM RIDET DUM NUDA VIDET PUDIBUNDA PARENTIS
– –| – –| – ∪ ∪|– –| – ∪ ∪|– –
IUDEI RISERE DEI PENAM MOR[IENTIS].

Whoever the author was, he used the same meter as the monk Bernard of Morlas in his long satirical poem *De Contemptu Mundi*, as well as a similar (but not identical) triple rhyme scheme. Two famous quotations from Bernard's poem are:

– ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪| – ∪∪|– ∪ ∪| – ∪∪| – ∪
Hora novissima, tempora pessima sunt, vigilemus.
– ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪| – ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪|– ∪
ecce minaciter imminet arbiter ille supremus.

Urbs Syon aurea, patria lactea, cive decora.
omne cor obruis, omnibus obstruis, et cor et ora.

Bernard lived at Cluny in the time of Abbot Peter the Venerable (died 1142), to whom he dedicated the poem. This dedication contains several revealing comments. Bernard says that he is writing in verse because it will appeal to people more than prose, and moreover, that rhymes are easier to remember and therefore to learn from. He also refers to his achievement in having composed such a long poem in such a difficult meter, and admits that he could not have done it without divine inspiration. His pride was justifiable: he had written some three thousand dactylic hexameter lines, which rhyme in pairs with two-syllabled end rhymes,

12. I have so far been unable to trace this inscription.

and in which there are internal rhymes after the second and fourth dactyls in each line—*a a b, c c b*. Bernard's internal rhyme differs from that on the Cloisters cross in one important way: the feet divisions are also word divisions, and this makes it possible to divide the one line into three separate lines. This would never happen in classical poetry and tends to make the reading monotonous. The ivory-cross lines are far more classical.[13]

Few medieval poets besides Bernard combined dactylic hexameters with the triple division of interior and final rhymes. Marbod of Rennes (1035–about 1123) used the construction in a poem on the Virgin Mary:

– ∪ ∪ | – – | – ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪| – ∪ ∪| – ∪
Stella maris, quae sola paris sine coniuge prolem,
– ∪∪|– –| – ∪ ∪|– ∪ ∪| – ∪∪| – ∪
iustitiae clarum specie super omnia solem,

His younger contemporary Hildebert of Lavardin (died 1133) is said to have used it, but sparingly. Peter the Venerable also did in his "Rhythmus in laude Salvatoris"; perhaps he was copying Bernard, but the result was even more monotonous in spite of the dramatic content.

In the Arundel manuscript verse the order of the words has been changed round, and *genitalia*, a five-syllabled word, has been substituted for the four-syllabled *pudibunda*. To avoid incorrect scansion of the – – ∪ – – verse, however, *patris* has been used instead of *parentis*:

– – | – ∪ ∪|– –|– ∪ ∪| –∪∪ | – –
Cham dum nuda videt patris genitalia ridet.

This is the only example of the verse I know of that has *patris* and not *parentis*.

Jocelin says[14] that Abbot Samson "was eloquent both in French and Latin, having regard rather to the sense of what he had to say than to ornaments of speech," and that he "used to preach in English to the people, but in the speech of Norfolk, where he was born and bred . . .," but that he "seemed . . . to love the active life more than the contemplative; he had more praise for good obedientaries than for good cloister monks; and rarely did he approve of any man solely for his knowledge of literature, unless he were also wise in worldly affairs." There is more in the same vein, such as the telling remark that Samson "hated wordy fellows." All of Jocelin's description serves to give us a picture of a man who, although he was well educated and had a versatile mind with erudition at his command, was not addicted to scholarship as an end in itself. He saw fit to concentrate on active administration rather than on academic pursuits.[15] Such an abbot was needed, since the Abbey of St. Edmund, although greatly venerated as the ancient shrine of a royal Saxon martyr, was famed more for its material wealth and kingly patronage than for ascetic and spiritual zeal. The affairs of the abbey demanded constant attention from its abbot,[16] who was moreover a great feudal overlord managing the whole town of Bury St. Edmunds as well as the Liberty, an estate of eight and a half hundreds.[17]

Samson would have known quite well how to compose verse; poetry was studied in the monastery and cathedral schools, and textbooks on poetical composition were in vogue by at least 1175. Even so, a man such as the one Jocelin describes, when he needed a set of verses to accompany his Genesis scenes round the choir, might well look around for inspiration in various books, such as miscellaneous verse collections or Bible commentaries with marginal annotations, rather than construct all ninety leonine hexameters from scratch.

It is unlikely that the same person wrote both groups of verses, since the Arundel line is clearly an imitation. There are three possibilities. One is that the author of the Arundel rhyme (Samson) derived his line from the cross couplet, which he had seen or knew of, and fiddled about with the word order to fit it to his own scheme. An alternative is that the designers of both

13. Mr. Christopher Hohler of The Courtauld Institute of Art first drew my attention to the parallels between the meter and rhyme of the Cluny verses and those on the ivory-cross shaft. On Bernard of Morlas, see F. J. E. Raby, *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1966) pp. 315–318 and notes. I am grateful to Mr. Brian Cook of the British Museum for technical criticism of the rhyme schemes that I have discussed.

14. *Jocelin*, p. 40.

15. David Knowles, *Saints and Scholars* (Cambridge, 1962) pp. 64–69, makes this point in his portrait of Samson. See also Gransden, *Bury Chronicle*, p. xiv.

16. Gransden, *Bury Chronicle*, pp. xxix–xxx.

17. *Jocelin* (Intro.) pp. xxiv–xxvi.

the choir screen and the cross had recourse to a common text that contained the whole couplet. Strength is given to this theory by the fact that the only two monuments on which the verse is found are datable within the same decade (1180–1190), the one verified as a Bury creation, the other having certain connections with Bury. The third possibility, which is the most feasible on the evidence I hope to show, is that the couplet was already in circulation by about 1180, and that it was to be found in more than one text. The following attempt to determine the extent to which it was absorbed into the current Latin literature of the period 1180–1190 can at best be partial.

The scene of the drunkenness of Noah and his son Cham's disrespect for him appears in Genesis 9: 20–27:

Coepitque Noe vir agricola exercere terram, et plantavit vineam; bibensque vinum inebriatus est et nudatus in tabernaculo suo. Quod cum vidisset Cham pater Chanaan, verenda scilicet patris sui esse nudata, nuntiavit duobus fratribus suis foras. At vero Sem et Japheth pallium imposuerunt humeris patris sui: faciesque eorum aversae erant, et patris virilia non viderunt. Evigilans autem Noe ex vino, cum didicisset quae fecerat ei filius suus minor, ait: Maledictus Chanaan, servus servorum erit fratribus suis. Dixitque: Benedictus Dominus Deus Sem, sit Chanaan servus ejus. Dilatet Deus Japheth, et habitet in tabernaculis Sem, sitque Chanaan servus ejus.[18]

Noah's drunkenness, portrayed in two to five scenes, was an integral part of most Byzantine Old Testament picture cycles. As such, it illustrated a sacred Bible story and had no typological or allegorical meaning. Some fine examples are the early sixth-century Vienna Genesis,[19] where it is shown in two scenes, the mosaics at St. Mark's, Venice (about 1200), where it is in five, and the twelfth-century Sicilian mosaic cycles at Monreale and Palermo. At Monreale the accompanying inscription reads: HIC OSTENDIT CAM VERENDA PATR(IS) FR(ATR)IBUS. In the Cappella Palatina at Palermo it is almost identical, with the addition of the names CHAM SEM IAPHET NOE (Figure 5).[20] The story is also included in the Octateuch manuscript cycles, where it is illustrated in four scenes. They are the Vintage, Noah Drinking, Noah's Drunkenness and Cham's Disrespect, and Noah Cursing Cham's Descendants.[21]

The scene of Noah and Cham occurs in several Romanesque Genesis cycles. Two instances are in the frescoed nave vault at Saint-Savin-sur-Gartempe in Poitou and on one of the later panels of the bronze doors at San Zeno, Verona (mid-twelfth century). The painted choir enclosure at Bury belonged in this category, of course, as the leonine verse in Arundel XXX (Figure 3) is strictly a caption to an Old Testament scene: no typology is involved.

The prefiguration of the New Testament in the Old was frequently referred to by the writers of the Gospels, both in their own narratives and in the words of Christ;[22] it was also alluded to by Saint Paul.[23] This mysterious plan of fulfillment was expounded and elaborated in an increasingly grandiose way by the early Fathers of the Church,[24] and a flood of patristic literature resulted. The events in Genesis were considered particularly significant symbols of Christ's life and Passion, apart from their consequence as the beginning of history. Beryl Smalley[25] remarks that Genesis was one of the four books on which a choice of commentaries was usually possessed by a really good,

18. "And Noe, a husbandman, began to till the ground, and planted a vineyard. And drinking of the wine was made drunk, and was uncovered in his tent. Which when Cham the father of Chanaan had seen, to wit, that his father's nakedness was uncovered, he told it to his two brethren without. But Sem and Japheth put a cloak upon their shoulders, and going backward covered the nakedness of their father: and their faces were turned away, and they saw not their father's nakedness. And Noe awakening from the wine, when he had learned what his younger son had done to him, he said: Cursed be Chanaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said: Blessed be the Lord God of Sem; be Chanaan his servant. May God enlarge Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Sem; and Chanaan be his servant." (Gen. 9:20–27) All Bible passages quoted in English in this article are from the Douay-Rheims Version (1941 ed.).

19. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. theol. graec. 31, fol. III, 6.

20. Otto Demus, *The Mosaics of Norman Sicily* (London, 1949) p. 67, note 175; p. 169, note 439; pls. 32 A, 102.

21. Vatican, Cod. gr. 747, eleventh century; Vatican, Cod. gr. 746, Istanbul, Seraglio Cod. 8, Smyrna, Evangelical School Cod. A.1 (burnt 1923), all twelfth century. For ill. of the scene in the Smyrna Octateuch see D.-C. Hesseling, *Miniatures de l'Octateuche Grec de Smyrne* in *Codices Graeci et Latini*, Supplementum VI (Leyden, 1909) figs. 36–37.

22. Matt. 5:17; 13:35; 27:35. Luke 21:22; 24:44.

23. Rom. 1:2. I Cor. 15:3–4. II Cor. 3:13–16.

24. Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, chap. 1.

25. Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, p. 38.

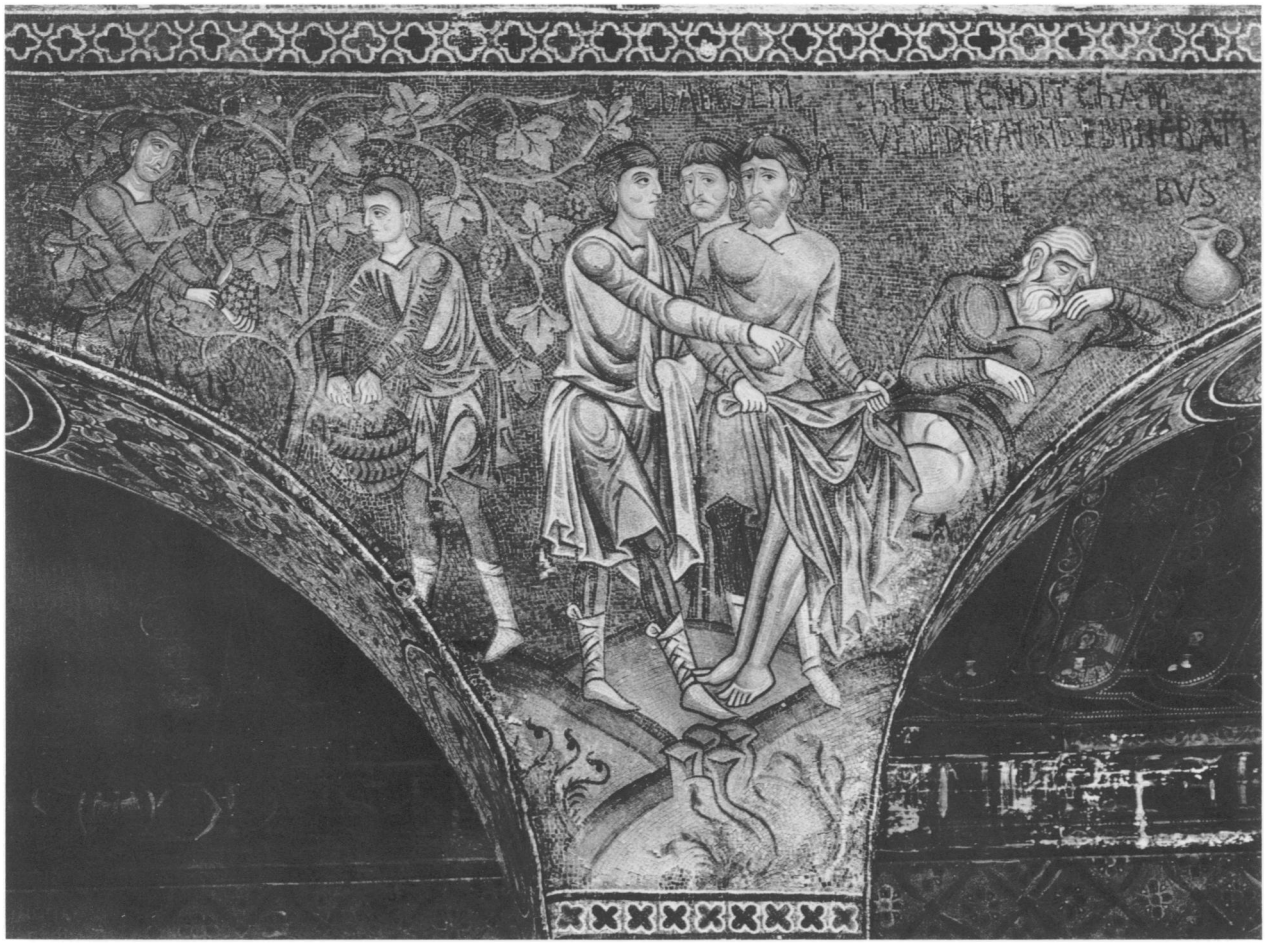


FIGURE 5
Noah's Vintage and Drunkenness. Part of a Genesis cycle on the nave wall of Monreale Cathedral. Mosaic, last quarter of the XII century (Photo: Alinari)

up-to-date monastic library at the turn of the ninth century. The idea that Noah was a type for Christ and his son Cham a type for the Jews was developed in Christian literature from the earliest writers onward and soon grew into an allegory. A survey of this development reveals a wealth of interpretations and comments, which provided the literary background for the emergence of the *Cham ridet* proverb—if it may so be called—sometime during the second part of the twelfth century.

The contents of the first two chapters of book 16 of St. Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (written 413–426) demonstrate to what lengths the Fathers took their interpretations. Noah himself is considered prophetic: "His tilling of the vineyard, his drunkenness by its fruit, his nakedness while he slept and the other events recorded here are all heavy with prophetic meanings and shrouded in mysteries."[26] In chapter 2 Augustine expounds the matter. He asks, "Who can . . . intelligently consider these events, without recognizing them fulfilled in Christ?" He continues by saying that Cham means "hot" (*calidus*) and signifies "the tribe of heretics, hot with the spirit of impatience. . . ." He adds to this the fact that hypocrites—those who call themselves

26. *P.L.*, XLI, col. 477. I have used my own translations for all Latin passages except those acknowledged in notes 10 and 18. For Augustine on Gen. 9:20–27 the reader is referred also to *St. Augustine, The City of God against the Pagans*, ed. E. M. Sanford and W. M. Green, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass, 1965) V, pp. 3–15.

Christians but lead bad lives—can also be figured by Cham, Noah's middle son, "for Christ's passion, which was indicated by that man's nakedness, is at once proclaimed by their hypocrite's profession, and disgraced by their wicked deeds." Further on he interprets Noah's vineyard as the house of Israel:

> . . . from the very vineyard, that is, from the people of Israel, came the flesh and blood which he took on that he might suffer for us. He was drunken, means that he suffered, and he was naked, that his weakness was visible. . . . Now as to the fact that the Bible adds . . . in his house, that is a polite way of revealing that Christ was to suffer death on the cross at the hands of his own people, the members of his own flesh and blood, namely the Jews.

Augustine may have taken the idea that Noah's drunkenness was a foreshadowing of the Crucifixion from St. Cyprian, because in *De Doctrina Christiana* he comments on a particular passage on this subject from the writings of Cyprian.[27]

The indexes of Migne's *Patrologia Latina* reveal an abundance of references to the Noah-Cham story and its hidden meaning, but like any other such biblical type and allegory it cannot be given an exact chronology and was clearly a widespread notion among the early Christian Fathers and commentators. For instance, it turns up with deeper, more obscure definitions in the lyrical writings of Ephraem the Syrian, who lived about 306–373 and appears to have written exclusively in Syriac.

The precise words of the Vulgate text, *Cham . . . nuntiavit*, were soon altered to mean that he not only announced Noah's shame but also jeered at it. Cyprian says *denotata*, which means "point out" or "mark out."[28] Augustine writes that "Cham . . . betrayed [*prodiderat*] his father's nakedness."[29] In his celebrated *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, which took place about A.D. 135, Justin Martyr said, "the son who laughed [*irriserat*] at his naked father."[30] Procupius of Gaza wrote in the early sixth century and drew on extracts from earlier exegetes. After an exceedingly lengthy discussion of Genesis 9, he suggests that "we dwell a little on an allegory. . . . Cham is the type of the Jewish people who mocked [*illusit*] Christ hanging from the Cross."[31]

Isidore of Seville—who was archbishop of that town for thirty-six years (600–636)—is more specific in his *Allegoriae quaedam Sacrae Scripturae*[32] and his *Quaestiones in Vetus Testamentum*.[33] In the latter the evidence of Augustine is very evident; in fact, certain sentences are direct extracts.[34] Isidore disregarded the *nuntiavit* of the Vulgate text except as an afterthought[35] and wasted no words in explaining the point: "Cham laughed [*derisit*] on seeing the nakedness, which is the passion of Christ, and the Jews mocked [*subsannaverunt*] on seeing the death of Christ."[36]

Isidore's writings were very influential and widely read by other medieval authors; every monastic library would have wanted to own copies of his works.[37] The great theologian and abbot of Fulda, Rabanus Maurus (766 or 784–856), repeats entire passages on the subject from Isidore's *Quaestiones* in his *Commentaria in Genesim*,[38] and particularly in the *De universo*, where he includes the sentence quoted above.[39] Once the idea of the allegory took root, it was repeated and added to in the writings of every commentator, sometimes in a rather long and tedious way. Remigius of Auxerre said in the early tenth century: "Cham in truth signifies the heretics, wherefore he is well interpreted as crafty [*callidus*]. For the heretics are cunning, not from wisdom

27. *De Doctrina Christiana*, lib. IV, cap. 21; *P.L.*, XXXIV, col. 111. Augustine refers to, and quotes from (almost verbatim), Cyprian's *Epistola LXIII, Ad Caeciliam de Sacramento Dominici Calicis*, part 3. Cyprian's original text is in *P.L.*, IV, col. 375.

28. *Epistola LXIII*, part 3; *P.L.*, IV, col. 375. According to Etienne Baluze's note on this printed by Migne (col. 376), *denotata* is synonymous in this context with *denudata* or "revealed."

29. *De Civitate Dei*, XVI, 1.

30. *Dialogus cum Tryphone Judaeo*, chap. 13, *P.G.*, VI, col. 795 (from Migne's Latin trans. of the Greek).

31. *Commentarii in Genesin*, IX, *P.G.*, LXXXVII, cols. 306–307 (from the Latin).

32. *P.L.*, LXXXIII, col. 103.

33. *Quaestiones in Vet. Test.*, In Genesin, VIII, *P.L.*, LXXXIII, cols. 235–237.

34. *Quaestiones*, VIII, parts 1–6, 11. The comments are based closely on Augustine's *Contra Faustum Manichaeum*, lib. XII, cap. 23, *P.L.*, XLII, col. 266.

35. *Quaestiones*, VIII, part 6; *P.L.*, LXXXIII, col. 236.

36. *Quaestiones*, VIII, part 4; *P.L.*, LXXXIII, col. 235.

37. The lists of surviving books known to have come from English medieval libraries mention an *Isidorus* again and again. See Ker, *Medieval Libraries*.

38. Lib. II, cap. IX, *P.L.*, CVII, col. 525.

39. *De universo libri XXII*, lib. II, cap. 1, *P.L.*, CXI, col. 34.

but from malice, because they seek to deceive the honest people of the Church."[40]

Out of an immense choice of twelfth-century authors, the reader is referred particularly to Richard of St. Victor and to Peter Comestor. Richard was a pupil of the famous Hugh, who was director of studies at the wealthy and intensely scholarly abbey of St. Victor in Paris from 1133 until his death in 1141. Hugh taught that *lectio divina*, the study of the Scriptures, should be divided into three approaches: the literal or historical and the allegorical to attain knowledge, and the figurative to attain virtue. The *Allegoriae in Vetus Testamentum* were printed in Migne under Hugh's name, but as a doubtful work in the Appendix; they are now established as the work of Richard[41] and certainly reflect Hugh's insistence on both biblical allegory and moral meaning. "Noah . . ." writes Richard,

foreshadows Christ who fulfilled the Decalogue Law. . . . Unhappy Cham signifies the faithless Jewish people who derided him, saying "He saved others: himself he cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him";[42] Sem is the Apostles and certain disciples and those Jews who believed, and Japeth who covered the shame [*verenda*] of his parent with a cloak indicates the people of the Gentiles converted to the faith. . . . Wherefore Chanaan the son of Cham shall be punished with a curse, and thus so will the descendants of the Jews be damned by their own curse.

The *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor, probably written between 1164 and 1178 while he was chancellor of the University of Paris, rapidly became a prescribed text for theology students and one of the most widely read, translated, and annotated works on the Bible in the Middle Ages. It is a sacred history condensing the Old Testament, the Gospels, and Acts, and embellished with allegorical comments and explanations. On the account of Noah and Cham from Genesis 9, Peter does not have anything special to add to the expositions of his predecessors and contemporaries; in fact, he says a great deal less.[43] He alters, and adds to, the Vulgate text of verse 22: "Sed cum Cham verenda patris vidisset nudata, *irridens*, nuntiavit hoc fratribus," and further on explains that Cham is referred to in verse 24 as the youngest son when in fact he was the middle one, because he is less worthy: "Potest dici minor, id est indignior."

The anonymous scribe who copied the *Historia* in the manuscript Vatican lat. 1973 in the late twelfth century must have felt that Peter's text needed enriching, for he annotated it with couplets and marginal *postillae*. In the bottom margin of folio 14 verso, underneath the standard passage on Genesis 9:20, is written (Figure 6):

Versiculus
Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
Judei risere dei penam patientis.[44]

Apart from the ivory cross, this is the earliest example of the complete couplet known to me, albeit *membra* ("limbs") has been substituted for *pudibunda*, *detecta* ("uncovered") for *nuda*, and *patientis* ("suffering") for *morientis*; this wording will be found to be the most usual form of the couplet. I shall comment later on this alteration of the wording. Since the *Historia* was such an important set book in the theological schools, lecture courses were given on it,[45] and annotation of its text was a normal development. Unfortunately the provenance of this manuscript is not known, and it cannot be given a more specific date than late twelfth century. All that can be said at this point is that the couplet was apparently known in literary circles by that time.

By far the most remarkable discovery concerning this Latin distich is that it forms part of the standard, unabridged text of a particular sermon by the satirical English writer Odo of Cheriton, who lived from about 1185 to 1247.[46] The sermon belongs to his earliest set of homilies, the *Sermones Dominicales*, or Sunday Sermons,

40. *Commentarius in Genesim*, IX; *P.L.*, CXXXI, cols. 78–79.

41. *Allegoriae in Vetus Testamentum*, lib. I, cap. XVII; *P.L.*, CLXXV, cols. 643–644. On Richard's authorship of the *Allegoriae*, see Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, p. 98, note 5; p. 106, note 1.

42. Matt. 27:42.

43. *Historia Scholastica*, Liber Genesis, cap. XXXVI; *P.L.*, CXCVIII, col. 1087.

44. My first reference to the couplet in Vat. lat. 1973 came from Hans Walther, *Alphabetisches Verzeichnis der Versanfänge mittellateinischer Dichtungen* (Göttingen, 1959) no. 2674. See also *Codices Vaticani Latini III, Codd. 1461–2059* (Rome, 1912) p. 381: "Historia Scholastica cum scholiis" ("with notes").

45. Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, pp. 178–179, 200.

46. Friend, "Cheriton."

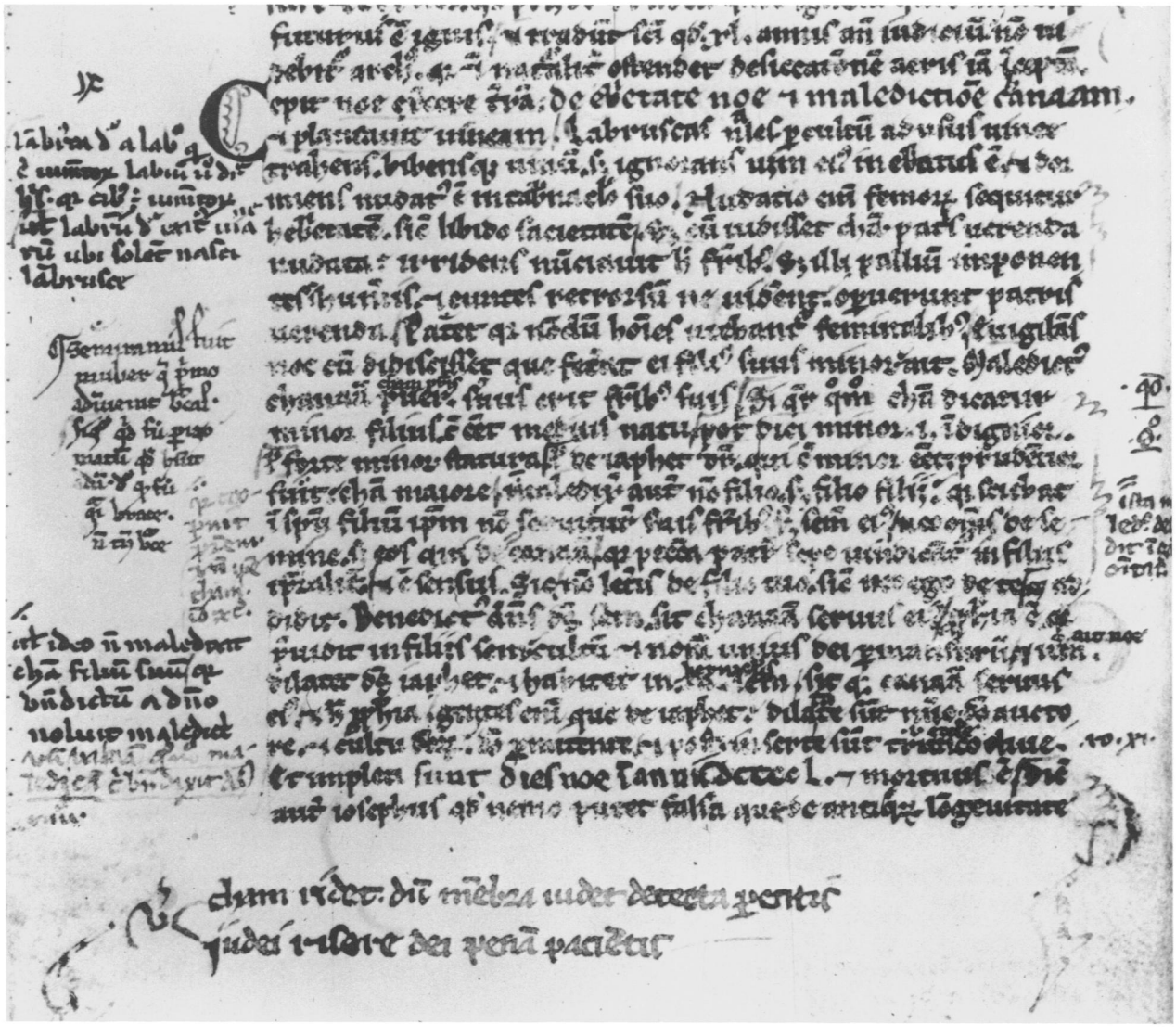


FIGURE 6

Petrus Comestor, *Historia Scholastica* with marginal notes. Part of a page, showing discussion of Genesis 9:20–29, and the *Cham ridet* couplet in the bottom margin. Copied late XII century. Biblioteca Apostolica, Vatican City, Vatican. lat. 1973, fol. 14 verso

which are on the Gospel readings for the *temporale* calendar of the ecclesiastical year. They were finished by Odo on December 31, 1219. It must be stressed that although this date comes thirty years or more after that suggested for the Cloisters cross (the decade 1180–1190, see note 2), Odo was probably collecting material in Paris for the sermons by 1210 or earlier (see below, p. 59). Obviously he took the couplet from an earlier source; the year 1219 and the name of Odo offer the only base from which to pursue this source.[47] I know of fifteen examples of the verse in texts; nine of these are in copies of Odo's *Sermones Dominicales*. Since five of the others are in anonymous works, including the annotation in the Vatican *Historia Scholastica* described above, and since Odo's source has only suggested itself,

47. Samson of Bury St. Edmunds cannot be termed an author on the basis of the Arundel XXX hexameter, as it is so clearly an imitation.

I am not certain exactly when and from where the first borrowing took place. Although the Vatican manuscript is undoubtedly the earliest of all the text examples, it is of no help in our search for an author, as the annotations are at present still anonymous. On this account, the present article contains many speculations and does not offer a solution to the problem. It is important and interesting, nevertheless, to follow these conjectures and the evidence on which they are based, since—in addition to the intrinsic fascination of the texts themselves—it will show how complex and how rapid the diffusion of literary sayings, verses, and the like really was in the Middle Ages. What is certain is that something as small as a two-line verse is more likely to have been disseminated through texts than through one or even two works of art, particularly when it appears in several texts of different natures.

It has been said of the spirited homilist Odo of Cheriton: "The effect of his work is yet to be explored: He is a source for the collections of *exempla* of the later Middle Ages. He opens for us a new field in which to trace the motifs of the literature of France, Spain and England."[48] It is hoped that the following exploration of a single, specialized aspect of Odo's earliest sermons may contribute in a small way to this project, as well as to the solution of the riddle of the ivory-cross inscription. It is also hoped that light may be thrown in general on the way in which literary motifs were passed around from one work to another in the Middle Ages, specifically during that great era of scholastic output, the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

The only way to attempt to trace the verse is to examine all the manuscripts that contain it, to date them, and to determine their provenance as closely as possible. The first manuscript of the *Sermones Dominicales* to be discussed here is Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 16506. It was written in the thirteenth century,

FIGURE 7

Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales*. Text of the last page of the Sermon on Luke 2:42–52 (sermon 12 in this set), showing the section *De obedientia laycorum* with the *Cham ridet* couplet: lines 31–33. Copied XIII century, after 1235. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, lat. 16506, fol. 141 recto

but not before 1235 (see below, note 49), in what is probably an Italian hand. This script, with the exception of the first three folios, is neat and legible. The book is a collection of sermons by different authors, some of them anonymous, but it does include four works by Odo: our *Sermones Dominicales de tempore* on folios 123–218, the Treatise on the Passion, which was also an early work (before or about 1219), the *Sermones de Festis* (after 1225), and the *Summa de Poenitentia*, which was not composed until after 1235.[49]

Halfway down the left column of folio 141 recto is the couplet (Figure 7):

> Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
> Iudei risere dei penas patientis.[50]

The wording is identical to that of the example in Vatican lat. 1973, excepting the variation of *penas* for *penam*. The passage in which the couplet occurs is the last part of the sermon for the first Sunday after Circumcision, which in this set is the twelfth sermon, placed between that for the Feast of the Circumcision and that for the Epiphany. The sermon itself begins on folio 140 recto with the words based on Luke 2:42–43, "Cum factus esset Iesus xii annorum, ascendentibus illis Iherusalimam secundum consuetudinem diei festi, consumatisque diebus cum redirent remansit puer Iesus in Iherusalimam et cetera."[51] The length of the

48. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 641.

49. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 657. B.N. lat. 16506 cannot therefore have been copied before 1235.

50. Walther, *Versanfänge*, no. 2674. The book is briefly described by Léopold Delisle, *Inventaire des manuscrits latins conservés à la Bibliothèque Nationale sous les nos. 8823–18613* (Paris, 1863–1871) IV, *Inventaire des manuscrits de la Sorbonne conservés à la Bibliothèque Impériale sous les nos. 15176–16718 du fonds latin* (Paris, 1870) p. 63. A detailed description is in B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits de quelques manuscrits latins de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, V (Paris, 1892) pp. 162–171, although the couplet is not mentioned. See also Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 133–135.

51. The text for the sermon is Luke 2:42–52. Because it is split up and discussed one line at a time throughout the sermon, the translation of the whole is given here for the reader's easy reference: "And when he was twelve years old, they going up into Jerusalem, according to the custom of the feast, And having fulfilled the days, when they returned, the child Jesus remained in Jerusalem. And his parents knew it not. And thinking that he was in the company, they came a day's journey and sought him among their kinsfolks and acquaintance. And not finding him, they returned into Jerusalem, seeking him. And it came to pass that, after three days, they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all

Quidam laici prelatis et sacerdotibus sunt inobe-
dientes de quibus osee. x. Populus enim tuus sicut hii
qui contra dicunt sacerdoti. In apocalipsi. Effudit primus
angelus fialam suam in terra. et factum est uulnus seuissi-
mum ac pessimum in homines qui habent caracterem
bestie. Bestia est diabolus. caracter bestie est su-
bia. hoc signaculum portat qui doctoribus ecclesie
mandata dei predicantibus per superbiam resistunt. Item
caracter diaboli est. inpenitentia quia diabolus est spiritus ua-
dens et non rediens. et ut dicit iob. Indurantur quasi
malleatores incus. ut penitere non possint. Carac-
terem ergo diaboli habent qui impenitentes et incorrigi-
biles perseuerant. Plerique etiam in morte de odio siue
inuidia. uel superbia seu luxuria penitere nole-
tes deum inpugnant. Sicut iulianus apostata qui cum
iniuria sua deum in membris persequi non cessaret.
cum a milite quem beata uirgo resuscitauit ut ipsum
interficeret lethaliter esset uulneratus. iaciens in aera
sanguinem plenum est manu sua deum in aliud percutere di-
cens. uicisti galilee. uicisti. Hi non sunt animalia
domestica habentes pastorem cuius uocem eius non audi-
unt. sed lupi siluestres leonem. id est diabolum regem habentes
qui eos non pascere sed deuorare. Hi sunt qui ut pre-
latis suis detrahant. et si uident uerenda pasto-
ris qui est pater spiritualis. statim superbis suis publicant
non attendentes quod maledictus est canaan fi-
lius cham qui patris eius uidens uerenda patris sui.
noe irrisit. et fratribus nunciauit. et filii et opera il-
lius que sunt filii spirituales maledicti sunt a domino. Qui
detrahunt prelatis. hi enim similes sunt iudeis deri-
dentibus christum. unde ulg. Cham ridet dum membra
uidet detecta parentis. Iudei nudata dei penas
pacientis. Sem et iaphet qui cooperuerunt uerenda.
benedictionem meruerunt. Sic laici uendicant a domino
qui peccata prelatorum tegunt uel excusant si fortiter
notorum sunt quomodo asinus subditus reprehendit ba-
laam. unde in regum .ii. quando ceciderunt saul et for-
tes israel dixit dauid. Nolite annuntiare in geth. id est
inter laicos. ne forte letentur filie philistium. ne
forte leuentur filie incircumcisorum. cadauera non est
reuelanda. ne fetor eorum aliquos corrumpat. Unde
dauid gratias egit uiris iabes quia sepelierunt ossa re-
gis saul. Sic et illi qui operiunt peccata prelatorum
Constantinus in .xcvi. di. legitur. dixisse si propriis
oculis uidisset sacerdotem dei aut aliquem monachum
peccantem. clamidem suam explicaret. et cooperire
eum. ne ab aliquo uideretur. Item gelasius papa. c.
cum uideas regum colla et principum submitti genibus
sacerdotum. quasi osculari eorum dextram orationibus eorum cre-
duntur se communiri. ait quod principes salutare cum offe-
runt debent osculari dexteram sacerdotis. Mater eius
conseruabat omnia uerba hec .ii. cor. suo. ideo
memoriter recondebat. ut cum ipsis predicande seu
scribende incarnationis adueniret. sufficien-
ter prout gesta sunt uniuersa posset explicare
unde beata uirgo lilio comparatur. cant. ii. ego flos campi
et lilium conuallium. quia cum ipsis fuit doctrina clausa
tenuit. cum ipsis fuit tamquam folia expandet. na-
tiuitatem christi et eorum que ante et post natiuitatem
gesta sunt discipulis uiua certe declarauit. Sequi-
tur. ihesus proficiebat etate et sapientia apud deum et homines
ueritatem ita sapiens fuit filius dei iacens in
utero matris sicut sedens ad dexteram dei patris.
unde iere. Nouum faciet dominus super terram. mulier cir-
cumdabit uirum. uirum appellat propter plenitudinem
scientie quam in utero habebat. proficiebat
ergo sapientia quantum ad patefactionem faciat profecie-
bat etiam quantum ad hominum opinionem. Puer ergo
qui etate profecit et nobis semper proficit faciat nos
proficere de uirtute in uirtutem donec uideamus deum
deorum in syon. Qui cum patre uiuit et regnat et cetera.

In epiphania domini. matheus. ii.

Cum natus esset ihesus in bethleem iude in
diebus herodis regis. ecce magi ab oriente
uenerunt ierosolimam dicentes. Ubi est qui natus est
rex iudeorum. Vidimus stellam eius in oriente et uenj-
mus cum muneribus adorare eum. Magi isti non fuerunt
malefici set sapientes caldeorum. et ut dicitur fuerunt
de gente balaam et successores doctrine eius.
predixerat autem balaam ut in numeris legitur. quod
egredietur stella ex iacob et consurget uirga
ex israel. et percutiet duces moab. Magi intelli-
gentes ut credo per gratiam spiritus sancti aliquem nouum ho-
minem per stellam designatum. congregauerunt ad inuicem.
ut cum muneribus uenirent nouum regem adorare
et ut dicitur super dromedarios que sunt animalia ue-
locissima equitantes. xiii. die a natiuitate christi.
qua stella primo apparuit bethleem uenerunt
et christum cum muneribus adorauerunt. Nomina
illorum hebreus in hoc uersu. Gaspar melchior hic.
balthasar ille fuit. Ierusalem que inter alias
urbium in iudea caput fuit. ipsam primo ut de
natiuitate pueri inquirerent intrauerunt
principes autem sacerdotum et scribe per micheam prophetam
ubi christus nasceretur cognouerunt. Micheas
dicit. Tu bethleem effrata paruulus es in mili-
bus iuda. Matheus dicit. Nequaquam minima
est in principibus iuda. ad hoc dicendum quod micheas
intellexit de quantitate. quia ibi natus est creator
omnium. Q[...] ostendunt quod pastor. statim sunt

whole sermon is 2¾ pages. It is divided into six sections, the last two of which are concerned with obedience. The second to last division is introduced by the words "Sequitur de obedientia," and opens with the line "Et erat subditus illis, suis parentibus. Unde monemur quod simus prelatis et maioribus nostris obedientes." ("And he was subject to them, his parents. From which we learn that we must obey our prelates and superiors.")

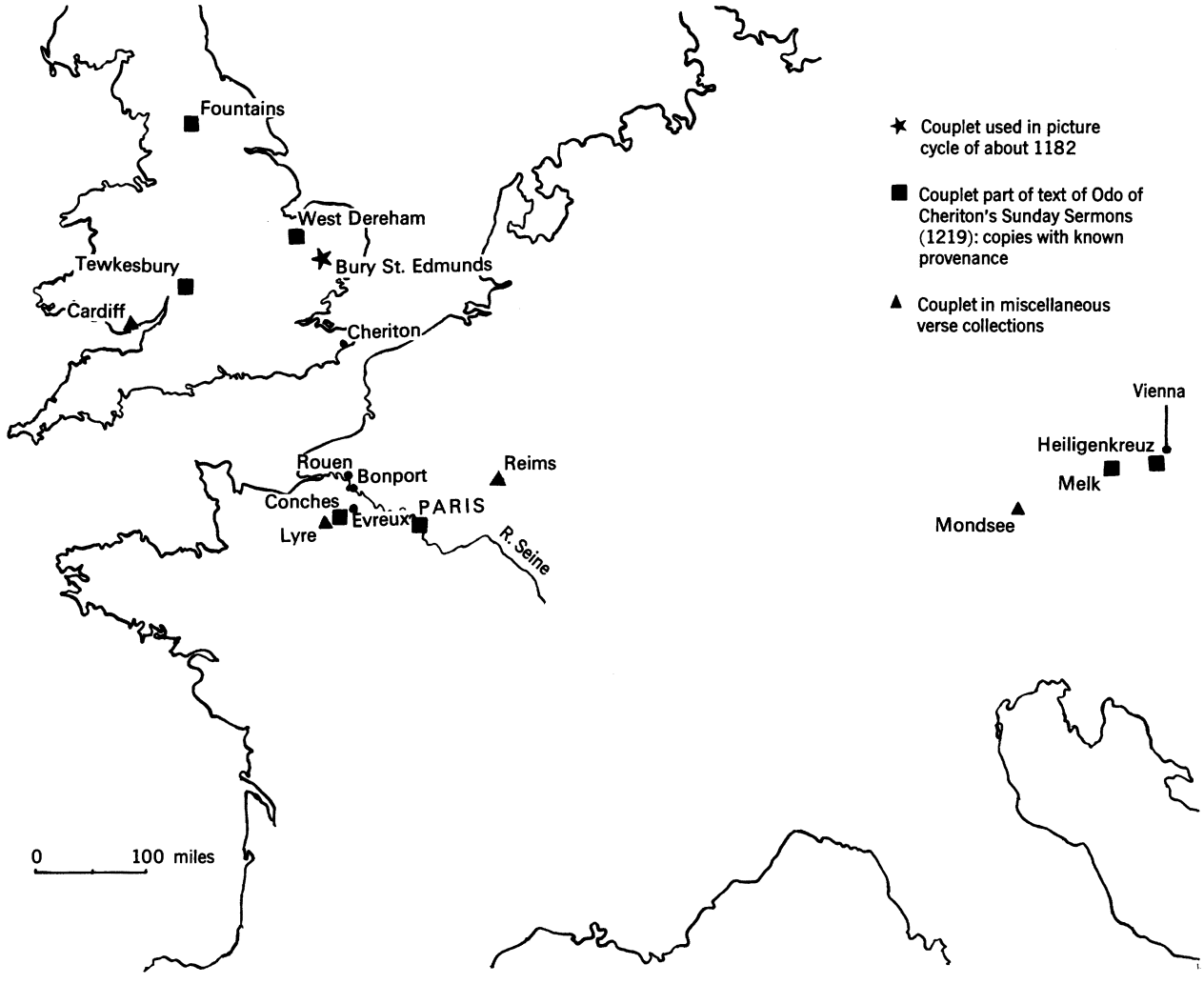
The sixth and last section expounds the theme of obedience and is headed in red ink: "de obedientia laycorum et hys qui prelatis detrahunt" ("Concerning the obedience of laymen and those who slander prelates"). Here follows a translation of about half the passage, down to and including the *Cham ridet* couplet and the comments that go with it:[52]

Certain laymen are disobedient to prelates and priests, for which see Hosea [4:4]: For thy people are as they that contradict the priests. In the Apocalypse [16:2]: The first angel poured out his vial upon the earth. And there fell a sore and grievous wound among men who had the character of the beast. The beast is the devil, the character of the beast is pride. This sign is borne by those who, through pride, oppose the doctors of the church who preach God's commandments. Likewise the character of the devil is impenitence for as much as the spirit of the devil arrives and will not leave; as Job says [41:15]: Their hearts shall be as hard as a smith's anvil so that they cannot repent. Accordingly, those who persevere impenitent and unreformed have the character of the devil. Very many people even die in a state of hatred or envy. Or they fight God, refusing to repent of pride and lust [*luxuria*]. Just so Julian the Apostate, who throughout his life did not cease to persecute God in his followers. When he was mortally wounded by the soldier . . . he lay on the ground in his own blood, and shaking his fist against God in heaven he cast himself down, saying: Jesus, thou has conquered, Jesus, thou has conquered. . . . Like this are those people who slander their prelates, and if they perceive the shame of their shepherd, who is a spiritual father, immediately they publish it to their brothers, not realizing that Canaan was cursed in his children because his father, when he saw the shame of his father Noah, laughed and told his brothers. And the children and deeds of such people who are the spiritual sons, and who slander superiors, are cursed by God. Of this kind, indeed similar, are the Jews deriding Christ. Whence is employed: Cham laughs when he sees the uncovered limbs of his parent; the Jews laugh at the pain of the suffering God. Sem and Japheth deserved a blessing because they clothed the shame. Thus God blesses those laymen who cover up or excuse the sins of their superiors, unless perchance they are publicly known, seeing that the subdued ass reproved Balaam, who is the prelate.

In the explicit of the *Sermones Dominicales* in Paris, B.N. lat. 16506 (folio 218), it says: "Complectum est hoc opus anno ab incarnatione Domini M°CC°XIX° pridie kalendas Ianuarii a Magistro Odes ad laudem ipsius qui est alpha et Ω"; on the same page the prologue says that "Ego Odo de Cirentonia, doctor ecclesiae minimus" ("I, Odo of Cheriton, the least important doctor of the church"), wrote the work. From this

that heard him were astonished at his wisdom and his answers. And seeing him, they wondered. And his mother said to him: Son, why hast thou done so to us? Behold thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said to them: How is it that you sought me? Did you not know that I must be about my father's business? And they understood not the word that he spoke unto them. And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject to them. And his mother kept all these words in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and grace with God and men."

52. "Quidam layci prelatis et sacerdotibus sunt inobedientes de quibus Osee 4. [In some MSS. there is a reference to Amos instead of Hosea.] Populus enim tuus sicut his qui contra dicunt sacerdoti. In apocalypsi effudit primus angelus filiam [fialam] suam in terram et factum est vulnus sevissimum ac pessimum in homines qui habebant caracterem bestie. Bestia est diabolus, caracter bestie est superbia. Hoc signaculum portant qui doctoribus ecclesie mandata dei praedicantibus per superbiam resistunt. Item caracter diaboli est inpenitentiam quoniam diabolis est spiritus vadens et non rediens. Et ut dicit Iob. Indurantur quasi malleatores incus ut penitere non possint. Caracterem ergo diaboli habent qui inpenitentes et incorrigibiles perseverant. Plerique etiam in morte de odio sive invidia vel superbia seu luxuria penitere nolentes deum inpugnant, sicut Iulianus apostata qui cum in vita sua deum in membris persequi non cessaret. Cum a milite . . . letaliter esset vulneratus, iacens in terra sanguinem proprium cum manu contra deum in altum proiecit dicens: Iesu vicisti, Iesu vicisti. . . . Huiusmodi sunt proni ut prelatis suis detrahant, et si viderint verenda pastoris qui est pater spiritualis, statim superbis [*fratribus* in at least seven other MSS.] suis publicant, non advertentes quod maledictus est Canaan in filiis suis quia pater eius videns verenda patris sui Noe irrisit, et fratribus nunciavit. et filii et opera talium que [qui] sunt filii spirituales maledicti sunt a domino qui detrahunt prelato. Huiusmodi enim similes sunt iudeis deridentibus Christum. Unde versus Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis; Iudei risere dei penas patientis. Sem et Iaphet quia cohoperuerunt verenda benedictionem meruerunt. Sic layci benedicantur a domino qui peccata prelatorum tegunt vel excusant nisi forsitan notorium fuerint [*sint* in some MSS.] quoniam asinus subditus reprehendit Balaam [*idest prelatum* in at least eight other MSS.]."



Map showing the distribution of various examples of the *Cham ridet* couplet from about 1180 to the first half of the XIV century

we can infer that by December 31, 1219, Odo had fulfilled the requirements for a doctorate in theology at the University of Paris: namely, that he was about thirty-five years old and that he had studied for a minimum of eight years after completing his Master of Arts degree.[53]

He was born sometime between 1180 and 1190 at Cheriton near Folkestone in Kent (see Map) and was at least twenty years old in 1210, since he is mentioned as *Magister Odo* in the Pipe Roll for that year. This title of *Magister* can only refer to a Master of Arts degree at that date, but it does mean that he had a license to teach (*licentia docendi*) and belonged to the guild of masters by then. Bulaeus listed him as being at the University of Paris in 1200, but this source cannot be relied upon.[54] Albert C. Friend has shown, however, that Odo was studying in Paris before 1210, for he borrowed heavily in his early works from Prévostin of Cremona, who was chancellor of the university from 1206 to 1209, and from lecture material (later put into the *Ars Concionandi*) of Peter of Capua (de Mora), who was regent in theology from 1201 to 1219.[55]

We may conclude from all this that Odo must have

53. Hastings Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, rev. ed. by F. M. Powicke and A. B. Emden, I (Oxford, 1936) p. 472.

54. C. E. Bulaeus (Du Boulay), *Historia Universitatis Parisiensis a Carolo M. ad nostra tempora* (Paris, 1665) p. 758.

55. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 647.

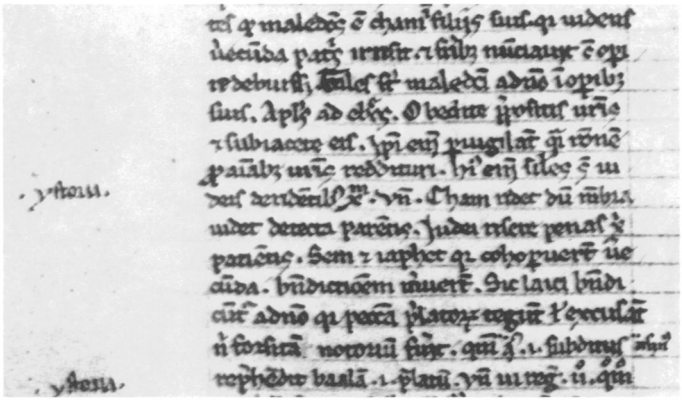


FIGURE 8
Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales*. Detail of the passage containing the *Cham ridet* couplet. XIII century. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, lat. 2593, fol. 29 verso

worked on the *Sermones Dominicales* while based on Paris, for at least eight years before 1219. Paris, B.N. lat. 16506 was given to the library of the Sorbonne by one of its masters before the year 1338,[56] which suggests that it had never left the city.

The distribution of the Sunday Sermons appears to have been fairly rapid, for a considerable number of thirteenth-century copies exist in libraries in France and England, at least four each in Austria and Germany, and one each in Spain and Portugal. In some cases there is evidence that the manuscripts have been in these countries since the thirteenth century. Either the Sermons introduced the *Cham ridet* distich to scribes in these places, because it turns up in other texts of contemporary or slightly later date, or it was already known independently.

There are three other unabridged copies of the *Sermones Dominicales* in the Bibliothèque Nationale: Paris, B.N. lat. 2593, 698, and 2459. All three contain the *Cham ridet* couplet,[57] though the sermon in which it falls is not always used for the same Sunday. The text of the reading on the obedience and behavior of laymen is slightly fuller in 2593 and 2459, where a few sentences have been added,[58] than in 16506, but the wording of the *Cham ridet* verse is the same, except in 2593, where it reads (Figure 8):

> Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis.
> Iudei risere penas Christi patientis.

The scribe no doubt thought *Christi* was more appropriate than the usual *dei*, but he made a mistake with the quantity of *penas*: the second line does not scan correctly.

Manuscript 698 is the only one of the three with a known provenance. It belonged to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Peter at Conches in the diocese of Évreux in Normandy (see Map);[59] both it and 2593 were written in the thirteenth century. The third manuscript, 2459, was probably written in the late thirteenth, perhaps in France; in the seventeenth century it entered the private library of Louis XIV's minister Colbert (died 1683).[60]

It is of special interest that at some point before 1219 Odo visited the Cistercian Abbey of Notre-Dame at Bonport, situated on a branch of the River Seine about nine miles south of Rouen in Normandy (see Map). Like St. Peter at Conches, it belongs to the diocese of Évreux. The house of Bonport is sure to have aroused the curiosity of a traveling English scholar in the early years of the thirteenth century, since it was founded personally by Richard the Lionhearted in or around 1190: while out hunting and trying to cross the river he had made a vow, and after landing safely he founded the monastery close by in fulfillment of his promise.

56. "Iste liber sermonum est pauperum magistrorum domus de Sorbonio, ex legato magistri Johannis de Gonessia, quondam socii domus." See Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, p. 135; Léopold Delisle, *Histoire générale de Paris. Le Cabinet des Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, III (Paris, 1881) p. 48: "Bibliothèque de la Sorbonne. Catalogue général de l'année 1338."

57. In MS. 2593 it is on fol. 29 verso; MS. 698, fol. 20 recto; MS. 2459, fol. 49 recto. An abridged copy, Paris, B.N. lat. 12418, does not contain the passage "Quidam layci . . ." and consequently does not contain the *Cham ridet* couplet. I have been unable to locate the only printed edition of the *Dominicales*, published under the title *Flores Sermonum ac Evangeliorum Dominicalium* excellentissimi Magistri Odonis Cancellarii Parrhisiensis, ed. F. Mathieu Makerel or Macherel, printed in Paris, 1520, by J. Badius Ascensius. Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 141–142, says there are sixty-five sermons, much abridged, as is indicated by the title *Flores*.

58. See Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 141–142.

59. Opposite fol. 108 verso: "Iste liber est de abbatia de Conchis."

60. For B.N. lat. 698, see Ph. Lauer, *Catalogue général des manuscrits latins*, I (Paris, 1939) p. 243; Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 127–128. For 2593, see *Catalogue général*, II (1940) p. 536; Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 130–132. For 2459, see *Catalogue général*, II, p. 468; Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 128–130.

Bonport Abbey was also a daughter house of Notre-Dame du Val in the diocese of Paris, which ran several houses for students from the University of Paris. We do not know how long Odo sojourned at Bonport, but seeing that he left his own Gospel book behind with his name in it, together with a record of a debt owed to him by the abbey (see below), one could hazard a guess of several weeks at the very least. Bonport flourished during the reigns of Philip Augustus (1180–1223) and Saint Louis (1226–1270).

> Nostra Boni Portus domus est velut omnibus ortus,
> Deliciis plenus, plane redolens et amenus,
> Mellifluus totus, Domino coeli bene notus;
> Hic nichil est fellis, sed plurima copia mellis,

wrote the monk Geoffroy du Jardin in a poem to another monk at Vaucelles. The contents of this poem and the list of theological books originally belonging to the abbey, which were also taken by Colbert, indicate a well-lettered establishment.[61]

It cannot be coincidence that we find the *Cham ridet* couplet in an early thirteenth-century collection of anonymous verses, compiled at the Abbey of Notre-Dame at Lyre, Normandy. Lyre is about thirty-five miles south of Bonport and only a few miles west of St. Peter at Conches, where the B.N. lat. 698 copy of Odo's *Sermones Dominicales* came from (see Map). The volume containing the verses is now MS. A. 452 in the Bibliothèque municipale, Rouen.[62] It consists mostly of sermons, but from folio 241 verso to 242 verso there are 198 lines of Latin verse, nearly all in rhyming couplets. On folio 242 verso, two-thirds of the way down column one, and between two other couplets, is written (Figure 9):

> Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
> Iudei risere dei penam morientis.

The first line is the same as in the annotated *Historia Scholastica* and Odo's Sunday Sermons on the Gospels; the second has *morientis* instead of *patientis*, and *penam*, like the Cloisters cross.

This book is dated twelfth–thirteenth century by Henri Omont in the *Catalogue Général*. It cannot have been copied before the 1180s, because fragments from Peter Riga's versified Bible, the *Aurora*, are included (folio 231). There is also a passage commonly ascribed to John of Garland on folio 241 recto; if it is by him, the *terminus post quem* would be 1195–1200, since he was born in 1180 and did not even come to Paris until 1195.

It seems to me that the proximity of the abbeys at Bonport, which Odo visited, Conches, which owned a set of his *Dominicales*, and Lyre, which owned a book of miscellaneous verses containing the couplet, points to an obvious borrowing on one side or the other. All three abbeys belong to the diocese of Évreux. If Rouen A. 452 dates from the early years of the thirteenth century, Odo could have discovered the couplet and copied it down, along with other material that he was collecting; although many of his fables and anecdotes are original, he was also a great borrower, particularly of verses. This was pointed out by Léopold Hervieux in his study of the *Fables*.[63] Or the borrowing worked the other way round. An inmate of Lyre heard Odo's sermon preached in the neighborhood, or saw a copy of it, and took the couplet down for his collection of leonine verses. It must also be remembered that the Paris, B.N. lat. 698 copy of the *Dominicales* came from the Abbey of Conches in the diocese of Évreux, to which diocese Bonport belonged, and that Conches itself is only thirty-six miles southwest of Rouen.

61. On Bonport and its library, see L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des Manuscrits*, I (Paris, 1868) pp. 534–543. Also E. Deville, "Les Manuscrits de l'Ancienne Bibliothèque de l'Abbaye de Bonport," *Revue des Bibliothèques* 16 (1906) pp. 319–321; 17 (1907). The abbey church, built 1200–1225, has almost disappeared, but some of the conventual buildings remain, see reference in Friend, "Cheriton," p. 648, note 65.

62. I owe this reference to the kind help of the Institut de Recherche et d'Histoire des Textes, Paris, in 1965. For Rouen, municipale A. 452, see Henri Omont, "Rouen," in *Catalogue général des manuscrits bibliothèques publiques de France. Départements.* I (1886) p. 131. A note on the last page of the MS. says: "Hunc librum in parte scripsit et in parte scribi fecit Johannes monachus Lirensis et indigena." According to Omont, this Johannes probably wrote fols. 5–45 only, and the first eight lines of fol. 46 recto. On the eve of the Revolution, the abbey of Lyre lent some its MSS. to the abbey of Saint-Ouen in Rouen (I am grateful to Madame Dupic, Director of the Bibliothèque municipale, Rouen, for telling me this in 1965), and thus MS. A. 452 came to the Bibliothèque from Saint-Ouen.

63. *Fabulistes*, pp. 126–127. I am most grateful to Professor Albert C. Friend of the College of the City of New York for telling me that the *Cham ridet* verse does not occur in any of Odo's other works.

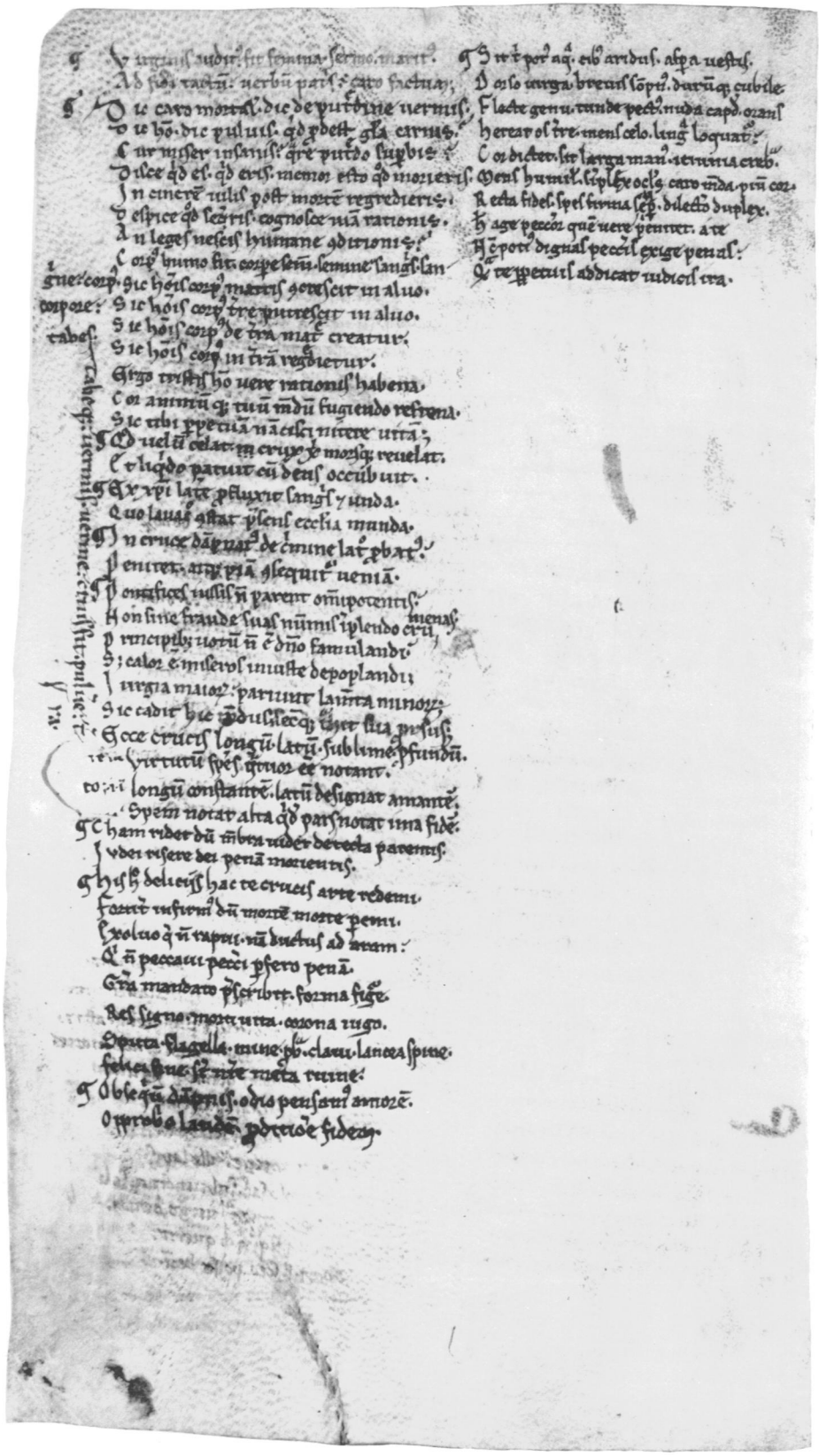


FIGURE 9

Part of a collection of Latin verses, compiled probably about 1200 or early XIII century, at Lyre Abbey, Normandy. The *Cham ridet* couplet is on lines 34–35. Bibliothèque Municipale, Rouen, MS. A. 452, fol. 242 verso

It is disappointing that in Odo's Gospel book from Bonport (see above, p. 61), now Paris B.N. lat. 295,[64] the *Cham ridet* verse does not appear either in the interlinear gloss, or among the marginal notes, which must be in Odo's own hand, since many of them are material that appears in the *Dominicales* and the Treatise on the Passion.[65] In fact, there are no marginal comments at all on Luke 2:42–52 (folios 14 recto–15 recto), except for three short lines at the lower left of 14 verso.

Still in northern France, we now move to Reims. A volume of miscellaneous *vitae*, sermons, and verses from the chapter library of the cathedral of Notre-Dame at Reims contains a couplet identical to the one on the sides of the ivory cross. The book belonged to the cathedral until the Revolution and is now MS. 1275 in the Bibliothèque municipale, Reims. It is dated late thirteenth century by W. Wattenbach in his detailed description of the verses and letters in the volume.[66]

On folio 188 verso, as part of an extensive collection of poetical works that starts on folio 129, the *Cham ridet* couplet appears at the end of an eight-line stanza of rhyming proverbs. The opening couplet is the only other one that has an internal double rhyme (Figure 10):

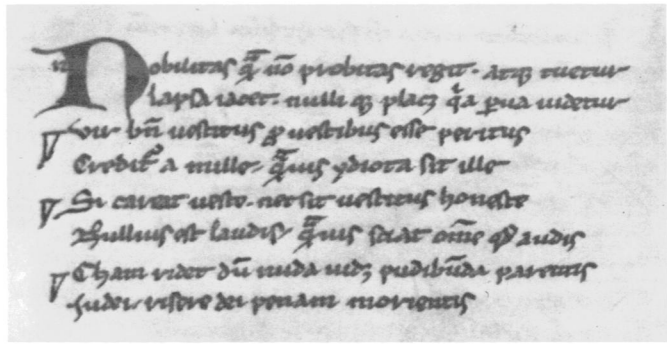


FIGURE 10

Miscellaneous Latin proverbs, including the *Cham ridet* couplet. Part of a large compilation of verse, in a volume from Reims Cathedral. Compiled late XIII century. Bibliothèque Municipale, Reims, MS. 1275, detail of fol. 188 verso

> Nobilitas quam non probitas regit atque tuetur,
> Lapsa iacet nullique placet, quia parva videtur.
> Vir bene vestitus pro vestibus esse peritus
> Creditur a mille quamvis ydiota sit ille.
> Si careat veste nec sit vestitus honeste,
> Nullius est laudis, quamvis sciat omne quod audis.
> Cham ridet, dum nuda videt pudibunda parentis:
> Iudei risere dei penam morientis.

This is the only example I know of where the wording is exactly the same as on the cross.

The source and early use of the couplet cannot be traced simply through its existence in Odo's Sunday Sermons and in two miscellaneous verse collections, which were all in northern France in the thirteenth century. But since the same coincidence occurs probably in Austria and without doubt in England, one can place some significance on it in each case and assume direct connections.

The verse appears to have become known in Austria through Odo's Sermons. The main body of Codex 1365 in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna (folios 4–48), is the *Summa* of the French theologian Guilelmus Altissiodorensis, or William of Auxerre, who died in 1231. The remainder consists of various additions, probably in different hands, and includes a collection of leonine verses on folios 83 verso–84 verso, in which we find our distich (Figure 11).[67] The whole manuscript was copied in the first half of the fourteenth

64. Lauer, *Catalogue général*, I, p. 106. It contains the Gospels of St. Luke and St. John. On fol. 1: "Iste liber est magistri O[donis]. Domus Boni Portus debet magistro Odoni XVII solidos et VII denarios de parisis. Si non venerit magister Odo, totum sit pro anima sua." On fol. 160 verso in a thirteenth-century hand: "Iste liber est Boni Portus."

65. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 648. Deville, "Manuscrits de Bonport," 17 (1907) p. 134, seems to have confused the folios that do and do not have *notes marginales*; he has also omitted to mention many of these *notes*.

66. W. Wattenbach, "Beschreibung einer Handschrift der Stadtbibliothek zu Reims," *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde* 18 (1892–1893) 16, pp. 493–526, especially p. 513. There is a reference to Wattenbach's transcription of the couplet in Walther, *Versanfänge*, no. 2674.

67. Hans Walther, *Lateinische Sprichwörter und Sentenzen des Mittelalters in alphabetischer Anordnung*, I (Göttingen, 1963) no. 2710.

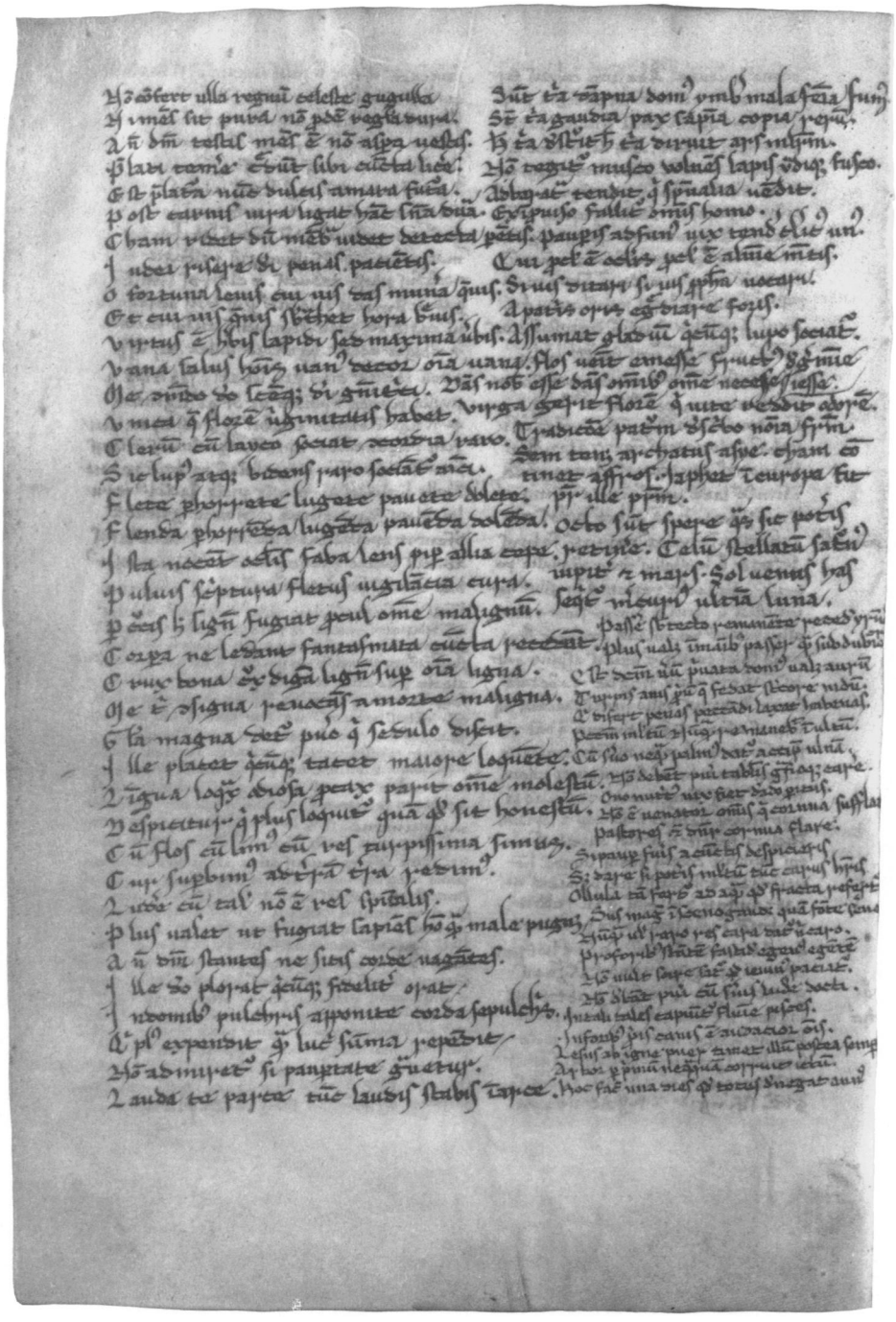


FIGURE 11

Part of a collection of Latin verses containing the *Cham ridet* couplet: column 1, lines 7–8. In a volume from Mondsee Abbey, Upper Austria. First half of the XIV century. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Vienna, Codex 1365, fol. 83 verso

century; it originally belonged to the Benedictine Abbey of St. Peter and St. Michael at Mondsee, Upper Austria, which was abolished in 1791.[68]

The collection of verses, which is described in the *Tabulae Codicum* of 1864 as "including maxims on moral subjects," begins at the top of folio 83 verso:

> Non confert ulla regnum celeste gugulla[69]
> Ni mens sit pura non prodest regula dura.
> Ante deum testis mens est non aspera vestis.
> Prelati temere credunt sibi cuncta licere.
> Est prelatura nunc dulcis amara futura.
> Post carnis iura ligat hanc sententia dura.
> Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
> Iudei risere dei penas patientis.

and so on, with various other epigrams. The opening lines, which precede the *Cham ridet* verse, are moralizing proverbs directed toward complacent monks, thus: "Any cowl [*cuculla*] does not get one to the heavenly kingdom." This suggests that the compiler of the "poem" took the couplet from the passage in Odo's sermon on remiss prelates. The wording of the verse is also the same in both, including *penas* for *penam*. Corruption of the clergy was a favorite topic with Odo, who although not in orders himself, as a *doctor ecclesiae* saw fit to instruct and censure members of the clergy by means of numerous *exempla* in his writings.

There are two thirteenth-century copies of Odo's *Sermones Dominicales* in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek: Codex 1579 and Codex 2164. I have not been able to examine the texts of either, nor does Hervieux say whether they contain the abridged or the complete versions of the Sermons.[70] It would be interesting to know their provenance, and also that of two other sets of the Sunday Sermons that are in the monastery libraries at Melk and Heiligenkreuz in Austria (see Map).[71] It is not unlikely that both the latter books have been in their present homes since the thirteenth century. One can certainly say that the existence in Austria of four surviving copies of the *Dominicales*, all written in the thirteenth century, suggests that they were known and read in Austrian monasteries within fifty years of Odo's death (1247). This seems to me an obvious explanation for the occurrence of the *Cham ridet* couplet in the fourteenth-century volume from Mondsee.

Odo certainly returned to England during the later years of his life, for in 1232–1233 he inherited the estate of his father, William of Cheriton; there are subsequent mentions of his name in the Pipe Rolls concerning a tax debt on his property, which was not cleared up until 1245–1246, the year before he died.[72]

It is clear that his Sunday Sermons on the Gospels were popular, in a modest way, in England during the thirteenth century. There are twelve known copies at present in English libraries, only one of which (Winchester College MS. 11) is as late as the fifteenth century; from this one can guess that once there were more. We are grateful to the "king's antiquary," John Leland (1506?–1552), for telling us in his *Collectanea* that among the books he saw at the Benedictine Abbey of Our Lady at Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, was an *Odonis de Siritono Sermones*.[73] We can assume with reasonable justification from the following evidence that the book Leland saw contained the Sunday Sermons on the Gospels: A manuscript from a Welsh cell of Tewkesbury—almost certainly the small Priory

68. I am grateful to Dr. Gerhard Schmidt for his kindness in 1965 in looking at Vienna, Cod. 1365 for me. On this MS. see Michael Denis, *Codices Manuscripti Theologici Bibliothecae Palatinae Vindobonensis Latini Aliarumque occidentis linguarum* (Vienna, 1793–1799) II, 2, cols. 1271–1274. Also *Tabulae Codicum manuscriptorum praeter Graecos et Orientales in Bibliotheca Palatina Vindobonensi Asservatorum*, I (Vienna, 1864) p. 229.

69. Walther, *Versanfänge*, no. 11994, lists this *incipit*; he entitles it "De monachis" and gives a reference to Vienna, Cod. 1365.

70. *Fabulistes*, pp. 140–141. Cod. 1579 contains only the *Dominicales* (192 fols.); Cod. 2164 has two other works not by Odo, followed by the *Dominicales* on fols. 46–198 verso.

71. Listed by J.-Th. Welter, *L'Exemplum dans la littérature religieuse et didactique du moyen âge* (Paris, 1927) p. 129: Melk, Stiftsbibliothek MS. 249; Heiligenkreuz, Stiftsbibliothek MS. 134. There are also two copies of Odo's *Dominicales* in the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich. Cod. lat. 2637 is late thirteenth century and contains only the Sermons; the scribe wrote his name at the end, "Qui me scribebat Purchardus nomen habebat." See Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, p. 136. Cod. lat. 19491 is dated thirteenth century, see Friend, "Cheriton," p. 657, note 109. I have not seen the texts of either MS., nor do I at present know their provenance.

72. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 649, note 73, pp. 650–652.

73. Quoted in William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, II (London, 1849) p. 59. Leland made most of his notes on antiquities in the libraries of English cathedrals, abbeys, etc., between 1534 and 1543.

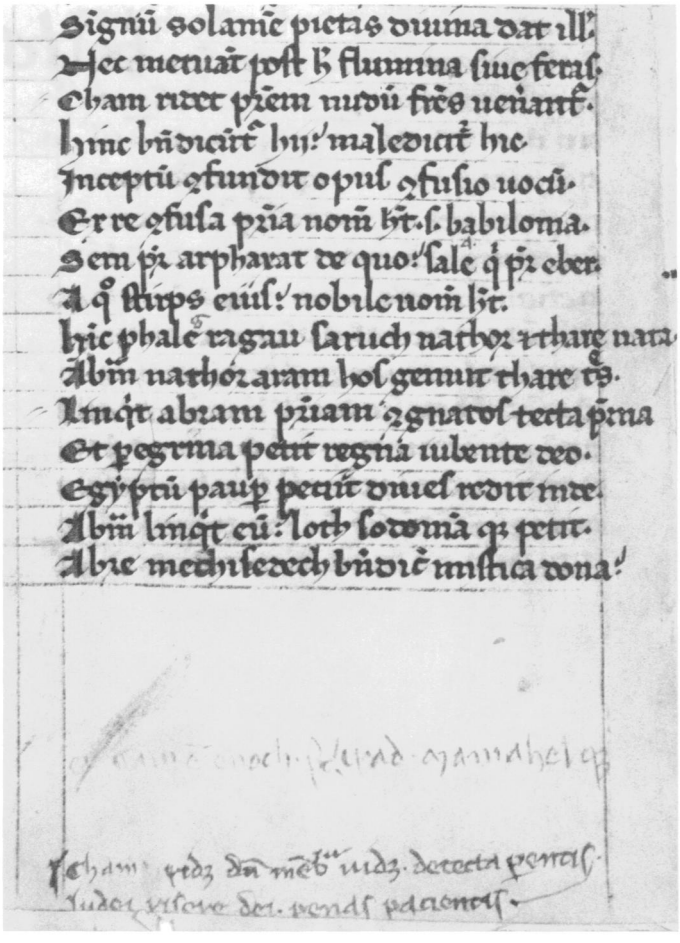


FIGURE 12

Extract from a Biblical poem, showing the verses on Genesis 9, and the *Cham ridet* couplet as a marginal note. Written probably at Cardiff Priory, Wales, early XIV century. British Museum, London, Royal MS. 6 B. XI, detail of fol. 54 verso

of Our Lady at Cardiff, Glamorganshire—contains the *Cham ridet* distich as a marginal note in a biblical poem of approximately 682 elegiac couplets (Figure 12). This volume is now British Museum, Royal MS. 6 B. XI. It consists of many different theological and historical works, which were rearranged in the fifteenth century; the two that concern us were both written in the early fourteenth. The first is the poem.[74] At the bottom of folio 54 verso, nearly running off the page, is the *Cham ridet* couplet:

> Cham ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
> Iudei risere dei penas patientis.

It is one of four marginal additions to the text of the poem on Genesis and refers to lines 32–33 in column two:

> Cham ridet patrem nudum fratres venerantur
> Hic benedicantur his maledicitur hic.
> (Cham laughs at his naked father, the brothers venerate
> Henceforth they are blessed, he is cursed.)

The second relevant part of B.M. Royal 6 B. XI tells us the provenance of the manuscript: it is a chronicle of English history from 1066 to 1268, which indicates that the book belonged to, and presumably was written for, a Welsh house connected with Tewkesbury Abbey. Up to 1248 it is a shortened recension of the Tewkesbury Annals; from 1246 to 1268 it is independent and deals specially with the Welsh marches, Cardiff and Llandaff.[75] Since there is proof that Cardiff Priory, which is in the diocese of Llandaff, was attached to Tewkesbury,[76] one can believe that the book came from Cardiff.[77] In 1404 Owen Glyndwr burnt the

74. George F. Warner and Julius P. Gilson, *British Museum. Catalogue of Western Manuscripts in the Old Royal and King's Collections*, I (London, 1921) p. 139, article 7: " 'Biblia in versibus' (so the later colophon): poem . . . containing Bible history and allegoriae. Brief prose preface' Ut historie veteris et novi testamenti postquam eas didiscerís memorie tue firmius inhereant . . . hoc metricum tibi mitto compendium in quo tamquam in speculo historias breviter comprehensas inspicere poteris.' Begins: 'Ante dies omnes mundi fuit omnis in uno.' "

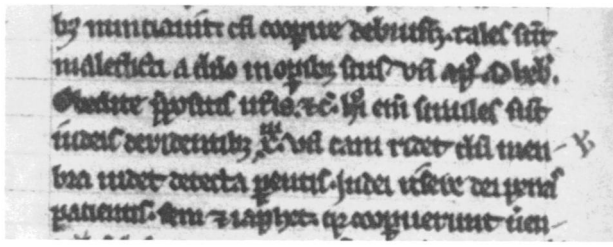
75. Fols. 105–108, 112. Warner & Gilson, *Royal and King's Collections*, I, p. 140, article 13.

76. A Norman lord, Robert Fitz Haimon (died 1107), re-established the monastery of Tewkesbury with lands and possessions before 1102; he then gave to that abbey the following: "In Wales the parish church of St. Mary in the borough of Cardiff, with one carucate of land; the chapel of the castle of Cardiff . . . the tithes of all the revenues of the churches and their possessions from Cardiff." Extract from the second Charter of Henry I to Tewkesbury Abbey, 1106; printed in Dugdale, *Monasticon*, II, p. 66. See also *Monasticon*, IV, p. 632.

77. Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 48, lists the MS. as from Cardiff on the evidence of its contents, with a query at the end of the entry. It came to the Royal Library after 1698 from the MS. collection of the antiquary John Theyer of Gloucestershire (1597–1673), who got many of his books from monastic libraries in the west of England. Theyer Sale Catalogue, 1678, (unprinted, B.M. Royal MS. Appendix 70) no. 48. See Warner & Gilson, *Royal & King's Collections*, I, pp. xxvi, xxxiii, xxxix.

FIGURE 13

Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales*. Detail of the passage containing the *Cham ridet* couplet, showing a preceding sentence different from that in Figure 7. From West Dereham Abbey, Norfolk. XIII century. University Library, Cambridge, MS. Kk. I. 11, fol. 32 verso



town of Cardiff and the priory with it. It was never restored, but we do know that its possessions remained with Tewkesbury until the Dissolution.[78]

From all accounts Cardiff Priory appears never to have been more than a minor establishment or independent of its great mother house;[79] domestic connections, however unimportant, were thus certainly maintained, and books like sets of sermons could have been borrowed by the prior and his few monks. The most that can be said is that circumstances point to a sequence from the existence of Odo's *Sermones Dominicales* at Tewkesbury, to the appearance of the *Cham ridet* couplet in an early fourteenth-century poem written for a small cell of Tewkesbury no further than fifty-seven miles away, and moreover, isolated from England (see Map). It is indeed truly remarkable that Leland saw and mentioned Odo's Sermons at all, because out of the library of a once great abbey he only noted five books, including the Sermons; whether he saw more but did not record them I do not know. The *Odonis de Siritono* that he did see has long since vanished —destroyed or hidden somewhere in obscurity. All we know about the fate of Tewkesbury Library at the Dissolution is that its contents passed into the hands of one Sir John Whittington, together with the church, cloisters, and other of the buildings.[80] Neil Ker[81] lists twelve volumes known to him that belonged to the abbey, ten of which are manuscripts; none of them is Odo's Sermons.

There were of course copies of the *Sermones Dominicales* to be found in other English monastic libraries in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, but in view of the remoteness of Cardiff and its dependence on Tewkesbury, it is unlikely that the borrowing came from any of them.

Of the five copies in England that I have seen, only one (British Museum, Egerton MS. 2890) has the abridged version of the sermon "Cum factus esset . . ." and therefore omits the homily on the obedience of lay folk altogether. Of the other four manuscripts, one is from West Dereham in Norfolk, one is from Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, and two belonged to colleges in Oxford and Cambridge by the early 1400s, so it is possible that they had never left England.

The thirteenth-century volume from the Abbey of Our Lady at West Dereham is now MS. K k. I.11 in the University Library, Cambridge.[82] This house was founded in 1188 for the Premonstratensians, or "White Canons," as a cell of Welbeck Abbey in Notthinghamshire, which had been established by 1154. The manuscript cannot have been written before the early 1240s, because it contains the *Summa de Penitencia* (after 1235), the *Sermones de Festis*, and the *Sermones Dominicales* in a revised version with cross references, which Odo probably made toward the end of his life.[83] The immediate passage in which the *Cham ridet* verse occurs on folio 32 verso (Figure 13) differs slightly from the text of Paris, B.N. lat. 16506, given on page 58; in fact I have found it so far in at least three variations. ". . . Cham was cursed in his children because on seeing his father's shame he laughed and told his brothers, when he ought to have concealed it. Such people are

78. Dugdale, *Monasticon*, II, p. 87.

79. See Austin Lane Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta 1087–1216* (Oxford, 1951) p. 295, on the role of the Church in the Anglo-Norman occupation of Wales: "It was a common practice of the invaders [in this case Robert Fitz Haimon] to grant a piece of the occupied land to a religious house in England . . . which would then plant on this land a cell of its own with a prior and one or two monks; e.g. Tewkesbury had a cell at Cardiff."

80. H. J. L. J. Massé, *The Abbey Church of Tewkesbury* (London, 1911) pp. 14–15.

81. *Medieval Libraries*, p. 188.

82. Note on flyleaf at beginning has "Derham." See *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, III (Cambridge, 1858) p. 570. Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 57, lists the book as West Dereham, Odo Cheritonensis, s.xiii ?

83. Friend, "Cheriton," p. 657.

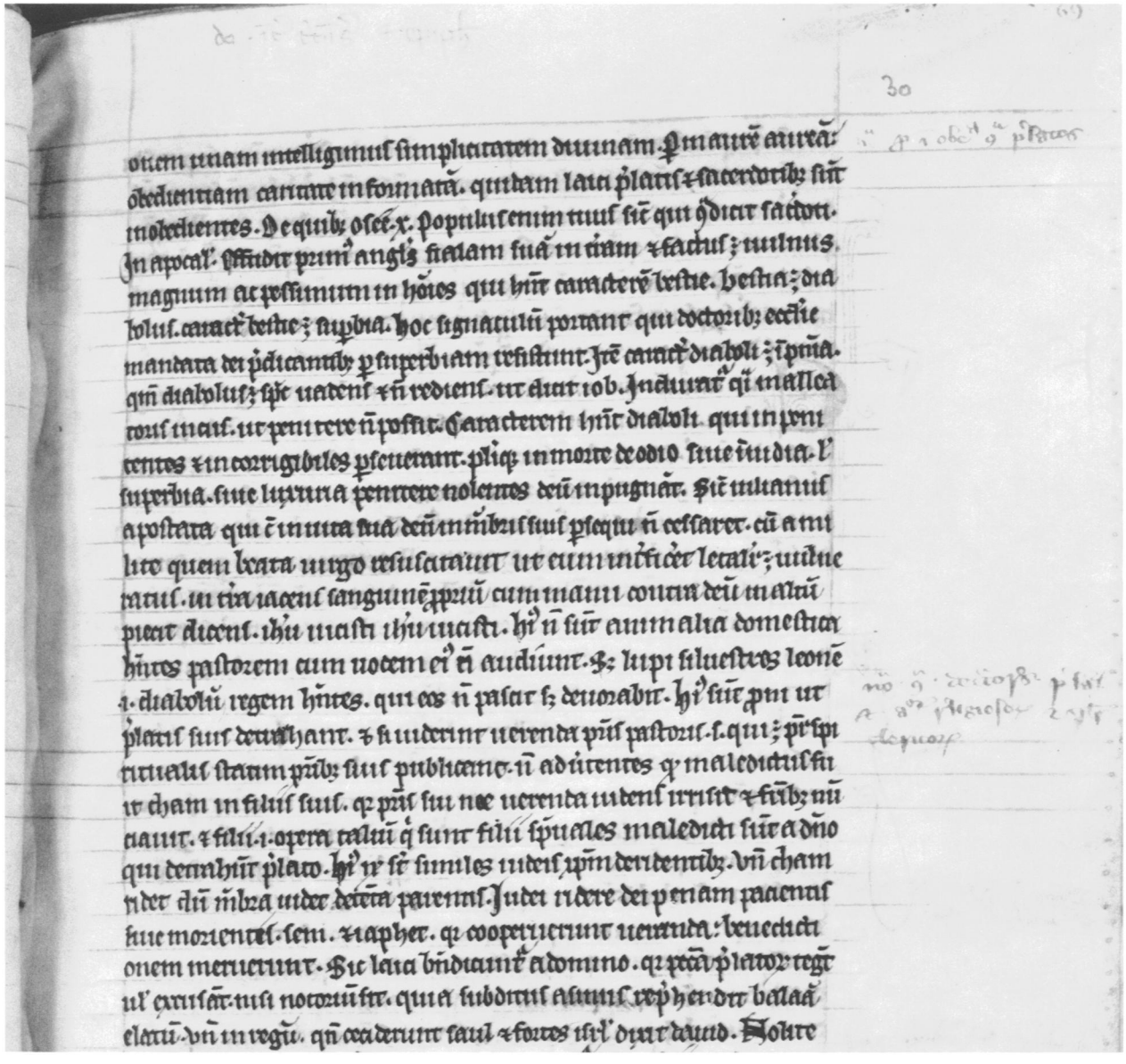


FIGURE 14
Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales*. Passage on the Obedience of Laymen from the Sermon on Luke 2:42–52, showing the *Cham ridet* couplet: lines 22–24. Middle of the XIII century. Peterhouse College, Cambridge, MS. 109, fol. 30 recto

cursed by God in their works. Whence the Apostle to the Hebrews: Obey your prelates. . . .[84] Indeed like this are the Jews deriding Christ. . . ."

Either the scribe who copied the text of the *Dominicales* in Cambridge, Peterhouse MS. 109, must have used his poetic imagination on folio 30 recto and given *morientis* as an alternative to *patientis*, or he knew of the couplet anyway and that it could be written both ways, for he wrote the second line like this: "Iudei ridere dei penam patientis huc morientis" (Figure 14). The book

is mid-thirteenth century, and may be English, since it belonged to the Library of Peterhouse College, Cambridge, by 1418 at the latest.[85]

A similar case is Oxford, Balliol MS. 38, which is again a thirteenth-century volume containing Odo's Sunday Sermons on the Gospels (folios 1–82 verso) and other works by him. A flyleaf at the back says that the book was given to the library of Balliol by a Master William Lambard of that college, who is known to have died by September 1414.[86]

The last example of the *Cham ridet* couplet that I have noted in English copies of the *Sermones Dominicales* is in British Museum, Arundel MS. 231, a two-volume book that was written for the Cistercian Abbey of Our Lady at Fountains, near Ripon in Yorkshire, in the early fourteenth century.[87] The manuscript is rather late to belong in the present discussion, but it is interesting because the sermons are a conflation of those of Odo of Cheriton, Jean of Abbeville (died 1237), and Roger of Sarum—probably he who was bishop of Bath and Wells from 1244 to 1247. The joint sermons are entitled "moral expositions" both near the beginning[88] and in the colophon;[89] they contain continuous *exempla* that are based mostly on Odo's sermons, combined with long theological passages taken from Jean of Abbeville and Roger of Sarum.[90] Thus the sermon "Cum factus esset Ihesus annorum xii . . ." is unusually long, covering 14½ pages on folios 85 recto–92 recto. J. A. Herbert notes only two *exempla* in the sermon;[91] neither of them is connected with the *Cham ridet* couplet on folio 91 verso, which is in fact indicated by the word "Ex-[emplum]" in the margin (Figure 15).

We have seen from his text (above, p. 58) that Odo of Cheriton employed the *Cham ridet* couplet as part of an *exemplum* or short, moralized anecdote in his sermon on Luke 2:42–52. In some of the manuscripts the medieval scribe has brought this point to our attention by making a note next to the couplet in the margin. In Paris, B.N. lat. 2593, it is named "ystoria" (Figure 8), and the story of Julian the Apostate that is told a few lines earlier is called "Exemplum." In Paris, B.N. lat. 2459, it is simply described, in red ink, as "Cham"; in B.M. Arundel 231 it is marked "Ex[emplum]"; and in a copy of the *Dominicales* in the Escorial, Cod. O. II. 7, it is entitled, inside a neatly drawn box, "Cam et fratribus suis" (Figure 16).[92] Doubtless there are other similar notations in copies of the Sermons that I have not seen.

G. R. Owst has pointed out[93] that there seems to have been no strong distinction to medieval homilists

84. Heb. 13:17: "Obedite praepositis vestris, et subiacete eis. Ipsi enim pervigilant quasi rationem pro animabus vestris reddituri." ("Obey your prelates and be subject to them. For they watch as being to render an account of your souls.") Cf. Paris, B.N. lat. 2593, fol. 29 verso, col. 1, lines 28–32 (Figure 8). The same as B.N. lat. 16506 are: B.N. lat. 698; Cambridge, Peterhouse 109; Oxford, Balliol 38; Escorial O. II. 7 (see below for the last three).

85. It is no. 137 in the Old Catalogue of Peterhouse Library, which was compiled in 1418; see M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Peterhouse* (Cambridge, 1899) pp. 9, 126–127.

86. "Item lego istum librum aule de Balliolo ad cathenandum in libraria," and "Istum librum legavit Mr. Willelmus Lambard quondam magister Collegii Ballioli Oxon' librarie dicti Collegii cathenandum. . . ." See R. A. B. Mynors, *Catalogue of the Manuscripts of Balliol College, Oxford* (Oxford, 1963) pp. 27–28; Lambard is in A. B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, II (Oxford, 1958) p. 1086.

87. Vol. I, fol. 1: "Liber sancte Marie de Fontibus" with fifteenth-century pressmark. Vol. II, end: "Johannes de Munkegate de Eboraco clericus, procurator religiosorum virorum dominorum Abbatis et conventus Monasterii de Fontibus, scripsit hunc librum." See J. A. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances in the Department of Manuscripts in the British Museum*, III (London, 1910, reprint 1962) pp. 57–78, for a full description of the MS. Also Ker, *Medieval Libraries*, p. 88.

88. Fol. 13: "Incipiunt morales exposiciones in evvangeliis Dominicalibus per totum annum."

89. Vol. II, fol. 229 verso: "Expliciunt morales exposiciones Magistri Johannis de Abbatis villa, Magistri eciam Odonis de Cancia, et Magistri Rogeri de Sarisbiria in unum compacte, super evangelia dominicalia per totum annum."

90. Herbert, *Catalogue of Romances*, III, p. 58.

91. *Catalogue of Romances*, III, p. 59. Fol. 90 verso: Devil tempts Abbot to make new rules, so as to entrap the monks; fol. 91: Monk says he is dead to the world. Neither of them is in Hervieux, *Fabulistes*.

92. Escorial, O. II. 7 is thirteenth century; provenance unknown except that it may have come from the library of the Conde-Duque de Olivares; see Guillermo Antolín, *Catálogo de los Códices Latinos de la Real Biblioteca del Escorial*, III (Madrid, 1913) pp. 198–204. It was probably copied in Spain, since Odo went there at some point in his life; Friend, "Cheriton," pp. 654–655. The wording of the couplet on fol. 36 verso is the same as in the other copies of the *Dominicales* that we have looked at:

Cam ridet dum membra videt detecta parentis
Iudei risere dei penas patientis.

The scribe has inserted the word *Versus* in red ink next to the right-hand edge of the column, with the result that it inadvertently splits *detecta*, hence *de versus tecta*.

93. G. R. Owst, *Literature and Pulpit in Medieval England* (Oxford, 1966, reprint) pp. 151–152.

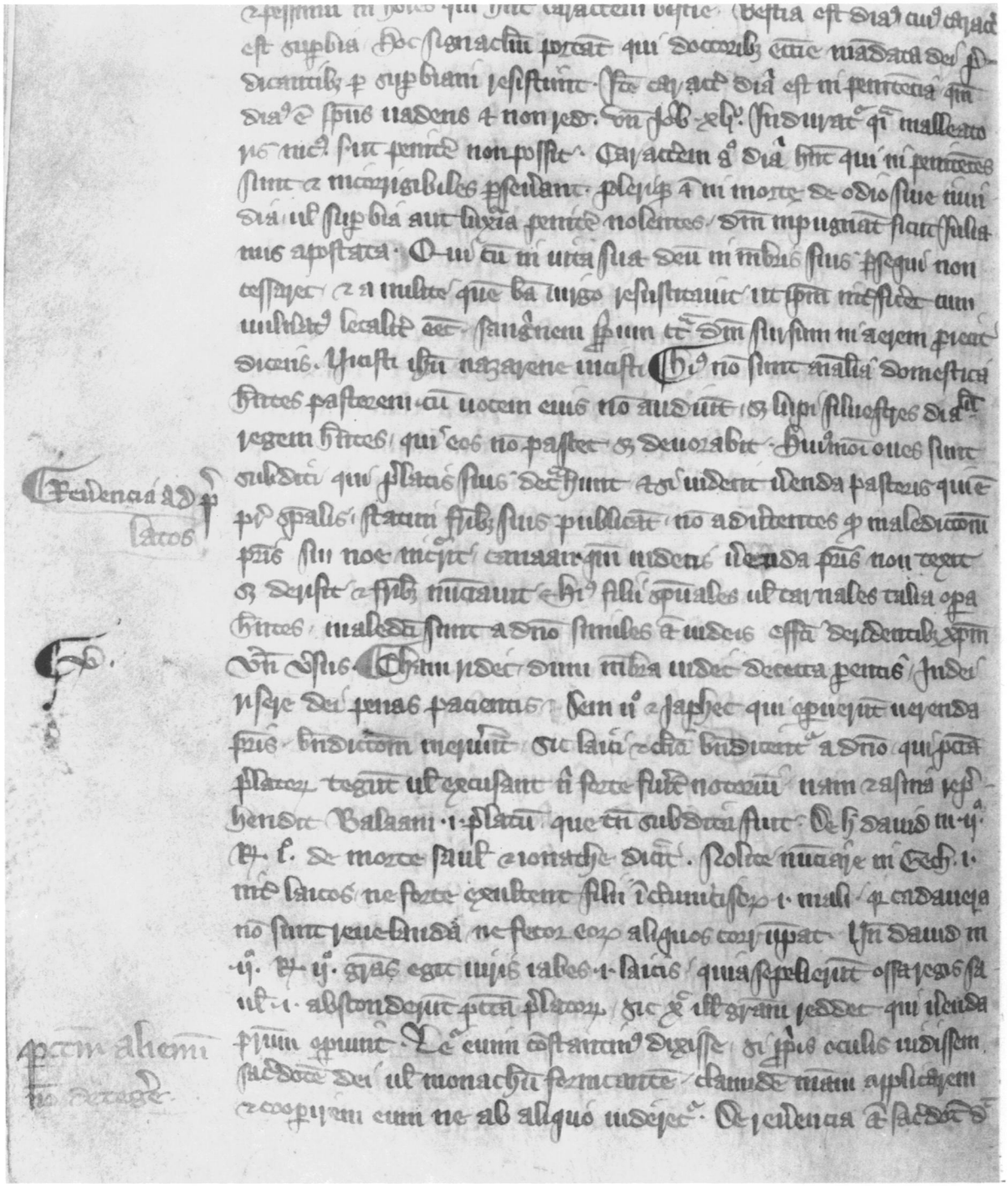


FIGURE 15

Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales* and *Exemplа*. Extract from Sermon 15, showing the *Cham ridet* couplet, marked out as an *exemplum*. From Fountains Abbey, Yorkshire. Early XIV century. British Museum, Arundel MS. 231, vol. I, fol. 91 verso

between "example" (*exemplum*), "narration" (*narratio* or *historia*), "figure" (*parabola*), and other such terms, with the exception of the "fable," which generally dealt with animals. We may therefore accept that the various marginal titles for the couplet in any copy of Odo's Sunday Sermons were purely alternative names for the commonest type of sermon-illustration—the *exemplum*.

The *exemplum* came into use toward the end of the twelfth century with the growth of popular preaching, and it soon became a typical feature of the medieval sermon.[94] It could be historical or fictitious, religious or secular, taken from ancient or contemporary sources.[95]

This brings me to the question of where Odo found the *Cham ridet* distich. Hervieux spoke of his liberal use of verses throughout his sermons, and lamented the fact that Odo never tells us where he took them from.[96] The distinctive meter and rhyme scheme of the couplet, which are similar to those used by Bernard of Morlas at Cluny, place its composition somewhere in the mid-twelfth century; its appearance in altered form on the Bury choir enclosure around 1181, but in full on the Cloisters cross and in the Vatican *Historia Scholastica*, strongly suggests that it was known to several compilers of miscellaneous verse collections by about 1180. It does in fact turn up in lecture material that was being delivered to theology students at Paris at some point between 1180 and 1206, probably from shortly after 1180 onward.

The university at Paris was flourishing by the years 1150–1170; it grew from the three schools of the collegiate church of Ste. Geneviève, the abbey of canons regular at St. Victor, and the cathedral of Notre Dame. The theology faculty itself was well established by the middle of the century. The basic texts after the Bible were the *Glossa Ordinaria*, compiled probably by Anselm of Laon (died 1117) and his pupils, Peter Lombard's *Sentences*, finished in 1152, and by about 1176, Petrus Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*. The teaching system was as follows: the master read out the text and commented on it, while the students took notes. A

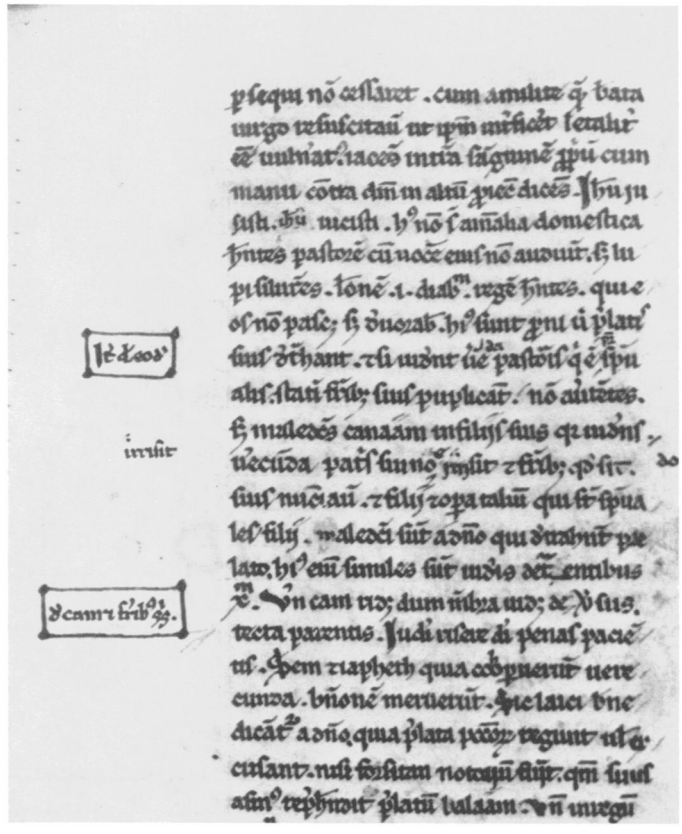


FIGURE 16
Odo of Cheriton, *Sermones Dominicales*. Detail from Sermon 12 of the passage containing the *Cham ridet* couplet. Probably copied in Spain. XIII century. Biblioteca del Escorial, Madrid, Cod. lat. O. II. 7, fol. 36 verso

word must be said on these lecture notes, since Odo very likely picked up the *Cham ridet* verse through this medium: either he could have taken it directly from the master into his own notes, or indirectly from another student's report (*reportatio*) of a lecture missed or given at an earlier date. Beryl Smalley defines the medieval *reportatio* method and discusses its place in the university classrooms of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with

94. See Welter, *L'Exemplum*, part I, chap. 2.

95. Owst, *Literature & Pulpit*, p. 149.

96. Hervieux, *Fabulistes*, pp. 123–124, 126: ". . . c'est chez eux [poètes latins du moyen âge] surtout qu'il puise les vers dont il émaille ses sermons. Malheureusement il s'abstient d'en indiquer la provenance. Toutefois, comme en grande partie ils sont rythmiques ou léonins, et quelquefois même parés du double ornement de la rime ordinaire et de la rime léonine, en un mot construits dans les conditions particulièrement chères aux poètes du XII[e] siècle, on peut supposer que ses citations sont le plus souvent extraites de poètes latins dont il était presque le contemporain."

particular reference to theology at Paris.[97] A *reportatio* was made by a pupil during the lecture, and although it often needed correcting and filling in, it was not reworked; this made it distinct from lecture notes, which had to be written up, and from the straightforward dictation of a work to a stenographer. Moreover, once a *reportatio* had been approved by the master, it was circulated; rare examples do even exist of two individual reports of the same lecture.

A. C. Friend, the authority on Odo's works, has found that he probably studied under Prévostin of Cremona and Peter of Capua; he also borrowed much material for notes in his Gospel book (Paris, B.N. lat. 295) from the writings of Peter the Chanter, Prévostin, and Stephen Langton.[98]

Peter the Chanter (so called from his office of *Cantor* at Notre-Dame) died in 1197. His best-known work is the *Verbum Abbreviatum*, the only one of his writings that has so far been printed.[99] It is an ethical treatise introduced by Peter in Chapter I with the title "Contra superfluitatem et prolixitatem glossarum et inutilium quaestionum" ("Against the superfluity and tedious length of glosses and futile questions"). Among the numerous instructions that he dictates on moral questions and rules of behavior, there are certain passages concerning the conduct of prelates and obedience, where one would hope to find material that occurs in the final section of Odo's Sermon on Luke 2:42–52, in particular verse 51: "et erat subditus illis."[100] However, there is nothing. Peter quotes frequently from the Bible, from classical poets, and from the Church Fathers, usually acknowledging his sources. He does not acknowledge any contemporary sources, following the normal medieval practice.[101]

Stephen Langton (died 1228) taught theology at Paris for more than twenty years before 1206, when he settled in Rome. That he was highly thought of and renowned as a doctor both in the liberal arts and in theology is attested to by remarks in a letter of 1207 from Innocent III to King John.[102]

The work by Langton in which one might expect to find the *Cham ridet* couplet—his *Glossa in Historiam Scholasticam*—does not contain it either in the earlier version of before 1187, or in the later, fuller version of 1193. Nevertheless, the later *Glossa* does have some specific comments on the moral lesson that Langton's students were intended to deduce from the scene of Noah's drunkenness: these comments may well have been among the material collected by Odo for the *Cham exemplum*. Langton says: "Concerning the drunkenness of Noah and the malediction of Cham. . . . the brothers Sem, the eldest, and Iapheth, the youngest, covered the shame of [their] father: from this we learn . . . that we must not reveal the sins of [our] prelates."[103]

This particular moral interpretation of Genesis 9: 20–27 was not new: Richard of St. Victor (died 1173) devoted a chapter to it in the *Allegoriae*, following his allegorical analysis of the scene.[104] He writes:

> Noah signifies the prelates, who when they govern well are fathers of just as many sons as they are rulers of the righteous; who when they plant the vine, build the Church, and when they are drunk from its wine are, full of human weakness, glorying in the progress of their virtues and the prosperity of their rule. . . . And when their shame is uncovered, a want of self-restraint is revealed . . . either through any amount of ostentation, or through worthless wealth, or in short, through the course of human nature. But Cham laughs at the shame, just as the sinners [*reprobi*] who when they see the excesses [caused] by weak nature of any of the prelates tear them with wicked speeches and do not cease to mock. But Sem, that is, the good contemplatives . . . and Japheth, that is, the good active people . . . take pains to conceal and excuse the weaknesses of the prelates, just as when they cover up the shame of their

97. Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, pp. 200–208, in chap. 5, "Masters of the Sacred Page: The Comestor, The Chanter Stephen Langton," pp. 196–263.

98. Friend, "Cheriton," pp. 647–648.

99. *P.L.*, CCV, cols. 23–370. Peter also wrote exegetical works; Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, p. 197, note 4, says: "No comprehensive study of the manuscripts of the . . . Chanter's glosses exists."

100. Chap. LVI, "De officio praelatorum"; LVII, "Contra negligentiam praelatorum"; also LVIII, LIX, LX, LXI, and LXVI, all on prelates. Chap. CXII, "De obedientia."

101. Smalley, *Bible in Middle Ages*, pp. 179–180.

102. May 1207. Printed with English trans. in *Selected Letters of Innocent III concerning England (1198–1216)*, ed. C. R. Cheney and W. H. Simple (New York, 1953), p. 87.

103. "De ebrietate et maledictione Caym. . . . [venientibus] fratribus sem maiori et iaphet minori coopuerunt verenda patris per hoc docemur . . . peccata prelatorum non revelare." Paris, B.N. lat. 14. 414 (from St. Victor, Paris), fol. 118 recto. The MS. is listed in P. Glorieux, *Répertoire des maîtres en théologie a Paris au XIIIe siècle* (Paris, 1933) no. 104.

104. See above, p. 54.

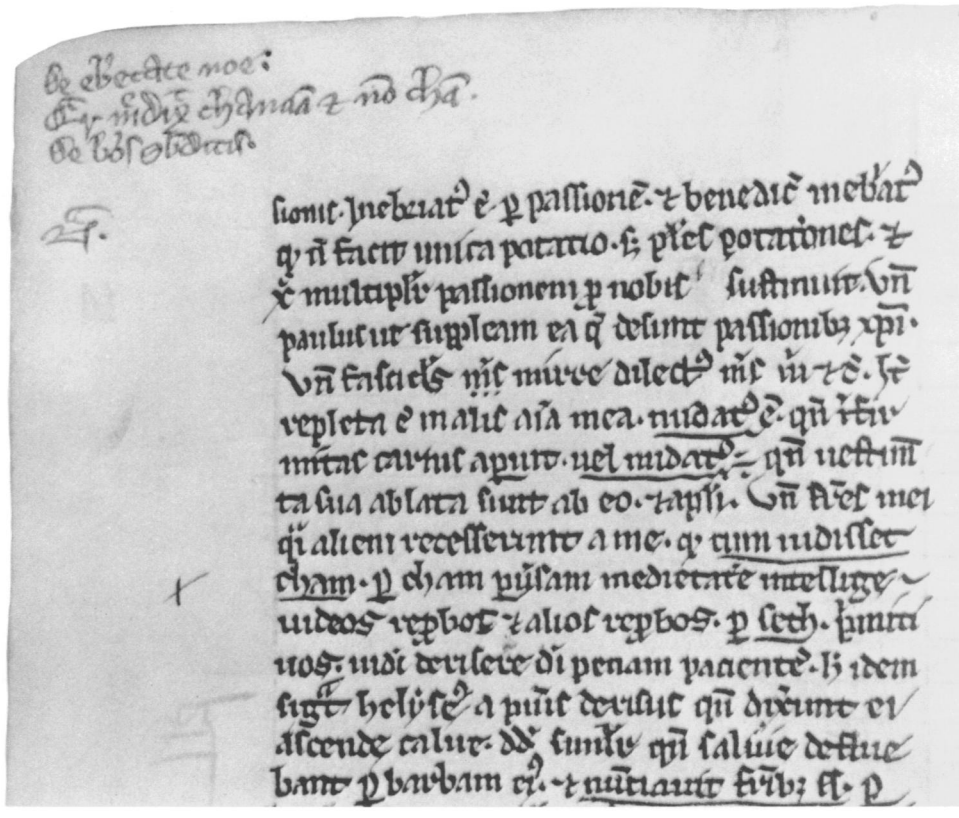


FIGURE 17
Stephen Langton, *Postillae super Genesim*. Extract from the allegorical exposition of Genesis 9:20–27, showing the second line of the *Cham ridet* couplet. Copied XIII century. British Museum, Royal MS. 2. E. XII, fol. 25 verso

father. . . . Noah therefore [signifies] the prelates, Cham the sinners [*reprobi*], Sem and Japheth the chosen, both active and contemplative.[105]

Langton's commentaries on the Bible were given as lectures to the Paris theology students during the period 1180–1200. They contain many *exempla*. Beryl Smalley has pointed out with reference to the *exempla* in the Old Testament commentaries, however, that those drawn from Scripture, legend, and classical antiquity are so numerous that they are indistinguishable from passing allusions.[106] For this reason she has listed and identified with *exempla* found in other authors (including Odo of Cheriton and Jacques de Vitry) only those stories that are not taken from the above three sources.

The second verse of the *Cham ridet* couplet does appear, however, in the text of Langton's *Postillae super Genesim* (Figure 17).[107] The commentary on Noah and Cham covers some 2½ columns: first the *allegoria* is discussed, then the *moralitas*—these two words being written in red ink in the margin. The context in which the verse occurs is that of the *allegoria*, and the text on folio 25 verso (column 1) is as follows: "... quod cum vidisset Cham. Per Cham . . . medietate intelligetur iudeos reprobos et alios reprobos post Seth. Permitti [?] vos iudei derisere dei penam patientis. Hoc idem significatur Helyseus a pueris derisus. . . ."

105. *Allegoriae in Vetus Testamentum*, Lib. 1, cap. XVIII; *P.L.*, CLXXV, col. 644.

106. Beryl Smalley, "Exempla in the Commentaries of Stephen Langton," *John Rylands Library Bulletin* 17 (1933) pp. 121–129, especially p. 123 and note 1.

107. I have so far only looked at one copy of the *Postillae super Genesim*: British Museum, Royal MS. 2. E. XII, fols. 9 recto–60 recto (new foliation). The MS. is described briefly by Warner & Gilson, *Royal and King's Collections*, I, pp. 64–65.

Langton certainly wrote his Commentary on Genesis during his professorship at Paris, which lasted from about 1180 to 1206, the year in which he was made a cardinal by Innocent III. We can be fairly sure that he started his Old Testament glosses with Genesis, which would mean that he probably completed at least a first version soon after 1180 and was then using it for lectures.[108] The particular copy of the *Postillae super Genesim* that I have used for the above quotation is dated thirteenth century, and it has been suggested that it belonged to St. Alban's Abbey, since there is a reference to an owner who was a monk from nearby Watford.[109] This seems to me a rather doubtful attribution for the manuscript's provenance, but at any rate it was probably copied in England. There are extant in European libraries a considerable number of copies of the work, and it can be presumed to have become rapidly known once it had been used in theology lectures.

There are undoubtedly other examples of the *Cham ridet* couplet, either complete or just one line of it, to be found in Genesis commentaries and in miscellaneous verse collections dating from the last quarter of the twelfth century through the thirteenth. Its occurrence in a work by Stephen Langton, written at Paris probably shortly after 1180, is evidence enough that it was in circulation by about that year.

It is clear, however, that Langton did not compose the couplet. Whoever did used the harsher wording of *nuda*, *pudibunda*, and *morientis*, found on the Cloisters cross and partly in the Bury choir (*nuda* and *genitalia*). This harsh wording would appear to have been fairly rapidly suppressed, since in Langton's commentary of the 1180s *patientis* replaces *morientis*, and in the annotated Vatican *Historia Scholastica* of the end of the twelfth century the words are already the gentler alternatives found in Odo's sermon, in the versified Bible from Cardiff, and in the verse collection from Mondsee: *detecta*, *membra*, and *patientis*. The more caustic, first version evidently lingered or had already found its way into some books before it could be changed, hence the Lyre volume of the late twelfth–early thirteenth century (Rouen MS. A. 452), which has *morientis*, and the late thirteenth-century book from Reims Cathedral (Figure 10), which has wording identical to that on the ivory cross. The scribe of Peterhouse MS. 109 (Figure 14) was evidently aware of the harsher variant, since he put *patientis huc morientis*.

It is not impossible that Langton himself altered the wording in the early 1180s; *Deus moriens*, the concept of God actually dying, would certainly have been considered heretical. *Deus patiens*, the suffering God, was a more fitting choice.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I should like to thank particularly Mr. Christopher Hohler of The Courtauld Institute of Art for his assistance in reading through my text with so much care.

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108. See G. Lacombe and B. Smalley, "Studies on the Commentaries of Stephen Langton," *Archives d'Histoire doctrinale et littéraire du moyen âge* 5 (1930) pp. 5–266, especially pp. 127–131, on the order in which he composed his Old Testament glosses. The complicated question of whether Langton glossed the Old Testament twice is discussed here at length.

109. Warner and Gilson, *Royal and King's Collections*, I, p. 65. At the bottom of fol. 9: "Annulae fratris Willelmi de Watford anno primo coronacionis regis E[d]wardi" (Edward III? A.D. 1327). Royal MS. 2. E. XII is nevertheless not in Ker, *Medieval Libraries*.