Seeing Beyond Seeing: The Idea of Figurative Exposition in the High Middle Ages.

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Short Abstract

Medieval exegetes composed figurative expositions on animals and the created world that were shaped and informed by the authority of scripture and the Fathers ('auctoritas scipturae et auctoritas patrum'). Despite this observation, the historiographical framing of works such as Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, Alexander Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, and second- and transitional-family bestiary manuscripts, have often been misrepresented as either proto-scientific, pseudo-scientific, or encyclopaedic. Whilst it is generally acknowledged that each of these works (and related medieval literature) had a strong moral element and figurative connotations, persistent scientific and encyclopaedic framing in historiography inhibits more creative and sympathetic engagements with the expositions they contain.

In response to scientific framings of medieval figurative expositions, especially ones that feature animals, this thesis proposes a re-evaluation of significant texts produced in the High Middle Ages according to proper theological context. Noting the inheritance of patristic exegetical practice, and considering the moral and material dimensions of the created world medieval theologians inhabited, such a re-evaluation recognises seemingly absurd or bizarre ideas about animals as significant contributions to medieval religious practice. Conforming to an established and authoritative mode of writing that used the created world to expose a deeper intention of meaning, figurative expositions on animals became a way of articulating the hidden things of God. This was especially the case through expositions on fish and birds. In this sense, medieval ideas about animals and the created world were closely connected to the idea of scripture as sound, and the communicative ability of the sacraments ('sacramenta') to transform the believer through faithful engagement with corporeal things. Through five chapters, this thesis not only demonstrates the religious sophistication underpinning figurative expositions on animals, but it also reveals the interconnected nature of religious devotion and medieval life through what is termed a 'deeper sense of seeing', or a 'seeing beyond seeing'.

Long Abstract

Following the work of Haskins, historiographical approaches to medieval 'zoology' have long misrepresented high-medieval authors and the religious traditions to which they belonged. This has occurred in a variety of ways and has resulted in the suggestion that medieval exegetes who had an interest in animals and the created world were either proto-scientists, or else their figurative expositions on animals were regrettable aspects of a slow development of scientific thinking in the west; one that was held back by the dogmatic nature of the institutional church. Whilst there is a growing appreciation for the moral dimension of medieval figurative expositions on animals in modern scholarship, the tendency to categorise exegetical writings as either 'natural history' or as essentially 'encyclopaedic' inhibits more creative engagements with the ideas they contain. In response, this thesis proposes a creative engagement with high medieval figurative expositions that is entirely free from post-enlightenment and post-industrial modes of thinking. Embracing instead the rich inheritance of patristic and early medieval figurative exegesis in the High Middle Ages, the work of this thesis immerses the reader in a mode of reading wherein God awaits rediscovery in and through the created world.

One of the underpinning contentions of this thesis lies not in the emergence of 'medieval science' as a mode of disciplinary engagement with the past, but rather with the anachronistic assumption that the 'scientific' overshadows the fabulous, biblical, or patristic in medieval ideas about the created world. Such an assumption miscategorises traditions according to what they were not, or what they are (only now) perceived to be inferior to: the unscientific, the pseudo-zoological, or more subtly the 'imprecise'. In this sense, an inhibitor to understanding intellectual developments across the Middle Ages is the assumption that a particular tradition, or way of seeing the world, was unscientific and irrational, and *could*, *should*, or *ought* to have been otherwise.

The current discussion is organised around five chapters. Each, in order, seeks to better understand the nature of figurative exposition, and thus reframes historiographical approaches to high-medieval texts in a manner sympathetic to the intentions of medieval authors, and reflected in the methodological objectives of Baxter (who also notes the need to rediscover the category to which medieval animal literature belongs). Collectively, the aims of these five chapters can be categorised into two main parts. The first and second chapters seek to rediscover a mode of figurative exposition, embodied by and inherited from patristic exegetical authorities, as a key to comprehending the intentions at play in selected high-medieval texts and traditions. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters apply the mode of figurative exposition (rediscovered in the first and second chapters) to a reconsideration of medieval approaches to fish and birds; redefining what is meant by the 'zoological' in the process, and situating moral interest in humans, animals, and the created world amidst contemporary culinary, recreational, religious, and cultural interests. From this, a reading emerges that connects animal, and other figurative, expositions to an authoritative culture of exegetical practice spanning from late antiquity through to the High Middle Ages.

Chapter One, *A Deeper Sense of Seeing: Alexander Neckam and the Idea of Allegorical Exposition,* interrogates Alexander Neckam's *De visu*, an exposition 'on seeing' contained in his *De naturis rerum*. This interrogation achieves two things. First, it demonstrates how Neckam's *De visu* has been misinterpreted as a proto-form of optical science by the historians of science, Grant and Lindberg, whose misinterpretation informs their omission of Neckam's concluding paragraph on moon-rays and horse ulcers. Second, by resituating Neckam's exposition 'on seeing' in light of the exegetical practice of Augustine, Anselm, and the School of St Victor (as well as Neckam's own explicit exegetical intentions), the chapter enables the reader to discover a deeper layer of intentional meaning at play in his exposition on moon-rays and horse ulcers, one that is integral to his overall aims. Importantly, such a resituating of his

De visu, sees Neckam properly as an exegete, rather than a 'scientist', and understands his expositions as moral exercises that have very little to do with 'seeing' in the scientific sense.

Chapter Two, *Fruit Trees and Charlemagne: The Unobvious Authority of Scripture and the Fathers in the High-Middle Ages*, aims to provide historical-theological context to a figurative mode of reading and writing that was to dominate the schools and monasteries of high-medieval Europe. This chapter traces the development of a culture of 'auctoritas' in the Carolingian reforms of Charlemagne, Alcuin, and Bede through to high-medieval exegetes. In so doing, this consideration gives reason for the high-medieval reverence for Latin fathers, especially Augustine, and the exegetical practice that informed their approach to the bible, humans, and the created world. In this, the chapter provides a strong basis for reinterpreting medieval treatises in light of the authority of patristic exegetical practice, especially treatises that were not obviously exegetical in nature. This is the case with Abelard's *Historia calimitatum* and medieval autobiography generally, which were modelled on Augustine's *Confessions* and intended to convey a deeper intention of meaning informed by the authority of scripture and the authority of the fathers.

Chapter Three, *Ichthyological Hermeneutics: The Oyster and the Cloister*, applies the methodological approach adopted in the first two thesis chapters to a consideration of medieval ideas about 'fish'. This commences with Neckam's expositions on Oysters and Plaice, and the Lanercost *Chronicle's* story of Grosseteste and the Pike, and culminates in considerations of the medieval fish-trade evidenced by monastic sources, religious iconography, and archaeological discoveries. Ultimately, this chapter suggests a strong correlation between moral interest in fish, and the material ubiquity of fish in medieval culture, and gives reason to the way fish feature prominently as a medieval food and symbol. Fish were not only a staple of the religious and secular diet, but an important aspect of the theology of creation, and were used to communicate ideas about human being and behaviour in the created order.

Chapter Four, *Vultures, Emperors, Traditions, and the Historiography of Science,* moves the case-study portion of the thesis from 'fish' to 'birds' by exploring the way Frederick II engages with, and challenges, the theological manuscript tradition when writing about the vulture. This chapter demonstrates how Frederick II defines his own recreational interest in birds by a departure from established and authoritative ways of writing about animals in his own medieval landscape. Rather than being motivated by 'science', however, it is clear that Frederick's interests are strictly part of the noble pursuit of falconry. This reframes historiographical approaches to Frederick which has seen him presented as a proto-renaissance man, and even a scientist; depictions used to justify his inclusion in historiographies of science. Further, this chapter establishes Frederick's genuine engagement in theological manuscript traditions and provides a way of further highlighting (albeit indirectly) a high-medieval mode of thinking and writing about animals that was intentionally non-literal.

Chapter Five, *A Sacrament of Fish and Birds: Turning to the Exegetes,* more fully fleshes out the suggestions of the first four chapters by further interrogating high-medieval interest in birds. Continuing its consideration of the medieval vulture, the chapter places ideas about birds into proper exegetical context, and investigates the idea of figurative exposition in relation to scripture as sound, awaiting human apprehension. Since medieval representations of the vulture grew out of a wider exegetical tradition that developed from the patristic period through to the Middle Ages, this chapter demonstrates how patristic exegetical practice informed the process of expositing medieval textual and visual representations of birds. Here, it will be argued that high-medieval expositions on the vulture, when viewed as a sacramental point of contact between God and humans, ought to be understood in much the same way as scripture. This sort of re-evaluation of the medieval vulture, therefore, becomes theological, and places the idea of figurative zoological exposition into a larger exegetical conversation

where humans both apprehend and respond to the voice of God, sounding throughout the created world.

Together, the five chapters proposed in this thesis comprise a different way of thinking and writing about the high-medieval world in the context of authority, scripture, and creation. Such an approach is imperative if the modern reader is to truly throw-off the dominance of scientific historiography, and instead comprehend the theological nature of the medieval texts they examine. Given the attention to figurative animal expositions throughout the thesis, and the argument that high-medieval expositions on fish and birds had a thread of consistency and sophistication underpinning their composition, this thesis also contributes to a growing scholarly trend sometimes referred to as 'the animal turn'. Noting the emergence of scholarship that seeks to further explore medieval ideas about animals, this thesis acknowledges its own contribution to 'the animal turn'. In joining the call to reassess medieval ideas about animals, however, this thesis aims to *see beyond* the encyclopaedic way of categorising medieval animal expositions in order to consider how they might function theologically. The more theologically reflective investigation of figurative animal expositions outlined in this thesis enables two things. First, it provides a more sympathetic interpretation of writings on animals in the High Middle Ages, in their religious, exegetical, and cultural context. Second, it enables the modern reader to penetrate the seemingly bizarre literal surface of a medieval text and exposes both obvious and less-obvious figurative layers of intention. It allows for a deeper sense of seeing, even a seeing beyond seeing, in theological and intellectual harmony with the authors and texts it examines.

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Dedication

For Kate, Maysie, and Maddie – whose boundless love and patience saw me through.

List of Abbreviations

Throughout the thesis, the following abbreviations are used. Included here are the Latin editions and preferred English translators (where applicable). Where passages have been translated by the author, or where the translations/transcriptions of other translators have been altered or amended by the author, an indication of this appears in the footnotes. For full bibliographic detail, please see the thesis bibliography.

Brepols Library of Latin Texts (LLT) has been an invaluable resource for available Latin Editions. Where this resource has been used, this is indicated by the following: [(ed.) Brepols LLT (*CPL 0123/ *CC CM 123/ Author, (Brepols LLT).] Citations from Migne's *Patrologia Latina* are indicated with the abbreviation 'PL'.

Note: *CPL = Codices Palatini Latini
*CC CM = Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis

<u>St Augustine of Hippo:</u>	
Conf. = *Confessiones*	(ed. & tran.) Hammond
DDC = *De doctrina christiana*	(ed. & tran.) Green
DCD = *De civitate Dei*	(tran.) Bettenson
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0313)
DDQ = *De diuersis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*	(tran.) Mosher
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0289)
DCR = *De catechizandis rudibus*	(tran.) Canning
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0297)
CA = *Contra Academicos*	(tran.) O'Meara
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0253)
DVR = *De vera religione*	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0264)
DLA = *De libero arbitrio*	(tran.), King
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0260)
DGAL = *De Genesi ad litteram*	(tran.) Hill
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0266)
AII = *Adnotationes in Iob*	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0271)
En.Ps. = *Enarrationes in Psalmos*	(tran.) Boulding
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0329)
IIET = *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus*	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0278)
DT = *De Trinitate*	(tran.) Hill
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0329)
DO = *De ordine*	(tran.) Borruso
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0255)
<u>St Ambrose of Milan:</u>	
Hex. AM = *Exameron*	(tran.) Savage
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 0123)

Alcuin of York:

VDP = *Versus de patribus, regibus, et sanctis Euboricensis ecclesiae*	(ed. & tran.) Godman

The Venerable Bede:

HEG = *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*	(tran.) Sherley-Price MS. Kk.3.18
H.Evan. = *Homiliarum Evangelii*	(ed.) Brepols LTT (CPL 1367)

Gregory the Great:

Mor.I. = *Moralia in Iob*	(tran.) Kerns (ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 1708)

Isidore of Seville:

Etym. = *Etymologiae*	(tran.) Barney (ed.) Brepols LLT (CPL 1186)

Anselm of Canterbury:

EDIV = *Epistola de incarnatione verbi*	(trans.) Davis & Evans (ed.) Schmitt
De.Ver. = *De veritate*	(trans.) Davis & Evans (ed.) Schmitt
Pros. = *Proslogion*	(trans.) Davis & Evans (ed.) Schmitt

William of Malmesbury:

LSEL = *Liber super explanationem Lamentationum Ieremiae Prophetae*	(tran.) Winterbottom (ed.) Brepols LLT (CC CM 244)

Alexander Neckam:

DNR = *De naturis rerum*	(partial trans.) Lindberg & Lindberg (ed.) Wright
SD = *Suppletio Defectuum*	(ed. & tran.) C. McDonough

Gerald of Wales:

TH = *Topographia hibernica*	(tran.) O'Meara (ed.) Brewer
IK = *Itinerarium Kambriae*	(tran.) Thorpe (ed.) Dimock
DRSG = *De rebus a se gestis*	(tran.) Butler

	(ed.) Brewer, Dimock, & Warner
<u>Peter Abelard:</u>	
Hex. PA = *Expositio in Hexameron*	(tran.) Zemler-Cizewski
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CC CM 15)
HC = *Historia calamitatum*	(ed. & tran.) Luscombe
SN = *Sic et non*	(tran.) Throop
	(ed.) Boyer & McKeon (Brepols LLT)
<u>St Bernard of Clairvaux:</u>	
D.Con. = *De consideration libri v*	(trans.) Anderson & Kennan
	(ed.) Leclercq & Rochais (Brepols LLT)
CC = *Sermones in cantica canticorum*	(tran.) Walsh
	(ed.) Leclercq, Talbot, & Rochais (Brepols LLT)
<u>Hugh of St Victor:</u>	
Didas. = *Didascalicon*	(tran.) Taylor
	(ed.) Buttimer (Brepols LLT)
DS = *De sacramentis*	(tran.) Deferrari
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (PL, 176)
DAN = *De arca Noe*	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CC CM 176)
<u>Guibert of Nogent:</u>	
D.Vit. = *De vita sua*	(tran.) Benton
	(ed.) Labande (Brepols LLT)
<u>John of Salisbury:</u>	
Meta. = *Metalogicon*	(tran.) McGarry
	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CC CM 98)
Policrat. = *Policraticus*	(ed.) Brepols LLT (CC CM 118)
<u>Hugh of Fouilloy:</u>	
Av. = *De avibus*	(ed. & tran.) Clark
<u>Robert Grosseteste:</u>	
LC = *Lanercost Chronicle*	(unpublished eds. & trans.) Gasper & Sønneysn *used with permission*
Hex. RG = *Hexameron*	(eds.) Dales & Gieben
<u>Bartholomew the Englishman:</u>	
DPR = *De Proprietatibus Rerum*	*Latin* (ed.) Korberger (1483)
	Latin (ed.) Husner (1505)

	Middle English (ed.) Seymour
<u>Frederick II:</u>	
DAV = *De arte venandi cum avibus* (Note: DAV refers to a reading/translation informed by the edition of Willemsen and the version MS. Lat. 1071. Where a specific edition or version is used, this is indicated in the footnotes.)	(trans.) Wood & Fyfe (ed.) Willemsen Biblioteca Apostolica Latina, MS. Lat. 1071
<u>Bestiary Latin Editions:</u>	
NB = *Northumberland Bestiary*	(ed. & tran.) White
SFB = *Bestiarium* (Clark's Second Family Latin Bestiary)	(ed. & tran.) Clark
MS. Bodley 764	(ed.) de Hamel
RB = *Regula S. Benedicti*	(ed.) Lowe

Some further notes on referencing:

Book, Part, Chapter, Prologue, Distinction, Exposition, Sermon, Question, Paragraph, Line, Column, and Page/Pages and are indicated as: Lib. Pars. Cap. Prol. Dist. Expos. Ser. Qu. Par. Lin. Col. p. pp.

In Augustine's *Confessiones* and *De doctrina christiana* relevant passages are cited as: Lib. [x], 1(1)

Manuscript/s are indicated as: MS./MSS.

Where manuscript folios are cited, recto and verso are indicated as: [^{r}] & [^{v}]

All quotations from the Latin Vulgate and its English Translation are taken from the modern Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library. This presents a modified English translation of the Latin Vulgate based upon nineteenth-century translations of Challoner's revision of the Douay-Rheims: *The Vulgate Bible: Vols I & VI: The Pentateuch; The New Testament; Douay-Rheims Translation,* (eds.) S. Edgar (OT Pent.), & A. Kinney (NT), (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press: 2013).

Introduction

Historical Theology amidst an Historiography of Science

> I also began to rejoice because the old Scriptures of the law and the prophets were no longer set before me to read with that scrutiny which had once found them ridiculous back in the days when I used to reproach your saints for opinions they did not actually hold. I was delighted to hear Ambrose, when preaching to the people, often urgently recommending this as their rule: "the letter kills, but the spirit gives life." He took away the mystical veil and opened the spiritual sense of things which seemed, according to the letter, to inculcate what was unreasonable.[1]
>
> - St Augustine of Hippo

Sense Beyond the Letter: Rethinking the Immediate

In book six of his *Confessiones*, Augustine recounts how Ambrose radically transforms his approach to reading scripture. Formerly, Augustine admits, his reading was rooted in scrutinising the literal sense of words. It was from this sense that he would deride the Old Testament for being 'ridiculous', in the sense of being implausible: Augustine's term is 'absurda'.[1] In the narrative account of the *Confessiones*, it was not until he was exposed to the writings and exegetical practice of Ambrose, that he began to see sense beyond the letter; or as medieval historians would later phrase it, to penetrate the cloak of the letter, and to expose the

[1] Conf. Lib. vi, 4(6), pp.246-9. 'Gaudebam etiam quod vetera scripta legis et phrophetarum iam non illo oculo mihi legenda proponerentur quo antea videbantur absurda, cum arguebam tamquam ita sentientes sanctos tuos, verum autem non ita sentiebant. et tanquam regulam diligentissime commendaret, saepe in popularibus sermonibus suis dicentem Ambrosium laetus audiebam: "littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat," cum ea quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoto mystico velamento, spiritaliter aperiret, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamvis ea diceret quae utrum vera essent adhuc ignorarem.'

[1] Conf. Lib. vi, 4(6), pp.246-9.

spiritual sense of words.[2] In short, to engage in a 'reading beyond reading', or a seeing beyond seeing.[3]

The passage from Augustine is a fitting reminder to all who encounter foreign ideas and it is relevant in the same vein to ideas of the past. For instance, if a reader lacks sufficient context, whether that be historical, cultural, religious, or theological; or if a reader is without intellectual sympathy for the texts they interrogate, for whatever reason or consequence, then the ideas that emerge may very well appear as either 'ridiculous' or 'absurd'. But that is to fall prey to deception. As Crone demonstrates in her *Pre-Industrial Societies*, a reader must not, as far as it is reasonably possible, impose the ideas of the present onto a foreign age or tradition:

> The civilised societies of the past resemble those of modern times, but in some ways the similarity is deceptive. One cannot come to grips with them without thinking away modernity and working out the consequences of its absence.[4]

Immersion in the ideas and traditions of a foreign age or culture requires an intense 'thinking away' of all that is familiar to the present or immediate. Instead, a rigorous re-thinking of precisely why a particular movement, tradition, practice, or phenomenon is significant, is required.

A pertinent example for the current study is Radding's 'Superstition to Science' from the late 1970s on society's turning away from the practice of trial by Ordeal over the course of the late-eleventh to early-thirteenth centuries, the High Middle Ages. Radding suggested that 'twelfth-century Europe merits attention as a society that became critical of its magical beliefs

[2] B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), Third Printing, 1978, 2.
[3] The phrase 'reading beyond reading' is found in Robertson, and is explored in greater depth in the methodology section of this introduction. See: D. Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading,* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), xix-xx
[4] P. Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies: Anatomy of the Pre-Modern World,* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2015), 2.

and developed scientific conceptions.'[5] In making this case, he relied on the ego-centric theory of the educational psychologist, Piaget, to explain an 'imminent justice' mentality, before readily applying this beyond Piaget's children, and to modern under-developed communities in Melanesia,[6] and the cultural-religious practices of the medieval west.[7] In making this argument, Radding provided a reading of Piaget's study on moral judgments in children:

> One of Piaget's associates told 167 French children a story about a child who stole apples from an orchard. While running home the child fell into a river when a rotten bridge gave out underfoot. When asked what they thought of the story, most of the youngest children, those under the age of nine, said that the child would not have fallen into the water if he had not taken the apples: "It serves him right. He shouldn't have stolen. It serves him right," said one six-year-old. And, when specifically asked if the child who stole the apples would not have fallen into the water had he not stolen, the youngest children said he would not.[8]

As Radding explained, Piaget's study compares the views of younger children, with those of older children, in response to a story of apple theft, concluding that the latter group are less likely to accept the 'imminent justice' theory to account for its misfortunate aftermath.[9] This Radding and Piaget put down to child cognitive development. And in spite of this, Radding concluded that 'social usage and common opinion' account for similar notions of 'imminent justice' being perpetuated by religious communities in the Middle Ages.[10] When

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[5] C. Radding, 'Superstition to Science: Nature, Fortune, and the Passing of the Medieval Ordeal', *The American Historical Review,* 84 (1979), 945-69. The above quote appears on page 968. For further reading on Trial by Ordeal, see: R. Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water: The Medieval Judicial Ordeal,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

[6] The prejudicial notion that modern Melanesian communities are under-developed is alluded to by Radding's suggestion that the 'cultural egocentricity' in Melanesia can be explained by an 'absence of well-developed operational skills.' See: Radding, 'Superstition to Science', 952-5.

[7] Radding, 'Superstition to Science', 952.

[8] Radding, 'Superstition to Science', 951-2.

[9] Radding, 'Superstition to Science', 952.

[10] Radding, 'Superstition to Science', 955-9.

such ‘social usage and common opinion’ begin to shift, which as Radding asserted happened with Ordeal around the turn of the thirteenth century, rational thinkers begin to question the connection between moral transgression and divine retribution.[11] This model of ‘imminent justice’, Radding argued, is further seen in modern under-developed nations who, through religious and social norms, are held back from rationally scrutinising their own societal practices, an argument that was, according to Radding’s own social norms in the late 1970s, considered less problematic despite its overt racist implications.[12]

Radding’s use of Piaget for comprehending religious practice in the Middle Ages is disconcerting for three significant reasons. First, he adopts an anachronistic dichotomy between ‘magical beliefs’ and ‘scientific conceptions’.[13] In the Middle Ages, the term ‘science’ (‘scientia’) was understood very differently from the way Radding employs it, and his assertion of high-medieval ‘scientific… development’ gestures toward a future intellectual destination of which medieval monks and scholars were perfectly unaware.[14] Furthermore, the very term ‘magical’ takes no account for the fact that medieval scholars defined ‘magic’ (‘magice’) as a phenomenon of nature (‘natura’), and not as one of the supernatural (‘supra naturam’).[15] As Bartlett deftly argues, a reader must pay close attention to the terminology that underpins the exegetical practice of the schools and monasteries of the High Middle Ages, much of which is informed by Augustine’s conception of ‘natura’ and ‘seminales rationes’, and was seriously taken up by Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, William of Auvergne, and,

[11] Radding, ‘Superstition to Science’, 952-3.
[12] Radding, ‘Superstition to Science’, 954-8.
[13] Radding, ‘Superstition to Science’, 968.
[14] Hugh of St Victor, for instance, uses the phrase ‘morals equip learning’ (‘mores orant scientiam’) in relation to expounding a text, memory, meditation, and discipline. This appears in book three of his *Didascalicon,* and later in book five he would revisit this in relation to sacred reading, stating: ‘Twofold is the fruit of sacred reading, because it either instructs the mind with knowledge or it equips it with morals’; ‘geminus est divine lectionis fructus, quia mentem vel scientia erudite vel moribus ornat.’ It is difficult to see how Hugh’s use of ‘scientia’ could possibly refer to ‘science’ in the modern sense. Didas. Lib. iii, Cap. xii, Lin. xiv, p.61; Lib. v, Cap. vi, Lin. xx, p.104.
[15] R. Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middles Ages,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 1-29.

historiographically speaking, Henri de Lubac.[16] Given that 'magice' was confined to the workings of 'natura', it makes no sense to present a supposed dichotomy between the 'magical' and the 'scientific' (attributing the latter to a study of the natural world). Moreover, it makes even less sense to suggest Ordeal has anything to do with the magical at all, as its central theological issue was, of course, a question of the supernatural.[17]

The second concerns Radding's mode of expression and inquiry, in that no consideration whatsoever is given to the biblical language present in Piaget's story, and what that might mean for possible interpretations of it, even in twentieth-century France. Indeed, the language of forbidden fruit leading to a fall, and the evocative notions of rottenness and injury as forms of punishment for moral transgression, not to mention the very idea of having to leave the orchard, are obvious themes in Genesis.[18] Further still, the nature of the story is almost identical to Augustine's pear-theft episode in his *Confessiones* which was modelled too on the narrative of human fallenness in Genesis, and was crafted to provoke figurative readings, going on to enjoy a massive reception in medieval (as well as modern French) society.[19]

Third, using Piaget to explain the erosion of theories of 'imminent justice' in medieval Catholicism is itself absurd, as there can be no doubt that correlations between human morality and divine judgment continued to be held at virtually every level of society and the church regardless of changes in attitude toward Ordeal. In fact, Aquinas would later specifically address the issue of Ordeal not as being a problem of connecting moral action to divine retribution, but rather of manipulating God into miraculous response.[20] Radding

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[16] Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middles Ages,* 1-29. The argument Bartlett presents here is hugely important.
[17] Bartlett, *Trial by Fire and Water,* 89.
[18] Genesis 3.1-17.
[19] L. Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft in Augustine's "Confessions", *Revue D'Etudes Augustiniennes Et Patristiques*, Vol 16, Nos. 3-4, (1970), 233-242. This is discussed in greater detail in chapter two.
On the modern French reception of Augustine, especially amidst the positivism and scientism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, see: A. Chimkovitch, 'French Literature', in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine, Vol. II,* (eds.) K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (2013).
[20] Aquinas is quoted by Bartlett, on Ordeal: 'a miraculous effect is expected of God', 'expectatur aliquis miraculosus effectus a Deo'. See: Bartlett, *The Natural and the Supernatural in the Middles Ages,* 29.

mischaracterises forms of medieval belief and practice, resulting from the imposition of modern cognitive-psychological theory upon a foreign age and tradition. In a twist of irony, he provides only a surface reading of the texts and narratives he encounters, both medieval and modern. Coupled with his fundamental misunderstanding of medieval terminology, Radding's reading misses any consideration of the potential secondary intentions (whether consciously present or not) at play in the texts he draws upon, showing interest only in discovering modern scientific theories at play in the past.

Navigating the Historiography of Medieval 'Scientific' Zoology

In a similar way the current investigation pushes back at historiographies of science that frequently mischaracterise, and sometimes tragically misinterpret, the religious treatises of high-medieval authors, especially with respect to the theological traditions and exegetical practices that underpin figurative exposition, chiefly from the 1100s through to 1253.[21] Within the confines of the discussion to follow, the authors considered include, Alexander Neckham, Gerald of Wales, Peter Abelard, Hugh of Fouilloy, Hugh of St Victor, Bartholomew Anglicus, and even Adelard of Bath, Robert Grosseteste, and to some extent Frederick II. The range of authors considered, as well as the source material reviewed, spans several generations and intellectual traditions; such breadth is necessary to properly reframe medieval figurative expositions according to their intended context, and to put them into dialogue with established historiography.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century, ideas about 'scientific' development in the High Middle Ages have been significantly influenced by the work of Charles Homer Haskins. This can be seen in two ways. First, in shaping the historiography of medieval political

[21] For the most part, this study will focus on authors who wrote in Europe in the twelfth century, examining their influences, and looking at the reception of their figurative expositions by authors working in other traditions. 1253 is selected due to the fact that Frederick II's *De arte venandi cum avibus* was completed shortly after his death, in 1250; and 1253 also marks the death of Robert Grosseteste: J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 172-5; T. van Cleeve, *The Emporer Frederick II of Hohenstaufen: Immutator Mundi,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), 513-8.

thought, Haskins and his student, Joseph Strayer, forged the historiographical methodology encapsulated by the title of the latter's monograph, *Medieval Origins of the Modern State*.[22] This, in itself, establishes the idea that the origins of modern thought and society can be traced back to the medieval world, and discovered in proto form. Second, and connected to the first, is the idea that modern science can, too, be discovered in the past in embryonic form. This is found in Haskins' own *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*, a revolutionary collection in its day, and its successor monograph *The Renaissance of the 12th Century*.[23] Declaring his intentions quite neatly in the prefatory remarks to the first work, Haskins states:

> The history of European science in the Middle Ages is twofold. On the one hand it is concerned with the recovery and assimilation of the science of antiquity, little known at first and only gradually brought into the West, to some extent as enlarged by the Arabs, in the course of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; while on the other hand, it has to take account of the advance of knowledge by the process of observation and experiment in western Europe.[24]

Essentially, Haskins here assigns the High Middle Ages an pivotal place in the broader historical development of the European scientific tradition, deeming the presence of ancient philosophical theories (albeit ones limited to modern scientific interests) as evidence of 'recovery'. Furthermore, in this longer history of scientific progress, Haskins defines 'the advance of knowledge' in terms of that which can be demonstrated empirically through

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[22] N. Cantor, *Inventing the Middle Ages: The Lives, Works, and Ideas of the Great Medievalists of the Twentieth Century,* (New York: William Morrow and Company, 1991), 245-7; J. Strayer, *On the Medieval Origins of the Modern State,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973).

[23] C. Haskins, *The Renaissance of the Twelfth Century,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1927). It is noteworthy how long-lived Haskins' assertion of the 'renaissance' of the twelfth century would be: in the decades following this book, Leff, Knowles, and Southern would all release monographs and articles on the twelfth-century 'renaissance'. See: G. Leff, *Medieval Thought St Augustine to Ockham,* (Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press Intl, 1958); R. Southern, 'The Place of England in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance', *History,* 45 (1960), 201-16; D. Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought,* (Hoboken, NJ: Prentic Hall Press, 1962).

[24] C. Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), vii.

'observation and experiment'.[25] For Haskins, the modern scientific tradition, defined as a scientific community that progresses human knowledge through empirical observation and experimentation, has a secure lineage in medieval studies, despite the later objections raised by Agassi in response to anachronistic inductivist historiographies of science.[26]

Other prominent proponents of Haskins' approach to medieval science include Grant and Lindberg, who each have authored several works that seek to define and identify 'science' in the Middle Ages.[27] Endemic to these approaches are that many authors, from the Early Middle Ages through to the High Middle Ages, are heavily criticised for things they simply were not trying to do. Criticising a medieval author for having no knowledge of the way in which 'science' would later emerge and flourish in modern secular institutions is both unhelpful and unfruitful. For instance, in relying on Stahl when introducing his annotated revision of Isidore's *Etymologiae,* Grant states:

> In the selections from Isidore which follow, the reader will see what passed for science, mathematics, and knowledge of the physical world for many centuries. For science, it was truly a dark age… The meager scientific knowledge that came across into Latin was derived from a handbook tradition that went back ultimately to the Hellenistic period. Thus, Isidore was the

[25] Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* 305-26. A similar approach is adopted by Crombie. See: A. Crombie, *Science, Art and Nature in Medieval and Modern Thought,* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1996), 17-21.
[26] J. Agassi, *Towards an Historiography of Science* ('s-Gravenhage: Mouton, 1963).
[27] See: E. Grant, (ed.) *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974); E. Grant, *Physical Science in the Middle Ages,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); E. Grant, *The Foundations of Modern Science in the Middle Ages,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); E. Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy: From the Ancient World to the Nineteenth Century,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); E. Grant, *God and Reason in the Middle Ages,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); D. Lindberg, (ed.), *Science in the Middle Ages,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); D. Lindberg, "Medieval Science and Its Religious Context," *Osiris* vol. 10, Constructing Knowledge in the History of Science (1995): 60-79; D. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, Prehistory to A.D. 1450,* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992).

> hapless heir of a drastically diluted scientific heritage. He was rarely better than his sources, and occasionally much worse.[28]

In addition to criticising Isidore's own intellectual tradition for something it was never supposed to be, the language Grant employs here is deeply anachronistic. For one, when saying 'what passed for *science*, mathematics, and *knowledge* of the physical world…', Grant takes no thought over the fact that the Latin term 'scientia', which Isidore himself uses, literally means 'knowledge' or 'learning'.[29] To Isidore there could be no such distinction between 'science' and 'knowledge of the physical world', and certainly not much at all to be said about the phrase 'scientific knowledge'. Furthermore, by saying 'what passed as science', 'truly a dark age', 'meagre scientific knowledge', 'hapless heir', 'drastically diluted scientific heritage', 'rarely better' and 'much worse', Grant casts only the present 'scientific' age in positive terms, and judges the 'regrettable past' from the anachronistic perspective of the research, laboratories, libraries, institutes, and carefully-defined disciplines of a post-industrial age.[30] Ironically, it is such an approach to an early-medieval author, who often moralised his expositions on the created world as an aid to biblical exegesis, that is deeply bizarre.[31]

The assumptions that underlie Haskin's pioneering methodology can be found across studies of both late antiquity and the Middle Ages in the earlier twentieth century. A good example is Keenan's 'St. Augustine and Biological Science' from the late 1930s, which became limited to a search for 'Augustine's empirical approach in his study of natural phenomena' defined by 'the willingness to experiment' and 'the application of the value of observation.'[32]

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[28] E. Grant, 'The Latin Encyclopedists: Isidore of Seville', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* 3.
[29] For instance, in book six of his *Etymologiae,* Isidore comments on the 'learning' ('scientia') of Augustine, compared with Origen and Jerome, stating: 'Still, Augustine with his intelligence and learning overcomes the output of all these…'; 'Horum tamen omnium studia Augustinus ingenio uel scientia sui uicit.' Etym. Lib. vi, Cap. vii.
[30] Grant, 'The Latin Encyclopedists: Isidore of Seville', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* 3.
[31] Isidore writes at length on allegorical and moral readings of scripture in the very work in which he also writes about animals. The idea that he inherited 'a drastically diluted scientific heritage' misrepresents the nature of his work.
[32] M. Keenan, 'St. Augustine and Biological Science', *Osiris,* Vol, 7, (1939), 588-9.

Whilst informative, Keenan's interest only in the modern laboratory sees Augustine (at times) labelled as ignorant, and the 'scriptural character' of his natural expositions on plants, fish, and animals unexpectedly limited to whether or not his descriptions were scientifically 'correct', or how they might be evidence of his understanding of 'osmosis' or a 'theory of evolution'.[33]

Within high-medieval historiography it has not been uncommon for exegetes to be considered scientists, and their so-called scientific interests to be grouped together with authors who were participating in a very different literary or intellectual tradition. For example, in the case of Alexander Neckam and Robert Grosseteste, their most prominent twentieth-century biographers referred to them as 'scientists' or 'proto-scientists', and presented their ideas as scientific, despite the (not always explicitly) exegetical nature of the works in which these ideas are contained.[34] In some cases these (over)claims were positive, that the medieval period was part of the emergence of modern science, as is the case for Crombie, Peters, and Hannam; in others negative, sceptical of the positive claims though in an argument still framed around continuity or not with modern science, as for Wootton.[35]

Whatever the reason, such projection of present notions of modern science into the past inevitably becomes problematic. Not only are works like Neckam's *De naturis rerum* misrepresented as scientific, or an effort in natural history, or even (and misleadingly) as

[33] Keenan, 'St. Augustine and Biological Science', 591-608.
[34] R. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), 83-107; McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste,* 9-10; R. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1215),* (ed.) M. Gibson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 67-83; Crombie, *Science, Art and Nature in Medieval and Modern Thought,* 39-49; 368-72; 453-8.
[35] On this see the distinction between advocates of medieval science, as found in Crombie, Peters, and the more accessible popular author Hannam, and adversaries of medieval 'science' such as Wootton: A. Crombie, *Robert Grosseteste and the Origins of Experimental Science, 1100-1700,* (London: The British Academy, 2002); E. Peters, 'Introduction: Science and the Culture of Early Europe', in R. Dales, (ed.), *The Scientific Achievement of the Middle Ages,* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1973), 1-26; J. Hannam, *The Genesis of Science: How the Christian Middle Ages Launched the Scientific Revolution,* (Washington DC: Regnery Publishing Inc., 2011); D. Wootton, *The Invention of Science: A New History of the Scientific Revolution,* (Milton Keynes: Allen Lane, 2015). For a recent popular monograph that advocates for medieval science, see: S. Falk, *The Light Ages: A Medieval Journey of Discovery,* (Milton Keynes: Allen Lake, 2020), 1-13. From the above, Peters offers a classical survey on an historiography of medieval 'science'.

encyclopedic,[36] but authors like Neckam and Grosseteste are grouped historiographically with other misdiagnosed 'scientists', such as Frederick II.[37] This is witnessed especially in Haskins' inclusion of Frederick II's work on falconry in his *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science*, a mode of categorisation that would go on to feature in other prominent histories of science, despite the fact that Frederick's interest in birds was strictly courtly in nature.[38]

The critique of approaches to medieval intellectual endeavour is not a criticism of the value and meaning of the modern scientific discipline, nor its usefulness in engaging with medieval texts. On the contrary, recent collaborations between theologians, historians, philologists, philosophers, physicists, experimental psychologists, and musicologists have produced remarkable readings of medieval authors, as can be witnessed in the Ordered Universe Project's production of editions, translations, and commentaries on the writings of Robert Grosseteste.[39] Nonetheless, a clear difference of the collaborative and interdisciplinary method is that ideas contained in medieval treatises, such as Grosseteste's *De colore*, *De generatione sonorum*, and the *De iride*,[40] are viewed in their proper historical and theological context. Consequently, the ideas encountered inform the modern academic discipline, rather than allowing modern sentiments, assumptions, or social understandings and disciplinary frameworks to reconfigure the past.[41]

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[36] On this point, see: T. Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopedic Knowledge: The Tropological Universe of Alexander Neckam (1157-1217),* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

[37] Both Haskins and Grant include Frederick II's *De arte venandi cum avibus* in their histories of medieval science, alongside (in the case of Grant) excerpts from Neckam's *De naturis rerum* and Grosseteste's *Questio de fluxu et refluxu maris*. See: Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* 242-326; Grant, *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* 380-3; 640-44; 657-81.

[38] This is addressed in chapter four of the thesis, where Haskins' influence is seen (additionally to Grant) in the work of Hays. See: H. Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men: A Humanist History of Zoology* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1973), 38-53.

[39] G. Dinkova-Bruun, et al. *The Dimensions of Colour: Robert Grosseteste's De colore,* (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies, 2013); G. Gasper, et al., *Knowing and Speaking: Robert Grosseteste's De artibus liberalibus 'On the Liberal Arts' and De generatione sonorum 'On the Generation of Sounds',* The Scientific Works of Robert Grosseteste, Volume 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019).

[40] J. Harvey, et al. 'Bow-shaped caustics from conical prisms: a 13th-century account of rainbow formation from Robert Grosseteste's *De iride*', *Optical Society of America,* 56 (2017), G197-G204.

[41] This is captured in the preface to *The Dimensions of Colour,* where it is observed that: 'There is no sense… in which Grosseteste follows Aristotle beyond the authority of Scripture for his fundamental conceptions of the universe… What makes this project unusual is the inter-disciplinary nature of its investigators… It was the

In contrast to welcome collaborations between science and medieval history, philosophy, and theology, the methods championed by Haskins, Grant, and Lindberg, despite their production and edited compilation of translations of medieval Latin texts, inhibit, at times, a true appreciation of medieval ideas represented on the printed page. This is not to say the work of Haskins, Grant, and Lindberg are somehow deficient, or that they lack intellectual ability or expertise. Indeed, such a claim would be simply untrue. These authors each provide insights into the transmission of ideas and texts through Jewish and Arabic translators in the Middle Ages, and construct valuable arguments whilst navigating works that are philosophically dense, or are yet to be edited, translated, or to receive modern commentary.[42] What is more, the work of both Grant and Lindberg acknowledge the relationship between the *artes liberalis* and theological endeavours in the schools, regarding secular subjects as the 'handmaidens of theology'.[43]

However, by using Aquinas to elevate theology into a 'scared science', and doing so in the context of the history of science, Grant's arguments do not make clear enough that theology as 'queen of the sciences' ('regina scientiarum'),[44] to borrow medieval terminology, really meant it was the basis of all knowledge or learning, the final destination of which was divine Wisdom ('sapientia'), and not an Aristotelian model of natural philosophy.[45] Projecting modern interests in the past, Grant's acknowledgment of the secular and the theological

combination of disciplinary perspectives that led to the current edition, translation, and commentary, forging a closely engaged multidisciplinary working method that countered the dangers mentioned above of bringing presentist asuumptions to the text.' Gasper, *The Dimensions of Colour,* viii.

[42] Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* 141-222; Grant, 'A List of Translations Made from Greek into Latin in the Thirteenth Century', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* 39-41; Grant, *God and Reason in the Middle Ages,* 83-7.

[43] Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy,* 247; Lindberg, Medieval Science and Its Religious Context,' 78-9. It would seem that Grant appropriates the 'handmaiden' theory from Lindberg.

[44] G. van den Brink, 'How Theology Stopped Being *Regina Scientiarum* – and How Its Story Continues', *Studies in Christian Ethics,* 32 (2019), 442-54.

[45] Grant uses Aquinas in an attempt to suggest that theology became a 'science'. However, it is clear that the word 'scientia' was used very differently by Aquinas, and Grant make little effort to replicate its meaning here. See: Grant, *A History of Natural Philosophy,* 247. It is also noteworthy that Lawrence of Brindisi would, in his *Dominicalia,* how if learning ('scientia') pertains to wisdom ('sapientia'), and God is wisdom, then theology becomes the 'lady and queen of all learning'; 'theologia enim domina et regina scientiarum omnium est.' The translation here is my own. See: Laurentius a Brunusio, *Dominicalia,* Vol. VIII, Hom. Ii, Par. i, Lin. xx, p.110.

working together shifts from its intended context, favouring the secular as a beacon of intellectual progress. Consequently, this suggests, misleadingly, that 'natural philosophy' consistently comprises a medieval academic discipline in its own right, even in religious contexts where the trivium and the quadrivium were studied intensely, and natural philosophy was not.[46] On this point, it is important to note that the twelfth-century curriculum, with its focus on the seven liberal arts, exposed neither monk, cleric, nor schoolmen to the discipline of 'natural history'.[47]

To take medieval texts out of their intended context obscures, or fundamentally misrepresents, medieval interest in the created world. The dangers of doing so are not better illustrated than in Grant and Lindberg's treatment of Neckam's *De visu*, which is presented as a proto-form of optical science, rather than an exercise in figurative exposition connected, as it is, with established exegetical practice.[48] Identifying Neckam as an optical scientist, rather than an exegete, is one that informs Grant and Lindberg's editorial decision to cut short Neckam's exposition 'On Seeing' from its concluding paragraph concerning moon rays and horse ulcers, and to leave other parts of his figurative expositions unexplored for 'contain[ing] nothing of further optical interest.'[49] However, for Neckam to emerge as an exegete, a radical reframing of some of his theological contributions to medieval thought, in conversation with historiographical misrepresentations of his method, are required.

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[46] This point is made in the Statutes for the University of Paris, where natural philosophy is banned, but the Liberal Arts are approved. *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, I, 70-79 in L. Thorndyke, (tran.), *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975), 26-30. It is also a point noted in Taylor's introduction to Hugh's *Didascalicon* – a treatise dedicated to a study of the liberal arts in preparation for scriptural interpretation. See: J. Taylor, (ed.), *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 'Introduction', 31-2.

[47] Despite repeating the traditional dichotomy between the 'moralising bestiary' and the works of Albertus Magnus and Frederick II, this point is made (almost as a disclaimer) at the very beginning of Karen Reeds and Tomomi Kinukawa's chapter on medieval 'natural history'. See: K. Reeds & T. Kinukawa, 'Medieval Natural History', in *The Cambridge History of Science* (eds.) D. Lindberg & M. Shank, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 569-589.

[48] See Lindberg's commentary on Neckham's *De visu* in *A Source Book in Medieval Science*, 380-3. This point is explored in much greater depth in chapter one of the thesis: *A Deeper Sense of Seeing: Alexander Neckham and the Idea of Allegorical Exposition*.

[49] See Lindberg's note in *A Source Book in Medieval Science*, 383.

Seeing Haskins in the Bestiary

Before the methodology of my thesis is laid bare, it must be acknowledged that the legacy of the methods associated with Haskins have had a significant impact on the way medieval 'zoology', that is to say, *literature on animals*, has been approached and understood by subsequent generations of scholars. For instance, summarising Frederick II's *De arte venandi cum avibus*, Haskins states that the work has a 'systematic and scientific character' giving it '…an important place in the history of medieval zoology.'[50] Using modern zoology as a benchmark for offering a critique of medieval literature on animals, Haskins not only includes Frederick II's royal sporting interest in falconry in his selection of material on medieval 'science', but he elevates it to a work of scientific importance.[51] Positioning Frederick II's *De arte venandi cum avibus* in this way is also found in Grant's selection of material on medieval 'zoology', who unsurprisingly (given the parallels between his method and Haskins') describes the same work as 'one of the great scientific treatises of the Middle Ages', and 'a masterpiece of objective and concise scientific description.'[52]

Arguably, Haskins and Grant misrepresent Frederick II's work on falconry as one of scientific achievement. In large part, this is due to superficial similarities between the empiricism inherent in the modern scientific method, and the practicalities of training birds of prey in the Middle Ages which, in itself, was motivated by how falconry conveyed a sense of nobility and social status throughout the period; motivations notably absent from modern zoological research laboratories.[53] More to the point, however, is that these superficial similarities between medieval and modern interests in animals become a way of assessing the

[50] Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* 326.
[51] Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* 299-326.
[52] Grant, 'Introduction: On the Structure and Habits of Birds', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* 657-8.
[53] This argument in made in chapter four of this thesis, *Vultures, Emperors, Traditions, and the Historiography of Science*.

use and reliability of other texts on animals, despite them belonging to entirely distinct manuscript traditions. For instance, the opening to the section on medieval zoology in Grant's edited collection, includes an introduction, by White, to a twelfth-century bestiary, which asserts:

> A Bestiary is a serious work of natural history, and is one of the bases upon which our own knowledge of biology is founded, however much we have advanced since it was written.[54]

White goes on to connect authors such as Hugh of Fouilloy, Neckham, Bartholomew Anglicus, Albertus Magnus, and even Marco Polo, with the evolving medieval bestiary tradition, citing James' work on the division of first-, second-, transitional-, and third-family manuscripts.[55] Nonetheless, this is only done in order to trace the development of medieval 'zoology' from its perceived early-medieval beginnings through to the seventeenth-century *Pseudodoxia epidemica* which White indicates 'began to raise the subject of biology to a scientific level, for the first time since Aristotle'.[56] Such interest in medieval literature on animals is clearly overshadowed by a search for any remnant of proto-science that may lead to seeing the world, and its creatures, in an empirical fashion.

Situating the bestiary in this manner is epitomised by C.S. Lewis' mid-twentieth-century survey of medieval literature. On the question of zoology, or what Lewis explicitly terms as 'pseudo-zoology',[57] he writes:

> The written zoology of [the medieval] period is mainly a mass of cock-and-bull stories about creatures the authors had never seen, and often about creatures that never existed.

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[54] T. White, 'Descriptions of Animals from a Twelfth-Century Bestiary', in *A Source Book in Mediaeval Science*, 644.
[55] White, 'Descriptions of Animals', 646.
[56] White, 'Descriptions of Animals', 646.
[57] C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), Reprinting, 150.

> The merit of having invented, or the disgrace of having first believed, these fancies does not belong to the medieval. They are usually handing on what they received from the ancients. Aristotle, indeed, had laid the foundations of a genuinely scientific zoology; if he had been known first and followed exclusively we might have had no bestiaries.[58]

Two elements are worth drawing out here. The first is that whilst Lewis acknowledges the existence of an ancient zoological tradition, he views its medieval reception as a failed scientific zoology, contrasting the terms and phrases: 'cock-and-bull', 'stories', 'invented', 'disgrace', and 'fancies' with 'genuinely scientific'.[59] A second is that Lewis momentarily speculates the non-existence of the 'cock-and-bull' bestiary, if only Aristotle had been followed faithfully instead.[60] By isolating his own scientific expectations of 'zoology' from any contextual considerations of the tradition in which 'zoological' writings appeared, Lewis's approach becomes as impractical as it is misleading. Overall, the bestiary is not only understood by reference to more modern forms of 'zoology', but itself becomes mischaracterised as a type of 'pseudo-zoology', when its existence had precisely nothing to do with objectives of modern 'science' or 'zoology' whatsoever.

Following Grant, White, and Lewis, even more recent, and sympathetic, approaches to the medieval bestiary tradition, and its related literature, are inclined to portray it as an inferior version of modern zoology. Cynthia White's opening summary of the Northumberland bestiary provides a striking example:

> [The bestiary] relies upon the fiction that the qualities and behaviours of beasts are part of the natural world that God created for the edification of man. A combination of narrative, animal lore, and spiritual guidance, the

[58] Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, 147.
[59] Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, 146-51.
[60] Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, 147.

> bestiary partakes of both natural science and moral theology, while, at the same time, it anticipates a more scientific zoology and a more encyclopedic approach to the natural world.[61]

Whilst White acknowledges the presence of moral theology throughout the manuscript tradition, her summary suggests that the bestiary drew upon the discipline of natural science. Like the earlier exponents, this suggestion sees the bestiary as forming the beginning of a longer history of, and anticipating the future arrival of, an encyclopedic scientific zoology. Such a framing of the bestiary, and its related literature, as 'encyclopedic' is not uncommon among scholars of the Middle Ages, including the respective approaches of Wright and Zahora to Neckam's *De naturis rerum*.[62] Yet most surprising in White's summary is that, whilst she quotes Romans 1.20 at the very beginning of her introduction, she does not immediately frame the transitional bestiary tradition, of which the Northumberland manuscript was part, in terms of patristic and medieval exegetical continuity.[63] In this way, medieval animal literature, becomes restricted to a survey of what medieval authors thought or invented, rather than using animal expositions to explicate theological ideas on human being and seeing.

Seeing Beyond Seeing: Methodology and Figurative Exposition

Identifying theses historiographical issues is not unique to this thesis. In his *Bestiaries and Their Users,* for instance, Baxter identifies the same scholarly tendencies to frame the bestiary according to what it was not. Responding to James and White, Baxter explains:

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[61] C. White, (ed.) *From the Ark to the Pulpit: An Edition and Translation of the "Transitional" Northumberland Bestiary (13th Century),* (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut d'études médiévales de l'Université Catholique de Louvain, 2009), 1.

[62] T. Wright, (ed.) 'Preface', in *Alexandri Neckam: De naturis rerum libri duo with the poem of the same author De laudibus diuinae sapientae,* (London: Longman Green, 1863), xiv-xv; Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge,* 21-48. Admittedly, Zahora takes a more nuanced approach to Neckam, essentially concluding that he possesses a dualist nature comprised of both scientist and exegete. This appears in the chapter: 'Alexander Neckam: Proto-Scientist, Moralist, or Encyclopaedist?'

[63] In his *Hexameron*, Abelard quotes from Romans 1.20 on three separate occasions to communicate his conception of God's presence the created world and cites Augustine's Trinitarian theology. See: Hex. PA, Expos. xi, liv-lvi, & cxv, pp. 33, 44, & 54. It is also notable that Augustine quotes from this verse frequently to communicate the discovery of God in the created world: DDC*,* Lib. i, 4(10), pp.16-7; DVR, Cap. lii, Lin. viii; IIET, Tract. Xiv, Par. iii, Lin. xiii; En.Ps., Sr. lii, Cap. v, Par. xv, p.69; & DT, Cap. xii, Par. xix, p.171.

> To label the Bestiary 'natural history', a term which did not begin to acquire its present meaning until the middle of the seventeenth century, could only be justified if we were able, through the exercise of an objectivity unavailable to its original users, to state that this is what is really was. Since we cannot, the use of the label puts us in a position of discussing the Bestiary in terms of a concept foreign to both its medieval consumers and to any notion of objectivity. Foreign also, it seems to me, to modern scientific thought, since choosing the term 'natural history' as did James (1928) and White (1954), rather than 'zoology', like Allen (1887), looks suspiciously like deliberate archaism.[64]

To Baxter, then, the bestiary cannot be defined by terms and concepts that were foreign to its creators and users. Furthermore, Baxter proposes (albeit implicitly) two definitions of 'zoology'. The first appears above, where he distinguishes the term 'zoology' used by Allen (though Allen, in fact, uses the terminology 'mystic zoology'), from 'natural history' used by White and James, as a preferred scientific term.[65] However, when elsewhere resisting the tendency for modern archivists to catalogue the bestiary as 'secular' literature, Baxter points to the presence of Isidore in the *Physiologus* and therefore in first-family bestiary manuscripts (to which the *Physiologus* was central).[66] From this he concludes that the 'Christian didacticism' that underpins the entire structure of manuscripts such as Laud Misc. 247, an essential structure that would inform later second-family manuscripts, including MS. Ashmole 1511, frames the 'zoological' accordingly.[67] In short, though the 'zoological' can convey a

[64] R. Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users in the Middle Ages,* (Thrupp, Sutton Publishing Courtauld Institute, 1998), 184.
[65] Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 184. See also: M. James, 'The Bestiary', *History,* 16:61, (1931), 1-11; J. Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism in Great Britain and Ireland before the Thirteenth Century: The Rhind Lectures in Archaeology for 1885,* (London: Whiting & Co., 1887), 326-37. In Allen, the terminology 'mystic zoology' is adopted to describe medieval animal expositions.
[66] Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 83-5, 184.
[67] Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 183-4.

broad interest in animals and their qualities, in terms of the bestiary the 'zoological' is actually moral, in that the entries (no matter how expansive they appear) are moralised, as suggested by Allen's 'mystic zoology'.[68]

A preferred framing of the bestiary is adopted by a range of authors who each situate the manuscript tradition in its proper moralising context, connected, as it is, to the biblical and patristic authority of medieval exegetical practice. In addition to Baxter's astute observations, Barber suggests the second-family bestiary manuscript, MS. Bodley 764, 'offers us a unique insight into the medieval mind' and was designed to 'edify as a series of medieval examples… lead[ing] us, if we wish, into a world reminiscent of Jungian symbolism, with a Christian gloss'.[69] That Barber should evoke the psychological theories of Carl Jung through the use of the term 'Jungian symbolism' is fitting, in that it suggests the transcendent nature of the Bestiary's visual appeal, and the way both its text and image convey various intentions of symbolic meaning.[70] Such a response to reading medieval animal literature is also found in McCulloch, who resists the tendency to frame the *Physiologus* and related bestiary-family manuscripts as either 'natural history' or 'naïve credulity'.[71] Instead, McCulloch points to the continuity of Christian moralisation informed by patristic exegetical practice 'to render subtle theological concepts more intelligible and vivid to unlettered people.'[72] Further, Clark's edition and translation of Hugh of Fouilloy's *Aviarium,* many entries of which were copied out in second-family and transitional manuscripts including the Aberdeen Bestiary MS. 24, MS.

[68] Allen, *Early Christian Symbolism*, 326-7.
[69] R. Barber, *Bestiary: Being an English Version of the Bodleian Library M.S. Bodley 764*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2013), Reissued, 7-15.
[70] M. Kejriwal, & C. Nandagopal, 'Carl Jung's Approach to Symbolism: with special reference to Visual Art', *Scholars Journal of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences,* 3, (2015), 934-7.
[71] F. McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), Revised Edition, 7.
[72] McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* 7.

Ashmole 1511,[73] and the Northumberland Bestiary,[74] sees both the bestiary and the aviary as Christian 'exempla', and therefore stresses that these manuscripts 'must be viewed in this spiritual context.'[75]

Nonetheless, medieval ideas about animals are not always so neatly disentangled from the narrative of scientific natural history, even when their figurative nature is acknowledged. Wirtjes and Freeman, for instance, who both see the tradition of the *Physiologus* as participating in something quite apart from what has been described as Aristotelian science, are still unable to see it outwork a historiography of science. Wirtjes describes the Middle-English *Physiologus* as:

> …an exclusively allegorical mode of thought, which sees the world in terms of symbols rather than causal relationships, [as such, it] is not concerned with truth in the objective, scientific, sense and hence makes the development of science impossible.[76]

Here, the allegorical tradition to which the *Physiologus* belongs seemingly renders the 'development of science impossible' because it is seen to inhibit the objectivity inherent in the scientific method in favour of communicating divine truth through symbol.[77] This is something that is present in the thought of Lewis, discussed above, who views these early and high

[73] The fact that the manuscripts Aberdeen MS. 24, and MS. Ashmole 1511, absorbed Hugh of Fouilloy's entries on birds has been noted by de Oliveira Veloso Silva, and can also be gleaned from comparing the manuscripts directly. See: T. de Oliveira Veloso Silva, 'Evidências de Patrocínio em Bestiários Medievais', *Medievalista*, 29 (2021), 5.
[74] White, *From the Ark to the Pulpit,* 'Introduction II: The Northumberland Bestiary', 37.
[75] W. Clark, (ed.), *The Medieval Book of Birds: Hugh of Fouilloy's Aviarium,* (Binghamton: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992), 'The Author and the Text', 1-5. Whilst Clark here uses the term 'natural history' and even refers to the 'encyclopedia' of Isidore, she does so by redefining the terms in a manner similar to Baxter's use of 'zoology'. Thus the Isidore's work is presented as an 'imaginative encyclopedia', and 'natural history in the bestiary must be viewed in this spiritual context.'
[76] H. Wirtjes, (ed.), *The Middle English Physiologus*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 'Introduction 4: Beasts and Bestiaries', lxix-lxx.
[77] Wirtjes, *The Middle English Physiologus,* 'Introduction 4: Beasts and Bestiaries', lxx.

medieval manuscript traditions as hindering the development of a scientific zoology.[78] For Freeman's mid-twentieth-century work also asserts that:

> In a world in which the importance of things was estimated by their significance rather than by their nature, no scale of strictly scientific value could be evolved. The study of cause and effect is merely hampered by the perception of symbolic relations everywhere.[79]

Notwithstanding Wirtjes' and Freeman's 'scientific' framing of the *Physiologus*, each identify the figurative nature of the moralising tradition. This indicates a culture of thinking and writing that ought to transcend the literal dimension of the texts themselves and extend across the broader high-medieval intellectual landscape. In fact, quite apart from speculative questions of scientific possibility, the *Physiologus* was so radically different from the empiricist objectivity of modernity that it is 'impossible' to frame it, or even the intellectual landscape from which it emerged, as even remotely scientific. Put this way, the question of medieval animal literature as something that hinders, inhibits, or hampers 'science' becomes entirely irrelevant.

Fuller consideration of the bestiary and its related literature opens up interpretative possibilities for medieval ideas about animals, but also expands modern perceptions of connected medieval ideas, produced by the same and contemporary monks and scholars, whether or not their participation in the self-same culture of authority and tradition is immediately obvious. In this respect, the most significant influences on the methodology of the thesis are found in the works of de Lubac, Smalley, Baxter, Robertson, Dawson, and Ferrari. Whilst their ideas are engaged throughout the thesis chapters that follow, common among these diverse scholars is their approach to what might rightly be termed *figurative exposition*.

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[78] Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, 147.
[79] R. Freeman, *English Emblem Books,* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1948), 3; as quoted in Wirtjes, *The Middle English Physiologus,* 'Introduction 4: Beasts and Bestiaries', lxx.

De Lubac's historical theology, especially his close readings of Origen in his *Histoire et Esprit*, is resistant to the historicism that dominates the twentieth-century historical method.[80] As he declares: 'what gross or subtle distortions occur in reconstructions produced by an "objective" and "strictly historical" method!'[81] Further, as Harmon notes, far from being a direct critique of the 'historical-critical method of exegesis', de Lubac's main objective is to restore figurative readings of scripture, as found in Origen's *De principiis*.[82] Obscured by controversy since the fourth century, Origen was given renewed relevance by de Lubac for the reading and interpretation of the bible, especially throughout the Early and High Middle Ages where Augustine's continuation of Origen's exegetical practice is re-emphasised through the heuristic exegetical treatises of Isidore of Seville and Hugh of St Victor.[83] In the process, however, de Lubac offers a hermeneutical mode of reading that sees value in the figurative intentions of a text, image, or culture, regardless of the period to which it belongs, and prompts penetrating questions regarding how the modern reader visualises the ideas of the past in the face of historicism.

To properly grasp de Lubac's thought, it is worth turning to a section of his *Histoire et Esprit,* where he comments on the nature of the bible, and how Origen's reading of it indicates its figurative intentions of meaning, which he describes as 'secret intentions' waiting to be 'sounded' out.[84] To quote de Lubac more fully:

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[80] H. de Lubac, *History and Spirit: The Understanding of Scripture according to Origen,* (tran.) A. Nash, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), A Translation of the French Original, H. de Lubac, *Histoire et Esprit: L'intelligence de l'Ècriture d'après Origène,* (Paris: Èditions Montaigne, 1950), 12-3; Robertson, *Lectio Divina*, 16-8.
[81] de Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 12.
[82] T. Harmon, 'Historicism Versus History and Spirit: Henri de Lubac on What We Can Learn from Studying Origen', *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture,* 19:3, (2016), 29-30.
[83] Etym. Lib. vi, Cap. vii. Here, Isidore cites the influence of Origen, Jerome, and Augustine on his exegetical method. For an overview of Hugh's use of Augustine, see the following studies: F. Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', *Augustinian Studies,* 37:2, (2006), 219-46; B. Fitzpatrick, 'Medieval Theories of Education: Hugh of St Victor and John of Salisbury', *Oxford Review of Education*, 35:5, (2010), 575-88.
[84] de Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 103-4.

> The more we advance in our reading of the Holy Books, the more these mysteries accumulate. It is like an immense sea, and when we are close to casting ourselves into it, with the little raft constituted by our feeble means, a feeling of fear invades us....Nothing in Scripture is said as if by chance; nothing is related in vain. Secret intentions are hidden everywhere. The least details of vocabulary, the least editorial anomalies are the sign of a new mystery: the Holy Spirit did not will them without profound reasons. The sacred text must therefore be "sounded" everywhere with the greatest care. That is what Origen repeats with respect to everything, and it is what immediately strikes the reader. But this mysterious character of the Bible is not affirmed to the detriment of its historical character. The spirit does not wish to harm the letter. It does not wish to "destroy the text". If the reality of the visible world is a figure for the invisible world, then the reality of biblical history will also be a figure for the things of salvation and will serve as their "foundation".[85]

As de Lubac demonstrates here, the dual nature of the bible, and even the Christian world to which it belongs, is one of *both* mystery and history expressed through the visible word/letter, and the invisible spirit.[86] Or, as Dawson argues, through the layers of meaning contained in a narrative (the story one might tell about the world), the 'literal' points to the allegorical 'other'.[87] The reality of the historical-literal, is therefore found in its figurative signification of the 'things of salvation'.[88] And when considering the interconnected nature of the bible and high-medieval literature on animals, it is de Lubac's mode of reading that becomes useful in

[85] de Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 103-4.
[86] de Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 103-4.
[87] D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 4.
[88] de Lubac, *History and Spirit,* 104.

exposing the intended layers of meaning contained within a text or image. Pushing aside the historicism of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century historians von Ranke, Haskins, and subsequent historiographers of science, such a mode of reading sees value beyond the immediate, and investigates meaning in the seemingly bizarre or mundane.[89] It reflects the transformative effect Ambrose has on Augustine's reading of scripture, where the 'absurd' actually signifies a deeper sense of reality.[90]

Roberston takes up de Lubac's approach in order to understand the medieval practice of *lectio divina*, whereby 'lectio' and 'oratio' are key to ascending to higher forms of visual experience through 'meditatio' and 'contemplatio'.[91] This methodological approach to interrogating medieval ideas, as found in texts and practices, is termed a 'reading beyond reading', for it extends one's gaze beyond literal readings of the biblical page and enables an apprehension of divine truth within its figurative language.[92] To follow Robertson, sufficiently contextualising any medieval religious text requires the reader (or listener) to step into the religious landscape to which the text belongs, and become part of its 'interpretive community'.[93] It requires a 'thinking away of modernity' to quote Crone again.[94] Most significantly, it signals a 'moving away from a passive, mechanical text-reception model' of reading (inherent in historicism), instead requiring a creative engagement with the ideas of the past; a participation in a deeper sense of seeing, or even a seeing beyond seeing.[95]

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[89] G. Iggers, 'Historicism: The History and Meaning of the Term', *Journal of the History of Ideas,* 56:1, (1995), 129-52; J. Lake, 'Current Approaches to Medieval Historiography', *History Compass,* 13:3, (2015), 89-109. In Lake, the observation is made that German historicism under von Ranke, meant that 'Medieval histories were to be exploited as *Quellenmaterial* above all; the intentions, meanings, and social context of their authors were relegated to secondary consideration.'
[90] Conf. Lib. vi, 4(6), pp.246-9.
[91] Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* xiii-xv; 96-103
[92] Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* xix.
[93] Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* xix. Robertson here quotes Fish. See also: S. Fish, 'Interpreting the Variorum', *Critical Inquiry,* 2, (1976), 465-85.
[94] Crone, *Pre-Industrial Societies,* 2.
[95] Roberston, *Lectio Divina,* xix. The phrase 'seeing beyond seeing' is an innovation on Robertson's 'reading beyond reading'.

In many respects, the hermeneutical theology of Dawson becomes important for defining the terminology used throughout this thesis. It provides much-needed definitions of technical terminology relating to the 'figurative' or 'figural' mode of interpretation.[96] As a term that encapsulates the 'symbolic' or 'typological' intention of a text, the term 'figurative', from the Latin 'figura', becomes a way of discovering non-literal meaning, without dismissing the literal nature of the texts themselves.[97] The classic example of this is found in Christological exegesis, which reads the Old Testament in light of the New, discovering types and figures of Christ in Old Testament narratives, without necessarily dismissing the exegete's belief in the literal historicity of Hebrew scripture.[98]

Whilst Dawson presents many approaches the allegory, he notes one approach that makes a possible distinction between 'figurative' and 'allegorical' readings of texts. Whilst this distinction does not universally apply to scripture or textual exposition, it serves to broadly distinguish between a narrative-story of which the literal primary reading is either allegorical or else indicates an allegorical intention; and a text of which the primary literal (plain) meaning conveys a deeper figurative, and often moral, reading, whether or not it has a clear narrative structure.[99] In this sense, the allegorical is found in Greek mythology of the gods (conveying non-literal meaning through a narrative explicitly written for that purpose),[100] and may even be applied to New Testament parables, the literal function of which is more obviously, and

[96] D. Dawson, 'Figure, Allegory', in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* (ed.) A. Fitzgerald, (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 365-8. See also the use of 'figura' in Hugh: Didas. Lib. vi, Cap. iii.
[97] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 15-6.
[98] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 15. An example of this in the Middle Ages, is found in the opening chapters of Neckam's *De naturis rerum* where he uses St John to locate the Word in the beginning of the Genesis Creation account. See: DNR, Lib. i, Cap. i-ii, pp.1-15. 'Behold, in this way the Word in found in the beginning of Genesis', 'Ecce quonammodo in principio Geneseos est verbum inclusum.' p.8.
[99] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 4.
[100] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 23. As Dawson shows, this sort of approach is found in the interpretation Heraclitus offers Homer's literature, seeing the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as simply allegories. An interesting article on this question is also found in Michelini's review: A. Michelini, '*Did the Greeks Believe in Their Myths? An Essay of the Constitutive Imagination.* By Paul Veyne, (tran.), P. Wissing, (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1988),' *Ancient Philosophy,* 12, (1992), 420-4.

intentionally, allegorical rather than historical (with figurative intentions). Conversely, the 'figurative' conveys a deeper secondary intention of meaning through its literal primary intentions, even when the secondary intentions are not obvious.[101] This sort of distinction is found in Isidore's *Etymologiae*, where scripture is characterised as either 'narrative' ('historia'), 'moral instruction', ('mores'), or 'allegorical meaning' ('allegoria').[102] It is also potentially found in Augustine's interpretation of Cain and Abel, which Dawson terms 'biblical typology' (a form of figurative exegesis) insofar as Augustine's interpretation of the narrative is literal (Augustine does not think it was written as an allegory), but it also conveys other figurative meanings beyond the literal.[103]

Despite Dawson's distinctions between the allegorical and the figurative, he also presents allegory as a way of understanding the world *through* scripture and authority. As Dawson writes:

> …ancient allegorical readers used their readings of scripture to reinterpret the world and the other cultural classics that helped sustain and legitimate that world. Their texts thus come to us as records of a world already interpreted.[104]

In this sense, allegory has more to do with how the meaning of a text is used, rather than looking solely at what a text means.[105] This sort of approach to allegory is reflected in Latin authors of Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, who, using hermeneutical terms rather more interchangeably, are interested in how scripture can be used for human moral instruction.[106] For instance, in book three of his *De doctrina christiana*, Augustine defines 'allegory' ('allegoria'), 'enigma' ('aenigma'), and 'parable' ('parabola') as all forms of 'tropes'

[101] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 12-5.
[102] Etym. Lib. vi, 1(10), p.135.
[103] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 238-9.
[104] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 236.
[105] Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision,* 235-6.
[106] In the work of Bettetini and Paparella on the use of 'allegory' across Augustine's works, it is noted that 'allegory' may refer to 'metaphor, symbol, irony, or figurative meaning.' M. Bettetini & F. Paparella, 'Allegory' in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine, Vol. I,* (eds.) K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (2013).

('tropos'), relating to the moral-tropological sense of scripture ('tropologia').[107] Whereas, in book four, Augustine declares that the biblical narrative meaning of Abraham's two sons, Isaac and Ishmael, is discovered in allegory ('in allegoria') rather than being *described* as typological or tropological, but it still provides a model for human behaviour.[108] Moreover, in book six of Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon,* which drew on Augustine's *De doctrina christiana,* Hugh writes at length about 'allegoria' in scripture which, following the 'minds of holy men' ('sanctorum… mentes'), is used to raise up the 'simple' ('simplex') to virtue, and see the truth of God as Trinity.[109]

Looking to Dawson, the terminology used throughout this thesis favours the expression 'figurative exposition'. Not only is the term 'figura' found in Hugh in relation to drawing deeper meanings from the literal-historical sense of a passage ('historia'),[110] but it also becomes a useful way of encapsulating intentions of textual meaning across various types of texts, and understanding how it functions within its religious and cultural context. As Hugh states in relation to explicating the historical sense, and exposing the 'figurative': 'Following the shadow, one comes to the body; learn the figure ('figura'), and you will come to the truth.'[111] This is not to say that certain medieval expositions were not allegorical in the stricter sense, as found in Neckam's story of the fish (contained in chapter three) which reads like a New Testament parable.[112] However, figurative exposition extends a rather Augustinian mode of figurative exegesis, to writings that are either not, or not obviously, exegetical in nature.[113] It is a reading not just of scripture, but of crafted narratives, the created world, and otherwise imaginative contributions to high-medieval culture, that each perform a figurative function. Put

[107] DDC, Lib. iii, 39(40), pp.170-1.
[108] DDC, Lib. iv, 20(39), p.244-7. A phrase used by Augustine here, is literally 'Quae sunt in allegoria', which Green translates as 'This is an allegory'.
[109] Didas. Lib. vi, Cap. iv. p.121.
[110] Didas. Lib. vi, Cap. iii. p.116.
[111] Didas. Lib. vi, Cap. iii. p.116. 'per umbram venitur ad corpus; figuram disce et invenies veritatem.'
[112] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4.
[113] On 'figurative exegesis' in Augustine, see: M. Cameron, *Christ Meets Me Everywhere: Augustine's Early Figurative Exegesis,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 43-68.

this way, the believability of a medieval treatise is not important, in the sense that medieval monks and scholars simply 'believed' what a text says. Rather, what is important, is that medieval treatises are constructed to convey something that is believable in order to have a transformative effect upon the reader, expositing not only what can be seen, but also what cannot be seen.

In many ways, it is striking that Smalley writes of Origen's conception of scripture as a sacrament: 'In speaking of the Eucharist, he [Origen] puts more emphasis on Scripture than on the Eucharist; the Logos was incarnate in the flesh of the holy text.'[114] In what follows, then, the idea that scripture figuratively signifies divine Wisdom becomes a model for understanding both the creation and reading of exegetically-informed figurative expositions by high-medieval authors. Comparable to Ferrari's remarkable treatment of Augustine's pear-theft episode in the *Confessions*, the case is made for figurative interpretations of high-medieval expositions on animals, the nature of seeing, autobiography, and the omnipresence of fish and birds, all of which were connected to a continued tradition of exegetical practice that was to consume high-medieval religious culture. As Ziolkowski notes, figurative expositions on animals functioned to provide useful meaning beyond the literal sense of their words.[115] Through re-examining the voices of late-antiquity and the Middle Ages, the modern reader can, too, become an 'interpretative' communicant, and participate in a reading beyond reading, transcending the constructed boundaries of modernity. Such a mode of reading becomes a seeing beyond seeing, or, as Hugh of St Victor phrases it, a resituating of medieval writings on animals not as a scientific zoology, but as *a sacrament of fish and birds*.[116]

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[114] Smalley, *The Study of the Bible,* 11-2.
[115] J. Ziolkowski, *Talking Animals: Medieval Latin Beast Poetry, 750-1150,* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), 2-4.
[116] The phrase comes from Hugh's *De sacramentis,* where he writes: 'The sacrament *from whence* fish and birds were made of the one matter and not placed in the one abode', 'Sacramentum quare pisces et aves de una materia facti sunt; et in una sede dispositi non sunt.' Hugh writes on this in the context of creation of corporeity, using the fish of the waters and the birds of the sea to represent earthly corruption and heavenly virtue, stating: 'But the higher virtue of a sacrament is presented in these things', 'Sed altior in his rebus sacramenti virtus objecta est.' DSCF, Lib. i, Pars. i, Cap. xxvii, Col. 203. There are remarkable parallels between this and book

Synopsis of Chapters

One of the underpinning contentions of this thesis lies not in the emergence of 'medieval science' as a mode of disciplinary engagement with the past, but rather with the anachronistic assumption that the 'scientific' overshadows the fabulous, biblical, or patristic as a medieval mode of engagement in the created world. Such an assumption miscategorises traditions according to what they were not, or what they are (only now) perceived to be inferior to: the unscientific, the pseudo-zoological, or more subtly the 'imprecise'.[117] In this sense, an inhibitor to understanding intellectual developments across the Middle Ages is the assumption that a particular tradition, or way of seeing the world, was unscientific and irrational, and *could*, *should*, or *ought* to have been otherwise.

The current discussion is organised around five chapters. Each, in order, seeks to better understand the nature of figurative exposition, and thus reframes historiographical approaches to high-medieval texts in a manner sympathetic to the intentions of medieval authors, and reflected in the methodological objectives of Baxter. Collectively, the aims of these five chapters can be categorised into two main parts. The first and second chapters seek to rediscover a mode of figurative exposition, embodied by and inherited from patristic exegetical authorities, as a key to comprehending the intentions at play in selected high-medieval texts and traditions. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters apply the mode of figurative exposition (rediscovered in the first and second chapters) to a reconsideration of medieval approaches to fish and birds; redefining what is meant by the 'zoological' in the process, and situating moral interest in humans, animals, and the created world amidst contemporary culinary, recreational,

thirteen of Augustine's confessions, who similarly writes about the created earth, and the figurative nature of the fish of the waters, and the birds of the air, before stating: '…when they [ministers] preached, and spake by miracles, and Sacraments, and mysterious expressions', 'annuntiando et loquendo per miracula et sacramenta et voces mysticas'. Conf. Lib. xiii, 21(29), pp.382-5.

[117] Peters, 'Introduction: Science and the Culture of Early Europe', in *The Scientific Achievement of the Middle Ages*, 10.

religious, and cultural interests. From this, a reading emerges that connects animal, and other figurative, expositions to an authoritative culture of exegetical practice spanning from late antiquity through to the High Middle Ages.

Chapter One, *A Deeper Sense of Seeing: Alexander Neckam and the Idea of Allegorical Exposition,* interrogates Alexander Neckam's *De visu*, an exposition 'on seeing' contained in his *De naturis rerum*. This interrogation achieves two things. First, it demonstrates how Neckam's *De visu* has been misinterpreted as a proto-form of optical science by the historians of science, Grant and Lindberg, whose misinterpretation informs their omission of Neckam's concluding paragraph on moon-rays and horse ulcers. Second, by resituating Neckam's exposition 'on seeing' in light of the exegetical practice of Augustine, Anselm, and the School of St Victor (as well as Neckam's own explicit exegetical intentions), the chapter enables the reader to discover a deeper layer of intentional meaning at play in his exposition on moon-rays and horse ulcers, one that is integral to his overall aims. Importantly, such a resituating of his *De visu,* sees Neckam properly as an exegete, rather than a 'scientist', and understands his expositions as moral exercises that have very little to do with 'seeing' in the scientific sense.

Chapter Two, *Fruit Trees and Charlemagne: The Unobvious Authority of Scripture and the Fathers in the High-Middle Ages*, aims to provide historical-theological context to a figurative mode of reading and writing that was to dominate the schools and monasteries of high-medieval Europe. This chapter traces the development of a culture of 'auctoritas' in the Carolingian reforms of Charlemagne, Alcuin, and Bede through to high-medieval exegetes. In so doing, this consideration gives reason for the high-medieval reverence for Latin fathers, especially Augustine, and the exegetical practice that informed their approach to the bible, humans, and the created world. In this, the chapter provides a strong basis for reinterpreting medieval treatises in light of the authority of patristic exegetical practice, especially treatises that were not obviously exegetical in nature. This is the case with Abelard's *Historia*

calimitatum and medieval autobiography generally, which were modelled on Augustine's *Confessions* and intended to convey a deeper intention of meaning informed by the authority of scripture and the authority of the fathers.

Chapter Three, *Ichthyological Hermeneutics: The Oyster and the Cloister*, applies the methodological approach adopted in the first two thesis chapters to a consideration of medieval ideas about 'fish'. This commences with Neckam's expositions on Oysters and Plaice, and the Lanercost *Chronicle's* story of Grosseteste and the Pike, and culminates in considerations of the medieval fish-trade evidenced by monastic sources, religious iconography, and archaeological discoveries. Ultimately, this chapter suggests a strong correlation between moral interest in fish, and the material ubiquity of fish in medieval culture, and gives reason to the way fish feature prominently as a medieval food and symbol. Fish were not only a staple of the religious and secular diet, but an important aspect of the theology of creation, and were used to communicate ideas about human being and behaviour in the created order.

Chapter Four, *Vultures, Emperors, Traditions, and the Historiography of Science,* moves the case-study portion of the thesis from 'fish' to 'birds' by exploring the way Frederick II engages with, and challenges, the theological manuscript tradition when writing about the vulture. This chapter demonstrates how Frederick II defines his own recreational interest in birds by a departure from established and authoritative ways of writing about animals in his own medieval landscape. Rather than being motivated by 'science', however, it is clear that Frederick's interests are strictly part of the noble pursuit of falconry. This reframes historiographical approaches to Frederick which has seen him presented as a proto-renaissance man, and even a scientist; depictions used to justify his inclusion in historiographies of science. Further, this chapter establishes Frederick's genuine engagement in theological manuscript traditions and provides a way of further highlighting (albeit indirectly) a high-medieval mode of thinking and writing about animals that was intentionally non-literal.

Chapter Five, *A Sacrament of Fish and Birds: Turning to the Exegetes,* more fully fleshes out the suggestions of the first four thesis chapters by further interrogating high-medieval interest in birds. Continuing its consideration of the medieval vulture, the chapter places ideas about birds into its proper exegetical context, and further investigates the idea of figurative exposition in relation to scripture as sound, awaiting human apprehension. Since medieval representations of the vulture grew out of a wider exegetical tradition that developed from the patristic period through to the Middle Ages calls, this chapter demonstrates how patristic exegetical practice informed the process of expositing medieval textual and visual representations of birds. Here, it will be argued that high-medieval expositions on the vulture, when viewed as a sacramental point of contact between God and humans, ought to be understood in much the same way as scripture. This sort of re-evaluation of the medieval vulture, therefore, becomes theological, and places the idea of figurative zoological exposition into a larger exegetical conversation where humans both apprehend and respond to the voice of God, sounding throughout the created world.

The Animal Turn: 'Sitting upon the Shoulders of Giants'

Together, the five chapters proposed in the thesis, comprise a different way of thinking and writing about the high-medieval world in the context of authority, scripture, and creation. Such an approach is imperative if the modern reader is to truly throw-off the dominance of scientific historiography, and instead comprehend the theological nature of the medieval texts they examine. Given the attention to figurative animal expositions throughout the thesis, and the argument that high-medieval expositions on fish and birds had a thread of consistency and sophistication underpinning their composition, this thesis also contributes to a growing scholarly trend sometimes referred to as 'the animal turn'.[118] Noting the emergence of

[118] C. Wolfe, 'Moving Forward, Kicking Back: The Animal Turn', *Postmedieval: A Journal of Medieval Cultural Studies,* 2:1, (2011), 1-12. (Part of 'The Animal Turn [Special Issue]').

scholarship that seeks to further explore medieval ideas about animals, this thesis acknowledges its own contribution to 'the animal turn'.[119] Joining the call to reassess medieval texts about animals, this thesis aims to *see beyond* the encyclopaedic way of categorising medieval animal expositions in order to consider how figurative animal expositions might function theologically. In many ways, its hope is that it might be able, in some small measure, to assist the rediscovery of what has been previously assumed to be, to quote Baxter, categorically lost.[120]

It is important to indicate the existence of current scholarly contributions to 'the animal turn'. The considerations found in Oelze, for instance, are entirely philosophical in nature, with his chapter on Augustine limited to human sensory experience as distinct from that of animals, and his chapter on Albertus Magnus focussed on Albert's views on actual animal learning and reasoning.[121] By contrast Wei reveals a more serious engagement with theological ideas about animals whereby animal symbolism 'functions to shape human behaviour'.[122] This considered, the more theologically reflective investigation of figurative animal expositions outlined in this thesis enables two things. First, it provides a more sympathetic view of writings on animals in the High Middle Ages, in their religious, exegetical, and cultural context. Second, however, it enables the modern reader to penetrate the seemingly bizarre literal surface of a text and

[119] For a selection of studies on 'the animal turn' (in addition to those cited above) see: C. Hicks, *Animals in Early Medieval Art,* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993); A. Manning, & J. Serpell, (eds.), *Animals and Human Society,* (New York: Routledge, 1994); J. Salisbury, *The Beast Within: Animals in the Middle Ages,* (New York: Routledge, 1994); N. Flores, (ed.), *Animals in the Middle Ages: A Book of Essays,* (New York: Garland, 1996); J. Voisenet, *Bêtes et Hommes dans le monda medieval: Le bestiaire des clerc du V^e au XII^e siècle,* (Turnhout: Brepols Publishing, 2000); A. Pluskowski, *Medieval Animals,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); A. Pluskowski, (ed.), *Breaking and Shaping Beastly Bodies: Animals as Material Culture in the Middle Ages,* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007); B. Boehrer, (ed.) *A Cultural History of Animals in the Renaissance,* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2007); B. Hanawalt, & L. Kiser, (eds.), *Engaging with Nature: Essays of the Natural World in Medieval and Early Modern Europe,* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2008); A. Oelze, *Animal Rationality: Later Medieval Theories 1250-1350,* (Leiden: Brill, 2018); I. Wei, *Thinking About Animals in Thirteenth-Century Paris: Theologians on the Boundary between Humans and Animals,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020); A. Oelze, (ed.), *Animal Minds in Medieval Latin Philosophy: A Sourcebook from Augustine to Wodeham,* (Cham, Switzerland: Springer, 2021).
[120] Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 211-3.
[121] Oelze, *Animal Minds in Medieval Latin Philsophy,* 31-40; 75-91.
[122] Wei, *Thinking About Animals in Thirteenth-Century Paris,* 11-93.

becomes a hermeneutical mode of reading that is of relevance to both obviously and less-obviously figurative forms of expression.

Noting the culture of scriptural and patristic authority that shaped and informed high-medieval figurative expositions, the sort of reading prompted by this thesis, then, recognises a deeper significance in the popular metaphor of 'dwarves sitting upon the shoulders of giants'.[123] As an important part of chapter four, book three, of John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*, which sets out the correct use and nature of 'authority' ('autoritas'),[124] John actually says much about 'vision' or 'seeing' ('visus') in relation to interpretation.[125] The metaphor is not used, therefore, to refer to an inherited tradition of scientific thinkers, as suggested by Crombie;[126] or even to exclusively acknowledge the Greek philosophers (such as Aristotle), as suggested by Southern.[127] For, in attributing the saying to Bernard of Chartres, John of Salisbury writes:

> Our age is yet delighted by the service of those who have gone before, and has often discerned more, not that we lead by means of our nature but because, leaning on the virtue of others, we are made rich by the doctrine of the fathers.
>
> Bernard of Chartres would speak of our lives as though we were dwarves sitting upon the shoulders of giants. Because of this, we ought to see more than they, not on account of keener vision, or bodily reach, but because we are carried high and elevated by their gigantic greatness.[128]

[123] The phrase originates in John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*, see: Meta. Lib. iii, Cap. iv, Lin. 44. (Quoted and translated below).
[124] Meta. Lib. iii, Cap. iv, Lin. 34 & 38. Whilst John mentions Aristotle here, he does so in order to demonstrate the use of philosophy through the channels of accepted authority – citing Abelard as an example of using 'authority' (reminiscent of Abelard's appeals to the authority of Augustine in his *Historia calamitatum*). On this see chapter two of the thesis, *Fruit Trees and Charlemagne: The Unobvious Authority of Scripture and the Fathers in the High-Middle Ages,* which looks at Abelard's implicit and explicit appeals to the authority of Augustine and scripture.
[125] Meta. Lib. iii, Cap. iv, Lin. 38 & 46.
[126] Crombie, *Science, Art and Nature in Medieval and Modern Thought,* 454.
[127] R. Southern, *Making of the Middle Ages,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954), 203-4.
[128] Meta. Lib. iii, Cap. iv, Lin. 44. 'Fruitur tamen aetas nostra beneficio praecedentis, et saepe plura nouit non suo quidem praecedens ingenio, sed innitens uiribus alienis, et opulenta doctrina patrum.

This thesis argues that the 'seeing' ('visus') John speaks of here, and the 'giants' that enable that 'seeing' to occur, refers to figurative exposition through the exegetical practice set forth in the 'doctrine of the fathers' ('doctrina patrum').[129] Therefore, 'seeing' is made possible by high-medieval engagement with accepted patristic authorities who pioneered a way of reading that transcends letter shapes scribbled on a page in ink. Fascinatingly enough, a correspondence between Sarton and Kilbansky in the 1935 and 1936 issues of *Isis* came to similar conclusions about the metaphor, not only tracing it back to Bernard of Chartres through John of Salisbury (and therefore separating it from the Newtonian 'scientific' treatment it received in years previous to their writing), but also linking it to Neckam and the windows of Chartres Cathedral.[130] In Chartres, Kilbansky argues, its meaning was connected to the authority of patristic readings of the Old Testament in light of the New.[131] To this end, the metaphor of 'seeing' but not with 'keener vision' applies far-more readily to the idea of 'seeing beyond seeing'. Inherent in reading and interpreting figurative animal expositions alongside the fathers and scripture, this 'seeing beyond seeing' becomes a theological exercise in interpretation and, consequently, has nothing at all to do with modern notions of scientific thought.

Peter Harrison and the Fourfold Sense of Scripture

It must be noted that the methodology of this thesis parallels that of Peter Harrison's ground-breaking 1998 monograph: *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science.* Whilst focussed on the Early Modern development of science, Harrison first makes the important acknowledgement that medieval monks and scholars, who inherited their

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Dicebat Bernardus Carnotensis nos esse quasi nanos gigantum umeris insidentes, ut possimus plura eis et remotiora uidere, non utique proprii uisus acumine, aut eminentia corporis, sed quia in altum subuehimur et extollimur magnitudine gigantea.' The translation here is my own.

[129] Meta. Lib. iii, Cap. iv, Lin. 44.

[130] Sarton's original question features in: G. Sarton, 'Notes and Correspondence: Query no. 53. – "Standing on the shoulders of giants."', *Isis,* 24, (1935), 107-9. Kilbansky's response to Sarton features in: R. Kilbansky, 'Notes and Correspondence: Query no. 53. – "Standing on the shoulders of giants." (*Isis*, 24, 107-9, 1935)', *Isis,* 26, (1936), 147-149.

[131] Kilbansky, 'Notes and Correspondence: Query no. 53. – "Standing on the shoulders of giants.", 147-8.

conceptions of realities both visible and invisible from the exegesis of Origen of Alexandria, saw and experienced the created world as one rich with meaning, awaiting exposition.[132] The sources Harrison uses to demonstrate the reception of the patristic outlook include Hugh of St Victor, who (like his medieval counterparts) conceptualises nature through the imagery of 'two books': the book of scripture and the book of nature.[133] Just as scripture contains intentional layers of meaning awaiting readerly engagement through meditation, prayer, and contemplation, so too does the medieval view of the natural world, comprised of creatures and elements, contain meaning beyond what might be termed a 'literal' encounter.[134]

Harrison's invaluable treatment of the medieval world view becomes an integral aspect of his prevailing investigation into the emergence of 'natural history' in the Early Modern era. Approaching the question of the origins of modern 'science' from a different historical perspective, the way Harrison works-out his methodological rationale and conclusions nonetheless resonates with the methods, arguments, and conclusions of this thesis. Just as this thesis proposes a 'thinking away' of modernity as a starting point for an adequate interrogation of medieval animal expositions in proper theological (and, exegetical) context, so too does Harrison suggest the reader must witness a 'stripping away' of the medieval outlook as the first basic step in a radical shift away from allegorical/figurative exegesis, and toward Protestant 'Literalism' that begins to see the world in terms of utility rather than meaning.[135] It is the 'Protestant approach to the interpretation of texts' as Harrison argues, that becomes a 'major catalyst in the emergence of science'.[136] However, in reaching this conclusion, Harrison too resists the historiographical tendency to project modern conceptions of science back into the

[132] P. Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 1-33.
[133] Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 3-4; 56-7.
[134] Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 17-9.
[135] Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 205-11.
[136] Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 8.

past, and instead works (as far as it is possible) from late-antiquity and the Middle Ages, forward to the 17th century through a 'history of hermeneutics'.[137]

In similar fashion to Harrison, though with much more attention given to medieval treatises and manuscripts that articulate the medieval view of the created world (as well as the historical development of a culture of 'auctoritas' that preserved these modes of reading scripture and nature through the Latin fathers), this thesis also looks to the influence of Origen's exegesis as an important starting point in what too might be termed a 'history of hermeneutics'. To this end, it is here worth introducing the three/fourfold sense of reading scripture, which features again in the discussion of 'sacramenta' in chapter five.

The fourfold sense of reading and interpreting scripture in the Middle Ages owes a debt of gratitude to Origen's *De principiis* which presents three basic senses of scripture.[138] Offering a comprehensive history of the exegetical tradition would be a complex undertaking; but it would also be insufficient to refrain from comment on the rules for scriptural engagement that were commonly held amongst exegetes of late antiquity and the High Middle Ages. For in his *De principiis* Origen begins to layout a scheme of exegetical practice that differentiates between the literal word and its spiritual meaning by suggesting scripture is comprised of both flesh ('corpore scripturarum') and soul ('scripturae anima'), in much the same way as the human.[139] Of fundamental importance here is the distinction between the literal/historical sense of scripture, and the spiritual/figurative intentions it may contain, as an inescapable feature of the later exegesis of Augustine, Gregory the Great, and Hugh of St Victor.[140] Further, contained here is the idea that the imagery of scripture reflects the creaturely imagery of the created world, with both awaiting to be read with the same exegetical discernment.

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[137] Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 9.
[138] For an overview, see: Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* 43-50.
[139] Origenes sec. translationem Rufini, *De principiis,* Lib. iv, Cap. ii, Par. iv, p.312. See also: Harrison, *The Bible, Protestantism, and the Rise of Natural Science,* 18-9.
[140] D. Turner, 'Allegory in Christian Late Antiquity', in *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory,* (eds.) R. Copeland & P. Struck, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 71-2.

Looking to the literal/historical sense of scripture is always the first stage of reading and, as Hugh demonstrates later in his *Didascalicon,* it is integral if the allegorical (figurative), tropological (moral), or anagogical (future-prophetic) senses are to be discovered with any degree of certainty.[141] In this sense, history ('historia') provides scripture with a discernible form referring to, as Smalley summarises, 'either historical events or the primary meaning of its words'.[142] Only once scripture is understood in this way, can it then be read symbolically whereby either the narrative structure of the historical sense of its words, or their plain or obvious meaning, indicate a reality beyond the materiality of the written page for human edification through allegory ('allegoria') or tropology ('tropologia'). It is this process that Hugh says leads the student away from the books they read and into the created world through contemplation, recognising that all of nature may be used by humans the apprehend the divine.[143]

Of paramount importance here is that the three/fourfold sense of reading scripture, an exegetical mode of engaging the biblical texts that was to dominate throughout the Middle Ages, is also applicable to nature. Recognised thus, the intrinsic meaning of nature is inextricably tied to its intrinsic value – and both scripture and the natural world, including expositions on fish, birds, and animals, are given to humans (as creatures) to teach them about their life with God (as Creator). Whether presented allegorically, where the narrative structure of an exposition is fixed in terms of its symbolic meaning, or whether the exposition figuratively represents something that is less obvious (a symbol open to many possible interpretations), both scripture and the natural world were understood as books awaiting readerly engagement. In such a process of reading, the hidden reality of divine Wisdom is to

[141] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 86-8; Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* 222-4.
[142] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 88.
[143] Didas. Lib. vi, Cap. v, pp.144-5.

be exposed through faithful engagement with the dimensions of scripture and nature enabling a deeper sense of seeing, even a transformative ‘seeing beyond seeing’.

Chapter One

'A Deeper Sense of Seeing': Alexander Neckam and the Idea of Allegorical Exposition

> And when I talk about a ray, I bring back to memory a certain effect of the moon's ray, which, when it entered through a contracted aperture of a wall, and arrived upon an ulcer of a horse ['caballi'] lying on its back, brought death upon the horse ['equus'] standing in the stable. However, if truly the same horse ['idem equifero'] had been standing under God, and the moon's ray had reached its ulcer, no danger would have come upon it. For the ray is poured out and its strength vanishes when it is dispersed freely through empty space. But when it enters through a contracted aperture, the collective strength is restrained in one [beam]; a ray is most injurious if it enters, by some impetus, an aperture. Does it not now come to your mind, reader, that hidden detractions are sometimes more harmful than those set forward in public? The poison of hidden detractions spreads slowly and it is the more harmful because an audacious assertion, when it is clandestine, does not fear to be accused of falsehood. Published abuse is repelled, and mendacious iniquity is confounded.[1]
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> *Alexander Neckam, 'De visu', DNR Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238*

[1] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238. 'Et dum de radio loquor, reduco ad memoriam quandam radii lunaris efficaciam, qui dum per angustum foramen parietis intrans, pervenit ad ulcus caballi redorsati, mortem equifero adducit stanti in stabulo. Si vero idem equus sub divo staret, et radius lunaris ad ulcus ipsius perveniret, nullum incurreret periculum. Diffunditur enim radius et evanescit vis humiditatis, dum libere per inane discurrit. Sed dum per angustum subintrat foramen, vires collectas in unum retinet; maximeque novicus est radius si quodam impetu foramen intrat. Nonne iam tibi in mentem venit, lector, quoniam nonnunquam occultae detractiones magis nocivae sunt quam in publicum prolatae? Serpit virus latitantium detractationum, et eo magis nocivae sunt, quod temeraria assertio, dum clandestina est, argui falsitatis non metuit. Repelluntur convitia publicata, et confunditur iniquitas sibi mentiens.' (This translation is my own, though I am indebted to Sigbjørn Sønnesyn for helping me with the latter part.)

The Puzzle of the Horse

Alexander Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, includes a section titled *De visu* which properly translates as, 'On Vision' or 'On the Act of Seeing'.[2] Commencing with a discussion on celestial illusion, the section goes on to discuss various ideas about geometry, sight (in both humans and animals from an extramission theoretical position), and concludes with a discussion on moon-rays and their possible effect on horses.[3] A partial translation made by Grant and Lindberg in the 1970s, from Wright's nineteenth-century Latin edition, highlights some of the issues in how a particular focus, in this case, on optics, can unbalance the significance of the wider context for scientific interest.[4] In producing their translation of Neckam's exposition on seeing, Grant and Lindberg omit the discussion of moon-rays and horses entirely.[5] The aim of this chapter, by contrast, is to explore Neckam's *De visu* in light of the broader exegetical tradition of which it was part. This will both provide the modern reader with sufficient context to see the deeper significance of Neckam's figurative language, and simultaneously demonstrate that Neckam's horse is integral, rather than anomalous, to his overall aims. Since much of the figurative language Neckam uses throughout *De visu* is found

[2] In Wright's edition, the section appears as chapter 153, titled '*De visu*'.

[3] The history of visual theory is large and complex. In antiquity and the middle ages there were two main schools of thought: the 'intromission' and 'extramission' theories of vision. Following Plato, the extramission theory sees vision as a result of a ray or beam of either fire, light, or some other visual substance issuing out of the eye. This is found in Neckam where the strength of the 'visual spirit' differs according to the creature experiencing the phenomenon of 'seeing'. Following Alhazen and Avicenna, the intromission theory sees vision as a result of light being received into the eye. This is found in Albertus Magnus' later conception of vision, which turns heavily to Jewish and Arabic sources. Aristotle had presented a challenge to the extramission theory, explaining sight more in terms of the medium through which an object is seen, rejecting the idea of active vision (on the part of the one seeing). Though not explicitly, this can be seen in Neckam's discussion of celestial illusion, which presents a position consistent with Aristotelian sources, relying on Ptolemy and Al-farghani's (see the discussion below). For historical context, see the discussion below, and: D. Lindberg, *Theories of Vision from Al-kindi to Kepler*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 3-86; C. Akdoğan (ed.), *Albert's Refutation of the Extramission Theory of Vision and his Defence of the Intromission Theory: An Edition, English Translation and Analysis of his Muslim Sources*, (Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation, 1998), 1-18.

[4] D. Lindberg & G. Lindberg (trans.), 'Alexander Neckam (1157-1217): Concerning the Natures of Things', in E. Grant, (ed.), *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974), 380-2.

[5] The section has a minor footnote stating: 'In the brief remaining portion of this chapter Neckam discusses the effects of a lunar ray on a horse's sore'. Lindberg, 'Concerning the Natures of Things', 382. Note, I translate 'ulcus' as 'ulcer' rather than 'sore'.

in the works of both Augustine and Anselm, a hermeneutic of Neckam's exposition on seeing which ignores this aspect is rather short-sighted. In short, this chapter will argue that Neckam's *De visu* enables a deeper sense of seeing, where secondary moralistic intentions prevail over primary/historical readings, and the figurative nature of optical language actually has very little to do with physical sight.

Four areas are important in this exercise. First, the reason for Grant and Lindberg's omission will be briefly explored in light of Neckam's place in the historiography of science. This establishes the effect of an important historiographical context that continues to dominate modern scholarship on Neckam and his place in twelfth-century intellectual culture. Second, a re-examination of Neckam's expositions will be conducted in parallel with Anselmian ideas on 'truth' and 'seeing', and according to their shared inheritance of Augustinian thought. Not only does this demonstrate that Neckam employed figurative language also present in Anselm's *De veritate* (most probably through their shared use of Augustine), but it also begins to situate Neckam outside of a scientific tradition, where his interests transcend ideas about physical sight. Third, attention will be given to the way Neckam uses figurative language in light of twelfth-century exegetical practice. Here, the reception of Augustine's approach to learning and scripture will be located in Neckam's thought and methodology. In this connection Neckam's adoption of Hugh of St Victor's approach to learning and scripture (as an Augustinian Canon) is also important to consider. Most importantly, this raises questions of the exegetical framework underlying the secondary intentions of Neckam's *De visu*, to which the primary historical readings of his figurative expositions pertain. In other words, a consideration of the exegetical tradition in which Neckam was schooled and in which he participated, will set aside the primary historical reading of *De visu* as an effort in optical

science, so that his deeper (secondary) moralistic intentions come into view.[6] In what is perhaps a twist of irony for the modern reader, but natural for Neckam, this proposed way of reading will reveal the moralistic significance of the optical passages of the *De visu*, and the optical significance of the more obviously figurative passages (such as that on the horse). The fourth area is a re-examination of the neglected horse of Neckam's *De visu*, with an argument not only for the coherence of its inclusion, but also the way in which Neckam's horse incorporates previously unnoticed optical examples in order to mobilise the secondary exegetical intentions of the entire section.

Alexander Neckam: A Brief Biography

Unlike his monastic and scholastic contemporaries, the birth and early life of Alexander Neckam is well documented, whilst the nature of his death and burial remain ambiguous.[7] According to chronicle, Neckam was born in 1157 in St Albans and was nursed from the same breast as Richard Lionheart.[8] Receiving his early education at St Albans, it is thought that Neckam furthered his education in the schools of Paris (near the Petit-Pont), c.1175-82, before returning to England.[9] Teaching for a time at Dunstable, Neckam went on to Oxford c.1190 where he excelled in teaching grammar and theology.[10] It was most likely from Oxford that Neckam made the move to the Augustinian Abbey at Cirencester c.1197 where he became a

[6] 'Secondary intentions' is adapted from Bloom's twentieth-century article, which draws a distinction between the two senses present when expositing the concept of allegory. Applied to Neckam it distinguishes the literal/historical from a deeper moralistic/didactic intention: 'One [reading] may be designated as primary, or as a literal and figurative surface meaning. The other may be designated as secondary, or as a meaning of abstract significance; that is; one with penetrating moralistic or didactic intention'. E. Bloom, 'The Allegorical Principle', *Journal of English Literary History,* 18:3, (1951), 164.

[7] A. Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts and the Augustinian Canons of Oxford and Cirencester', PhD Thesis, Centre for Medieval Studies: University of Toronto, (2016), 2. The archaeologist of Worcester Cathedral, Chris Guy, suggests the effigy long thought to be Neckam, may be John Fordham. There is much source material on the birth and early life of Neckam. This is atypical of medieval documentation in relation to twelfth-century intellectuals, as attested by Baldwin in relation to Neckam's Parisian contemporaries. See: J. Baldwin, *Masters, Princes, and Merchants: the Social Views of Peter the Chanter and his Circle, Vol. I – Text,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), 3.

[8] R. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1217),* edited and revised by M. Gibson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 1.

[9] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 4; C. McDonough, (ed.) *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds, and animals*, (Sismel: Edizioni del Galluzzo, 1999), xiv.

[10] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 7; McDonough, *Neckam on plants, birds, and animals*, xiv.

Canon. Remaining at Cirencester, Neckam was elected as abbot in 1213, in which capacity he travelled to Rome in 1215 to attend the Fourth Lateran Council.[11] Shortly after his return to England, it is thought Neckam travelled to Kempsey, Worcestershire, where he fell ill and died.[12] Until recently, it was assumed that Neckam was buried in Worcester Cathedral, but recent correspondence of the Cathedral's archaeologist has suggested the effigy long thought to be Neckam may in fact be John Fordham.[13]

Toward the latter part of his career, Neckam completed the work for which he is best known: the *De naturis rerum*, or to offer its full title, *De naturis rerum et in Ecclesiastes*.[14] It is book two of this work that contains Neckam's *De visu*, and according to Hunt's estimations, the entire work was likely composed shortly after his arrival at Cirencester as an Augustinian Canon in 1197.[15] During this period of his career, Neckam composed his biblical commentaries on Proverbs and the Song of Songs.[16] It was also during this early Cirencester period that Neckam likely produced his *Meditatio de Magdalena*, another biblical commentary in the style of 'meditatio'.[17] Given this context, it is important to comprehend that the *De naturis rerum* was produced during the time that Neckam dedicated his studies and thought to exegetical writings. In this sense, the *De naturis rerum* naturally reads as an effort in exegesis, especially since its first part (the first two books) formed a long introduction to an exposition on biblical Wisdom literature (its last three books).[18]

Despite the chronology and broader content of the *De naturis rerum*, historiographical appraisals continue to situate this work within the scientific and encyclopaedic traditions. The most extreme example of this is Grant and Lindberg's interpretation of *De visu* (one particular

[11] McDonough, *Neckam on plants, birds, and animals*, xv.
[12] McDonough, *Neckam on plants, birds, and animals*, xv.
[13] Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts', 2.
[14] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 125.
[15] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 125.
[16] T. Bestul, 'The meditation on Mary Magdalene of Alexander Nequam', *The Journal of Medieval* Latin, 9, (1999), 1-3.
[17] Bestul, 'The meditation on Mary Magdalene', 1-4.
[18] Bestul, 'The meditation on Mary Magdalene', 1.

section of book two of the *De naturis rerum*) as primarily a medieval effort in optics.[19] To appreciate Grant and Lindberg's interpretative approach to *De visu*, it is first necessary to briefly consider the reception of Neckam's *De naturis rerum* in nineteenth- and twentieth-century historiography. This will provide a contextual basis for a critical reassessment of Grant and Lindberg's translation and commentary. Following an historiographical consideration and critical reassessment, this chapter will suggest that any historiographically-perceived incoherence in Neckam is a modern projection rather than a medieval construction.[20]

Neckam in the Historiography of Science

Wright, in his 1863 edition of *De naturis rerum* characterised Neckam as a proto-scientist. In part, this characterisation is found in Wright's summary of Neckam's text as primarily a manual of scientific knowledge.[21] Yet this characterisation is also found in Wright's assertion that Neckam's text itself possesses a dual personality, one divided between Neckam's conflicted interests in natural science and biblical commentary.[22] Wright's only solution to this interpretative difficultly is that Neckam must not have intended these perceived disparate halves to comprise two parts of the same work.[23] In a fashion, this characterises Neckam as a proto-scientist caught between two incompatible traditions.

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[19] In Grant's edited collection, Neckam's *De visu* is categorised under 'The Encyclopedic Tradition in Optics' alongside Adelard of Bath, and Bartholomew Anglicus. This is the first of four sections under the heading 'Optics'. Each collection has been selectively arranged according to content. See: Grant, *Source Book in Medieval Science*, xv-xvi.

[20] This study contributes to a growing trend found in the work of Smalley, McDonough, and Bestul, where Neckam is seen properly as a twelfth-century Augustinian Canon participating in Victorine exegetical practice. See: McDonough, *Neckam on plants, birds, and animals*, xxiii-xxiv.

[21] T. Wright, (ed.) *Alexandri Neckam: De naturis rerum libri duo with the poem of the same author De laudibus diuinae sapientae,* (London: Longman Green, 1863), 'Preface', xiv-xv. Wright states: 'This book in itself was intended to be a manual of the scientific knowledge of the time, and as such would be merely regarded as an interesting moment of the history of science in western Europe.'

[22] Wright, *De naturis rerum*, 'Preface', xiv. Wright expounds on his earlier assessment, stating: 'The plan of this treatise, in the condition in which it was published by the author, is not very easily understood, for it consists of two very distinct parts, the first of two books forming a sort of manual of natural science, as it was then taught, and the other three being simply a commentary on the book of Ecclesiasticus, which has no direct connexion with that which precedes.'

[23] Wright, *De naturis* rerum, 'Preface', xiv. 'We can only explain this by supposing that, according to Neckam's original design, they were two distinct works.'

Notwithstanding the problematic nature of Wright's summary and characterisation, the idea of conflict is a continual feature of historiographical approaches to Neckam. For instance, a number of subsequent commentators on Neckam's life and work have adopted Wright's position. Hunt's 1936 thesis on Neckam contains a chapter titled 'The Scientist' and argued that 'Alexander has long been recognised as a leading representative of the scientific current in English thought of the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.'[24] Hunt's text had considerable influence on the perspectives of twentieth-century medievalists who each retained the idea of Neckam 'the Scientist', including Southern, Wedge, McEvoy, and Zahora.[25] The scale of Hunt's influence does not ignore the subtle varieties of historiographical interpretations of Neckam (which Zahora indicates in his recent monograph).[26] However, the impact of Wright's initial characterisation of Neckam, and its continuance in medieval historiography since Hunt, means Neckam's perceived 'dual personality' continues to find acceptance. The most recent and striking example of this found in Zahora, who considers the perceived diversity of Neckam's interests to be an 'interpretative problem'. For clarity, it is worth quoting Zahora in full:

> The concentration on Neckam's encyclopaedic works brings with it an interesting interpretative problem. On one hand, his mention of Aristotle's new logic and *libri naturales*, together with his use of natural-scientific treatises of Arabic influence, locates him at the forefront of the new learning associated with the universities. On the other hand, though, as Neckam

[24] Hunt, *Schools and the* Cloister, 67-83.
[25] R. Southern, 'From Schools to University', in *The History of the University of Oxford: Volume I, The Early Oxford* Schools, (ed.) J. Catto, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 24; G. Wedge, 'Alexander Neckam's *De naturis rerum*: A Study Together with Representative Passages in Translation', University of Southern California Ph.D Thesis, 1967, 115-20; J. McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 8-11; T. Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge: The Tropological Universe of Alexander Neckam (1157-1217)*, (Turnhout: Brepols Publishing, 2014), 28-30.
[26] See Zahora's chapter: 'Alexander Neckam: Proto-Scientist, Moralist, or Encyclopaedist?' in Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge*, 21-48.

> himself repeatedly admits, his oeuvre is mostly tropological and concerned with the improvement of moral qualities rather than with philosophical investigation. Moreover, the *De naturis rerum* is followed by a Commentary on Ecclesiastes, a pageant of vanities that is anything but 'scientific' by any definition of the word. True, his Latin style and tendency to moralize earned Neckam a place among twelfth-century humanists, but the appellation 'moralist' and its modern connotation has not been helpful in increasing interest in his works. As a result, Neckam's portrait in historiography has features of a dual personality (the best sign, perhaps, of a truly transitional figure): a forward-looking natural philosopher and a less-than-rigorous, conservative moralist.[27]

Despite a small number of resistant voices to this trend, the characterisation of Neckam as a 'dual personality' (somewhat conflicted between natural science and biblical commentary, or the secular and sacred worlds) is undeniably there in the historiographical record.

An historiographical overview from Wright to Zahora provides a contextual basis on which to reassess critically Grant and Lindberg's commentary and translation of *De visu*. Appearing in a chapter on medieval optics in Grant's *Sourcebook in Medieval Science*, *De visu* is presented to the reader as 'all the optical material contained in Neckam's encyclopedia', and 'valuable chiefly as illustrations of the low level of optical knowledge in the twelfth century.'[28] From this perspective, it is clear that Neckam is being situated within a broader scientific tradition, the future development of which he would have been completely unaware of. As Grant and Lindberg well understood, it is impossible to ascertain the level of optical knowledge

[27] Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge*, 30.
[28] Lindberg, 'Concerning the Natures of Things', 380.

in the twelfth century without the hindsight of centuries of perceived 'progress'.[29] From the beginning, therefore, their approach places Neckam both out of discipline and out of context, in a modern quest to harvest all known writings that simply mention either sight or perception. This positions Neckam as a lesser forerunner to Roger Bacon, John Pecham, and Witelo.[30] Given the selective nature of this methodology, any perceived similarity between Neckam's thought and later optical science runs the risk of being entirely superficial.[31]

Throughout Grant and Lindberg's commentary, their selectivity is explicit. After presenting a docked translation of *De visu*, and a very short segment on the mirror from the proceeding section, they decisively pronounce: 'This chapter contains nothing further of optical interest'.[32] Not only does this selectivity reveal the narrow scientific interests of both scholars, but it also indicates the likelihood that this limited section of Neckam's work is being presented outside of the context in which he wrote and operated. This is especially so since Neckam begins book one of his text, in which he also begins his expositions on animals, with a commentary on the biblical creation narrative found in Genesis and John.[33] Furthermore, books one and two are entirely framed around the hexameronic creation of the world and its inhabitants, and the subsequent Fall of humans as found in the bible.[34] This receives no attention in Grant and Lindberg's commentary on the greater purpose of *De visu*. It is clear, therefore, that Grant and Lindberg adopt the popular historiographical characterisation of

[29] This sort of argument is made even by sympathetic by historians of medieval science who view 'Scripture' and Patristic writings as inhibitive. As Peters states: the 'immediate Christian successors of the late antique pagan compilers of handbooks and encyclopedias suffered both from the changes in late antique culture and from the limitations of their own interests'. This approach views history in terms of later 'progress' and early 'regress'. E. Peters, 'Introduction: Science and the Culture of Early Europe', in R. Dales, (ed.) *The Scientific Achievement of the Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 1-26. See especially pages 8-9.
[30] Grant, *Source Book in Medieval Science*, 384-434. Grant places Neckam before later sections titled 'Revival of Optics in the West', and 'Synthesis in Optics' which deal with later medieval authors.
[31] Grant's treatment of Adelard of Bath, Roger Bacon, John Pecham, Witelo, and others may be as equally anachronistic, since their thought has been selectively arranged to make a case for a broader history of medieval science.
[32] Lindberg, 'Concerning the Natures of Things', 383.
[33] DNR, Lib. i, Cap. i, pp.3-11.
[34] For more on the first books of the *De naturis* rerum, see: Wedge, 'Alexander Neckam's *De naturis rerum*', 115-7.

Neckam 'the scientist' in its most extreme form, and their subsequent commentaries are purposefully void of exegetical consideration and context.

Whilst it is natural for historians of science to select and arrange material according to their own specialisms and interests, an overview of Neckam's characterisation in medieval historiography poses important questions for the modern reader, relevant to the present discussion. Central issues are how Neckam employs optical examples throughout *De visu*, the question of his main influences, and how his use of figurative language should be interpreted. Lying behind these is the broader question of the extent to which an exegetical reading can help ascertain Neckam's secondary intentions in composing his *De naturis rerum*, and, in so doing resolve the perceived conflict between natural science and biblical commentary in his text as a whole.

The Truth of a Stick in Water

A striking feature of Neckam's *De visu* is that it mentions a stick in water, something also present within Anselm's *De veritate*.[35] It is uncertain whether or not Neckam explicitly drew this from Anselm, though it should be stated that this is entirely possible. For instance, Neckam was familiar with Anselm's contributions to medieval exegesis, especially in relation to 'meditatio' which as a term, and to close observers of Neckam's style, 'was given currency by Anselm of Canterbury'.[36] It is also striking that in his *Speculum Speculationem*, Neckam draws upon the authoritative position of Anselm on the question of Free Will.[37] This demonstrates both Neckam's familiarity with Anselm's works, as well as the adoption of his style when composing biblical commentaries. Further still, the most compelling parallel between Anselm and Neckam is found in the way Neckam discusses sight in relation to owls, bats, and eagles in his *De visu*, which appears to be an expanded commentary on Anselm's

[35] The language of Anselm and Neckam is found in Augustine. See below.
[36] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 107; McDonough, 'The *Laus beatissime virginis* and the Canon of Alexander Neckam', *Medieval Studies*, 66, (2004), 110; Bestul, 'Meditation on Mary Magdalene', 4.
[37] Hunt, 'Schools and the Cloister', 114-5.

discussion of the same points in his *Epistola de incarnatione verbi*.[38] Given the weight this particular parallel adds to the argument of this chapter, providing another direct link between Neckam's *De visu* and Anselmian imagery becomes necessary. It is therefore worth comparing the relevant parts of the two passages side-by-side:

Neckam's De visu	*Anselm's Epistola de incarnatione verbi*
For during the day the visual spirit (inasmuch as it is subtle and bright) is easily dispersed by the brightness of the air striking against the eyes, the whiteness of the eyes cooperating in this separation; and thus the power of sight of the spirits is darkened by perdition. But at night, aided and strengthened by the darkness of the air, the visual spirit illuminates (by its own brightness) the air between the seeing thing and the thing to be seen, and thus it prepares the way for discerning the thing opposite; and this is evident in owls. In other animals, illuminated by the brightness of the day, the visual spirit produces sight during the day, because the eyes [of those animals] are black and the visual spirit is gross and dark; but at night, darkened by much greater obscurity, it	And so it happens when beginners foolishly try to ascend intellectually to those things

[38] See below.

does not perfect sight, but confuses it; and this is clearly seen in men. However, in bats, because their instruments [of perception] are varied and their visual spirit is midway between darkness and brightness, sight is only achieved at dawn or dusk, because of the mediocrity [at those times] of the air; for during the day, because of the excessive brightness dividing the spirit, and at night, because of the excessive darkness obscuring the spirit, vision is as far removed from the bat as activity… The eagle, however, although it has an excellent organ of vision (both because its visual spirit is strong and because its pupil is small, on which account very little of its visual spirit is scattered outside), exposes its eyes to the rays of the that first need the ladder of faith (as Scripture says: 'Unless you have believed, you will not understand'), they sink into many kinds of errors by reason of the deficiency of their intellect. For they evidently do not have the strength of faith who, since they cannot understand the things they believe, argue against the same faith's truth confirmed by the Holy Fathers. This is as if bats and owls, who see the heavens only at night, should argue about midday rays of the sun with eagles, who gaze on the very sun with undeflected vision.[40]

[40] EDIV, Cap. i, Lin. 10, pp.7-8. 'Unde fit ut dum ad illa quae prius fidei scalam exigent, sicut scriptum est: 'nisi credideritis, non intelligetis', praepostere per intellectum prius conantur ascendere: in multimodos errores per intellectus defectum cogantur descendere. Palam namque est quia illi non habent fidei firmitatem, qui quoniam quod credunt intelligere non possunt, disputant contra eiusdem fidei a sanctis patribus confirmatam veritatem. Velut si vespertiliones et noctuae non nisi in nocte caelum videntes de meridianis solis radiis disceptent contra aquilas ipsum solem irreverberato visu intuentes.'

sun and [yet] directs its eyes without injury

to seeing.[39]

Despite the variations between Neckam and Anselm's respective passages, it is quite remarkable that Neckam employs the same examples as Anselm when contrasting the sight of owls and bats with eagles. Granted, Neckam's discussion is lengthier than Anselm's, and Neckam's use of the vision of the bat is more nuanced (within the context of medieval extramission visual theory).[41] However, in a text that draws upon a range of figurative language that is potentially Anselmian, the fact that Neckam's longer moralisation (which is worked-out more fully below) is mobilised by the idea that the eagle's vision is not injured by the sun's rays, is a compelling discovery. At the very least, this parallel builds on the argument that Neckam was familiar with Anselm's thought. In turn, this makes a stronger case that Neckam drew from Anselm frequently when constructing his own moralised figurative expositions.

As compelling as some of the visual parallels between Anselm and Neckam may be, it is worth returning to the question of Neckam's source for his stick in water. In suggesting the possibility that Neckam employed the Anselmian imagery of a stick in water in his *De visu*, it is vitally important to acknowledge that whilst some of the imagery in *De visu* was not unique to Neckam, neither was it unique to Anselm. As Gasper has demonstrated in a recent paper,

[39] DNR, Lib. ii Cap. cliii, pp.236-7. 'In die namque, pro aeris claritate oculos reverberante, cooperante oculorum albedine ad disgregationem, visibilis spiritus, utpote subtilis et clarus, facile disgregatus dispergitur, sicque visus spirituum perditione obtenebratur. In nocte vero, aeris obscuritate congregatus et confortatus, aerem inter rem videntem et rem videndam sui claritate illustrat, et sic ad rem oppositam cernendam iter parat. Hoc in noctuis est manifestum. In aliis animalibus, quia nigri sunt oculi et visibilis spiritus grossus est et obscurus, diei claritate illuminatus ad visum operatur in die. In nocte vero multiplici obscuritate obtenebratus, visum non perficit, sed confundit. Quod in hominibus aperte videtur. In vespertilionibus autem, quia instrumenta sunt varia et visibilis spiritus inter claritatem et obscuritatem mediocris est, visus tantum mane vel sero propter aeris mediocritatem perficitur. Nam in die pro nimia claritate spiritum disgregante, vel in nocte pro nimia obscuritate spiritum obfuscante, visus illis subtrahitur quoad exercitium… Aquila autem, licet clara habeat visus instrumenta, tum quia spiritus visibilis eius fortis est, tum quia pupilla est angusta, unde parum de spiritu extra diffunditur, radiis solis oculos obiicit, et sine offensa ad videdum figit.'

[41] Again, for historical context on ancient and medieval visual theory, see: Lindburg, *Theories of Vision*, 3-57.

Anselm's own influence when writing about the stick in water is found in Augustine.[42] In particular, the third book of Augustine's *Contra Academicos* considers the relationship between the truth of an oar ('*remus*') placed in water, and the perception of the oar to the perceiving human subject.[43] And in his *De vera religione* Augustine returns to the image of an oar in water twice to make a comparable point.[44] Furthermore, as a patristic authority, Augustine too finds considerable presence in Neckam's works.[45] Therefore, whilst it is entirely possible that Anselm was the nameless authority of Neckam's stick in water, it is also entirely possible that Neckam (like Anselm) drew directly from Augustine. In fact, given that Augustine, Anselm, and Neckam each select different Latin terms for 'stick', this latter possibility seems no less plausible.[46]

Regardless of whether Neckam drew from Anselm, or from Augustine directly, Neckam's use of these examples is (at most) still an example of an indirect use of Augustine. For this reason, the comparative use of the stick in water by both Neckam and Anselm help the reader situate Neckam's work within an inherited tradition of figurative exposition; one developed by Augustine and continued by both Anselm and Neckam. For comparison, it is therefore worth presenting both Neckam's and Anselm's passages of a stick in water side-by-side:

Neckam's De visu *Anselm's De veritate*

[42] Gasper demonstrates Anselm's discussion of the broken stick, glass, and the senses is found across Augustine's works. Gasper points to Augustine's *Contra Academicos* and *De Trinitate*: G. Gasper, 'Anselm, Nature, and Natural Imagery' a paper presented at the 2019 International Association for Anselm Studies Conference, held at Durham University.
[43] CA, Lib. iii, Cap. xi, Lin. 47. Augustine considers the perceived illusion of the changing colour of bird feathers, and the movement of buildings.
[44] DVR, Cap. xxix, Lin. 27; Cap. xxxiii, Lin. 23. This observation is made in Dutton's monograph, a source cited in Gasper's paper. See: B. Dutton, *Augustine and Academic Skepticism: A Philosophical Study,* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2016), Part II, Chapter Ten 'Defence of the Senses', 216-7.
[45] See below.
[46] All three authors select different Latin terms for 'stick'. Augustine uses 'remus' meaning 'oar'. Anselm uses 'fustis' meaning 'stick' or 'club'.
Neckam uses 'virga' meaning 'slender branch' or 'twig': CA, Lib. iii, Cap. ii, Lin. 47; DVR, Cap. xxix, Lin. 27; Cap. xxxiii, Lin. 23; De.Ver*,* Cap. vi, Linea 26, p.184; DNR, Lib. ii Cap. cliii, 235.

Likewise, a straight rod appears bent in water, which is customarily attributed to reflection of the rays from the surface of the water… waters represent tribulations and the straight rod good works. Thus the work of the just, who are vexed by tribulations, are often regarded as bent, although they are [actually] straight.[47]	So too when a stick, part of which is under water and part not, is thought to be crooked, or when we think that sight finds our faces in a mirror, and when many other things seem otherwise to us, sight and the other senses report what is, for it is no fault of the senses that report what they can, as they can receive it, but it should be imputed to the judgement of the soul which does not discern well what the senses can do or what they ought to do.[48]

Anselm and Neckam both use the stick in water to mobilise their respective arguments. Neckam does so in relation to developing an exposition on what he calls the 'Act of Seeing'; Anselm does so in relation to his theory on the truth of the senses.[49] Yet, despite these basic differences, both authors are constructing a comparable argument: essentially that what is seen (in the broader sensory process) does not always correlate with what, in reality, is. Whilst a stick placed in water appears bent or crooked to the observer, the property of bentness or crookedness is not a true reflection of the stick in reality. To both authors, despite the report of the physical senses, truth is not what the physical senses report it to be. A discovery of the truth, therefore, requires a deeper reading of things, even a seeing beyond the act of seeing.

[47] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. Cliii, p.235. 'Item, virga recta in aqua videtur curva. Quod 68ribula solet reverberationi radiorum a superficie aquae. Per aquas significantur 68ribulations; per virgam rectam, opera bona. Saepe igitur opera iustorum, qui tribulationibus vexantur, curva esse putantur, etsi recta sint.'

[48] De.Ver. Cap. vi, linea 26, p.184. 'Similiter cum fustis integer, cuius pars est intra aquam et pars extra, putatur fractus; aut cum putamus quod visus noster vultus nostro inveniat in speculo; et cum multa alia nobis aliter videntur visus et alii sensus nuntiare quam sint: no culpa sensum est qui renuntiant quod possunt, quoniam ita posse acceperunt, sed iudicio animae imputandum est, quod non bene discernit quid illi possint aut quid debeant.' Augustine makes this point *Contra Academicos*: CA, Lib. iii, Cap. xi.

[49] The Latin title for Anselm's chapter is '*De sensuum veritate*'.

When confronting the stick in water in *De* visu, it becomes apparent that Neckam (despite his optical examples) is not really interested in physical sight. That Neckam draws upon a series of optical phenomena is clear enough. *De visu* commences with a discussion on celestial illusion, and includes the visual imagery of a dog pursuing meat in water, and the illusion of a stick and coin in water.[50] But within each of these examples, the optical process intrigues Neckam far less than the deeper moral value they all have in common. To explain, when writing about celestial illusion, Neckam notes how the sun appears larger at sunrise than at noon. Since it is illogical that the sun is actually larger at a certain hour in the day, Neckam concludes that celestial illusion is caused by the observer viewing sunrise through the medium of nocturnal moisture close to the earth's horizon.[51] In this, Neckam borrows the argument of Al-farghani who also attributed celestial illusion to water vapour.[52] The modern scientist may easily dismiss Neckam's conclusion, since it is now argued that celestial illusion is an optical phenomenon connected to the position of the sun in relation to the horizon rather than the medium through which it is viewed.[53] However, a dismissive approach to the opening of *De visu* would fail to grasp its coherence in relation to Neckam's subsequent use of visual imagery.

In similar fashion to celestial illusion, Neckam's use of other types of visual illusion all build toward the same conclusions. For example, Neckam concludes that a dog swimming in water, and carrying meat in its mouth, is deceived by the way the water produces a larger image or shadow of the meat it is carrying; and a glass-bowl of water in which a coin is placed

[50] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, pp.234-8.
[51] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.234. 'In fact, the sun's body is perceived larger through the morning relics of nocturnal moisture than when it shines at midday'; 'Solare namque corpus ex reliquiis humoris nocturni de mane videtur maius quam fulget in meridie.' (The translation here is my own.)
[52] There are several possible sources for Neckam's celestial illusion, including Ptolemy and Al-farghani. Given Neckam quotes Al-farghani in book one of *De naturis rerum* in relation to the circular nature of the sun, this seems his most likely source. See: Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 76; H. Ross, 'The Sun/Moon Illusion in a Medieval Irish Astronomical Tract', *Vision*, 3:39, (2019). Ross gives an historical overview of the early proponents of the theory of the sun's 'magnification through atmospheric vapours'.
[53] For a scientific overview of the psychological phenomena known as celestial illusion, see: H. Ross & C. Plug, 'The Celestial Illusions' in their co-authored book *The Mystery of the Moon Illusion: Exploring Size Perception*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002). Referencing theories popular throughout the Middle Ages, the authors state: 'We hope that this book will help to correct such historical inaccuracies'.

produces a magnified image of the coin to an observer who is farther away.[54] Like Neckam's argument for celestial illusion and the stick in water, these examples suggest that the medium of water (and glass) deceives the physical senses of both animals and humans, and presents an image of things contrary to the way they actually are. It is not, therefore, important to ascertain the veracity of what Neckam visually paints. Rather, what matters to Neckam, is that each argument conveys a deeper moral reading of 'waters' as a visual medium. In each instance waters, whether water vapour (which Neckam, like Al-farghani, suggests causes celestial illusion) or the waters in which a stick, meat, or coin is placed, become a moral signifier. This is found in the corresponding moralisations Neckam provides, where waters signify tribulation:

> …martyrs placed in tribulations were greater than in time of peace… the works of the just, who are vexed by tribulations, are often regarded as bent, although they are [actually] straight… And as too much prosperity blinds the mind, so tribulation restores keener sight to the mind.[55]

Neckam's point here is subtle, but integral to his broader thought and methodology. It is not the case that he simply moralises natural phenomena haphazardly. Rather, Neckam ultimately conveys the idea that what a thing signifies is far greater than what the physical senses initially report; that the vision of the mind's eye uncloaks the true reality of things, a reality that lies within or beneath the surface of an initial visual encounter.[56] From this, it is unlikely that Neckam is interested in compiling an encyclopaedia of all known optical knowledge, or that he desires to advance scientific thought. Instead, he uses visual imagery to indicate a deeper reality of things; one that is achieved through a keener sight of the mind.

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[54] DNR, Lib. ii Cap. cliii, pp.234-8.
[55] DNR, Lib. ii Cap. cliii, pp.234-5. 'Martyres in tribulationibus positi maiores erant quam tempore pacis… Saepe igitur opera iustorum, qui tribulationibus vexantur, curva esse putantur, etsi recta sint… Sicut autem prosperitatis luxus superfluus mentem excaecat, ita tribulatio visum mentis reddit acutiorem.'
[56] Seeing the spirit through the veil of the letter is typical of patristic and medieval exegesis, as Smalley shows. This applies to Neckam (below). B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), Third Printing, 1.

Neckam's use of visual examples of figurative significance in *De visu* is enhanced through a comparative reading of the same in Anselm's *De veritate*. Anselm's main argument when discussing a stick in water is that the senses report as they ought: 'sight and the other senses report what is, for it is no fault of the senses that report what they can, as they can receive it.'[57] This means that the perceived illusion of the bent or crooked stick results from the physical senses observing as they ought to observe, and reporting as they ought to report to the higher parts of the soul. It should be noted here that Anselm's thought is informed by Christian Neoplatonism.[58] He conceives of a tripartite soul that is situated within a reality comprised of both the corporeal and the incorporeal.[59] Within the tripartite soul, reason (or judgment) is superior, and presides over the other two parts of the soul. Therefore, when the lower part of the soul reports as it ought, error cannot be said of the physical senses. Viewing a straight stick as bent or crooked, therefore, must necessarily be an error of reason, and not of the senses. Again, as Anselm states: '[error] should be imputed to the judgement of the soul which does not discern well what the senses can do or what they ought to do.'[60]

To push Anselm's thought further, the example of the stick in water correlates with his theory of divine Truth. In part, this concerns the relationship between making truthful, or correct, statements, and things in reality. For this reason, much of Anselm's thought in *De veritate* centres on discerning whether or not a thing signifies what it ought. This case is made clearly enough with regard to statements. According to Anselm, a statement is only truthful when it signifies 'truth' as it ought to, or in other words that it: 1) correlates with truth in reality,

[57] De.Ver., Cap. vi, p.26. '…visus et alii sensus nuntiare quam sint: no culpa sensum est qui renuntiant quod possunt, quoniam ita posse acceperunt'.
[58] The tripartite conception of the soul was promulgated by Plotinus, and influences Augustine and the subsequent thought of medieval authors in the West prior to the 13th century: R. Wallis, Neoplatonism, (London: Duckworth & Company, 1972), 73-7; E. Emilsson, *Plotinus on Sense Perception*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 23-30; W. Otten, 'Christianity's Content: (Neo)Platonism in the Middle Ages, Its Theoretical and Theological Appeal', *Numen*, 63, (2016), 245-70.
[59] This is an important consideration. It is not that Anselm is Neoplatonic, but rather that for him Neoplatonism emphasises the incorporeal aspect of reality: a reality comprised of both the material and immaterial.
[60] De.Ver., Cap. vi, p.26. 'sed iudicio animae imputandum est, quod non bene discernit quid illi possint aut quid debeant.'

and 2) is shown to have been made correctly. This broader approach to truth makes sense of Anselm's idea that when the senses report what they ought, in response to things in reality, any error in the process must necessarily be one of judgment.

In spite of his use of logic, it is important to view Anselm's writings on the truth of the senses as an effort in exegesis. In the preface of *De veritate*, Anselm himself states that this work was one of three concerned with the study of 'Sacred Scripture', and that whilst *De grammatico* was written in a similar style, the latter work pertains to a different sort of inquiry. Put another way, despite the style and logic of *De veritate*, Anselm categorises it among his works concerned with the interpretation of scripture. As such, *De veritate* was heavily influenced by Augustine's dialogue with Evodius in Book II of the *De libero arbitrio,* and in the thirteenth and final chapter of his *De veritate*, Anselm's logical dialogue seeks to prove that one 'Truth' exists eternally and immutably from all things, and is present within all true things.[61] As Anselm puts it: 'Quod una sit veritas in omnibus veris.'[62] Therefore, Anselm's work on Truth is built towards his primary interest in discerning the Truth that exists beyond that which can be seen or written, transporting the reader to the origin of all Truth. Like his ontological argument contained within the *Proslogion*, Anselm's aim was for reason to recognise a truth beyond itself and the bodily senses.[63] In this respect, it was the duty of reason to perceive something that can be seen only with the mind's eye, rather than with physical sight; an essential aspect of discerning truth contained within all things.[64]

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[61] For Augustine's on Anselm see Gasper's aforementioned paper. It is also noteworthy that Anselm composes a work under a similar name. See also: DLA, Lib. ii, Cap. viii-ix, pp.36-51.

[62] This phrase translates: 'That one truth exists in all true things.' For the chapter of this title, see: De.Ver., Cap. xiii.

[63] The *a priori* nature of the ontological argument is such that is seeks to identify that-than-which-nothing-great-than can exist (God) from logical deduction, rather than from sense observation. The crucial element of the argument is that God does not exist in the mind alone but exists as a reality outside of the mind. See chapter two of the *Proslogion* 'Quod vere sit deus': Pros., Cap. ii, Lin. ii, p.101.

[64] DLA*,* Lib. ii, Cap. vi, Lin. 42. The essence of this approach to things is found in Augustine's eloquent declaration in his *De libero arbitrio*: 'Suppose that reason sees something eternal and unchangeable through itself, without recourse to any bodily organ – not through touch, taste, or smell; not through the ears or the eyes, nor through any sense inferior to itself. Reason must then admit itself to be inferior, and the eternal and unchangeable being to be its God'; 'quae si nullo adhibito corporis instrumento neque per tactum neque per

A Tropological Turn: Augustine, Neckam, and the Victorines

The above comparison begins to place Neckam's *De visu* outside narrower traditions in the history of science, where his interests in visual imagery transcend the science of optics. Like Anselm's *De veritate*, Neckam's *De visu* was part of a longer commentary on scripture where visual examples were used to a moral end.[65] To properly establish Neckam's *De visu* as an effort in exegesis, however, it is needful to examine Neckam's moralised figurative expositions, and indeed his conception of all learning, in relation to medieval exegetical practice.

For Neckam, the purpose of all learning was connected to discerning divine truth as preparation for, or as an introductory aspect of, scriptural interpretation. In part, this is seen in his arrangement of material throughout his *De naturis rerum*, where the first two books are 1) framed around an hexameronic conceptualisation of things (which are all created by God), and 2) form a long introduction to a commentary on Wisdom literature.[66] Yet this exegetical method is also expressed more explicitly in Neckam's methodology, seen both within and without the text of the *De naturis rerum*. For instance, earlier in the text Neckam puts forward the idea that the Wisdom and Goodness of God can be apprehended within all created things, if such things are used correctly:

> The wisdom of God is told by a thing's colour, beauty, as well as its outward shape, and the disposition and number of its parts. The goodness of the highest creator is told by the preservation of a thing in existence and its

gustatum neque per olfactum neque per aures neque per oculos neque per ullum sensum se inferiorem, sed per se ipsam cernit aeternum aliquid et incommutabile, simul et se ipsam inferiorem et illum oportet deum suum esse fateatur.'

[65] See the discussion above.

[66] Bestul, 'The meditation on Mary Magdalene', 1.

> utility. For there is no thing, not even a common plant, that is not useful in many ways.[67]

Most significant about this passage is that it features in Neckam's prologue to book two, where his expositions on sight and zoology are contained. And within this prologue Neckam openly expresses the influence of all the Fathers in discovering the Wisdom that resides in the literal sense of things; for this was Neckam's aim in composing this work.[68]

The notion that all things in existence have utility, and that the properties of colour, beauty, shape, and number can be used to apprehend divine Wisdom, is strongly Augustinian. For one, Augustine's theology of number, weight, and measure also resonated with Neckam's contemporaries, and features in John of Salisbury's *Metalogicon*.[69] For another, the idea that created things ('signa'/created res) ought to be used to apprehend divine Wisdom ('sapientia'/divine res) is the basis of Augustine's guide to scriptural interpretation found in his *De doctrina christiana*.[70] It is this work that contains Augustine's philosophy of things and

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[67] DNR, prologus libri secondi, pp.125-6. 'Sapientiam autem Dei enarrant color rei, et pulchritude, et forma, cum figura et dispositione partium et numero. Benignitatem autem artificis summi loquuntur conservation rei in esse et utilitas eiusdem. Non est enim vel herba communis quae multas no habeat in se utilitates.' The English translation of this is found in Zahora: Zahora, *Nature, Virtue, and the Boundaries of Encyclopaedic Knowledge,* 130.

[68] DNR, prologus libri secundi, p.125.

[69] In book two of his *Metalogicon*, John of Salisbury credits Augustine for his theology of number, weight, and measure, and argues that Augustine's realist position becomes useful for philosophers 'who rise to the contemplation of all things': 'These "ideas," or "exemplary forms," are the original plans of all things. They may neither be decreased or augmented; and they are so permanent and perpetual, that even if the whole world were to come to an end, they could not perish. They include all things, and, as Augustine seems to maintain in his book *On Free Will*, their number neither increases nor diminishes, because the ideas always continue on, even when it happens that [particular] temporal things cease to exist. What these men [Plato, Seneca, Augustine, and Boethius] promise is wonderful, and familiar to philosophers who rise to the contemplation of higher things'; 'Hae autem ideae id est exemplares formae, rerum primaeuae omnium rationes sunt, quae nec diminutionem suscipiunt, nec augmentum, stabiles et perpetuae, ut et si mundus totus corporalis pereat, nequeant interire. Rerum omnium numerus consistit in his; et sicut in libro de libero arbitrio uidetur astruere Augustinus, quia hae semper sunt, etiam si temporalia perire contingat, rerum numerus nec minuitur, nec augetur. Magnum profecto est, et notum philosophis contemplantibus altiora quod isti pollicentur.' Meta., Lib. ii, Cap. xvii, Lin. 69.

A comparison between John and Augustine is found in: L. Ayres, 'Number, Measure, Weight', in A. D. Fitzgerald, *Augustine Through the Ages: An Encyclopaedia,* (Cambridge, 1999), 550-2; W. Roche, 'Measure, Number, and Weight in St Augustine', *The New Scholasticism,* Vol. xv, (Washington D.C., 1941), 350-76; C. Harrison, 'Measure, Number and Weight in Saint Augustine's Aesthetics', *Augustinianum,* Annus xxviii, Fasciculus 3, (1988), 591-602.

[70] On this point, see: DDC, Lib. i, pp.12-55.

signs, where he proposes that useful things signify divine things, and can be used both to apprehend and love Wisdom itself.[71] This, then, provides a methodological basis for Neckam's continual moralisations of visual imagery, where all things could be used to reveal something of the Wisdom and Goodness of God.

In Augustine, things to be *used* and things to be *loved* aptly articulate the ontological relationship between creature and Creator, and profoundly shape the Christian idea of secular and sacred learning. Overall, the explicit function of learning is connected to the way things may be used to illuminate truth contained in scripture, and to apprehend divine Wisdom itself. The case for this is made clearly enough in relation to the arts, where Augustine posits that learning the alphabet necessarily precedes learning to read; and learning the art of speaking, writing, and argument (rhetoric, grammar, and logic/dialectic) becomes a useful aid in the interpretation scripture.[72] Since the message of all scripture is found in the twin command of charity, all worthwhile secular learning becomes part of a broader scheme whereby one gradually ascends to Wisdom through learning and love.[73] All of this is encapsulated through Augustine's seven stages of reading found in book two of his *De doctrina christiana*, where fear and holiness lead to knowledge; knowledge leads to love of God and neighbour; fortitude and compassion enable the inner eye to be purified; and the purification of the inner eye precedes an ascension to divine Wisdom itself.[74] In short, all secular learning can be channelled to apprehend the divine; a reality invisible to physical sight.

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[71] DDC, Lib. i, pp.12-55.
[72] These points are made by Augustine in the preface and book two of his text: DDC*,* praefatio, pp.2-11; liber ii, 56-131.
[73] DDC, Lib. i, pp.15-17.
[74] DDC, Lib. ii, pp.62-7. Augustine states regarding the sixth stage: 'Full of hope now, and at full strength, since he has come to love even his enemy, he rises to the sixth stage, in which he now purifies the eye by which God may actually be seen—to the extent that he may be seen by those who, to the best of their ability, die to this world; for they see to the extent that they die to the world, and to the extent that they live in it they fail to see'; 'Et spe iam plenus atque integer viribus, cum pervenerit usque ad inimici dilectionem, ascendet in sextum gradum, ubi iam ipsum oculum purgat quo videri deus potest, quantum potest ab eis qui huic saeculo moriuntur quantum possunt. Nam in tantum vident in quantum moriuntur huic saeculo, in quantum autem hic vivunt, non vident.'

Before the significance of Augustine can be located precisely in Neckam, it is important to grasp that Augustine's scheme of 'doctrina', that is 'teaching and learning', also incorporates a knowledge and use of things in the natural world, an ignorance of which makes for imprecise scriptural interpretation. Again, this is to be discovered in book two of his *De doctrina christiana*, where he offers examples of scriptural exposition concerning stones, sticks, plants, and animals. Since Augustine refers to this twice in the same book, it is necessary to provide both references together:

> Ignorance of things makes figurative expressions unclear when we are ignorant of the qualities of animals or stones or plants or other things mentioned in scripture for the sake of some analogy… In this category ['historia'] are various studies of topography and zoology, and of trees, plants, stones, and other such things. I dealt with this category earlier and explained that such knowledge is valuable in solving puzzles in scripture.[75]

What Augustine provides above is an insight into both the reading and writing of expositions. In the case of scripture, the reader needs sufficient knowledge of things mentioned (whether sheep, stones, or plants) to perceive their true meaning and use in a scriptural passage. This is especially applicable to zoological knowledge, with Augustine demonstrating his argument through a figurative exposition on the snake.[76] Moreover, posited here is the notion that the language of scripture is arranged in a certain manner, and that deeper spiritual readings (especially of the historical sense) are intended by the author for the benefit of a diverse

[75] It is important to include sticks among things, since Augustine (in book one) earlier refers to Moses' stick in scripture in this same context: DDC, Lib. i, pp.12-4; Lib. ii, pp.82-5 & 106-8. 'Rerum autem ignorantia facit obscuras figuratas locutiones, cum ignoramus vel animantium vel lapidum vel herbarum naturas aliarumve rerum quae plerumque in scripturis similitudinis alicuius gratia ponuntur… In quo genere sunt quaecumque de locorum situ naturisque animalium lignorum herbarum lapidum aliorumve corporum scripta sunt. De quo genere superius egimus eamque cognitionem valere ad aenigmata scripturarum solvenda docuimus.'

[76] DDC, Lib. ii, pp.84-85. 'Just as a knowledge of the habits of the snake clarifies the many analogies involving this animal regularly given in scripture, so too an ignorance of the numerous animals mentioned no less frequently in an analogy is a great hinderance to understanding'; 'Ut ergo notitia naturae serpentis illustrat multas similitudines quas de hoc animante scriptura dare consuevit, sic ignorantia nonnullorum animalium, quae non minus per similitudines commemorat, impedit plurimum intellectorem.'

readership. Since Augustine maintains a classical view of the bible, where authorship is attributed to the Holy Spirit, both the 'plain' and 'obscure' aspects of scripture are seen as the workings of the Holy Spirit to capture the minds of readers and listeners.[77] In other words, a deeper sense of literal 'things' ('res') is an intentional feature of scripture, and is to be recognised by the more advanced readers.[78]

Given this context, perhaps the most important aspect of Augustine's guide to scriptural interpretation is found in the way 'ambiguities' present an obstacle for casual readers.[79] Not only does Augustine state that 'casual readers are misled by problems and ambiguities of many kinds, mistaking one thing for another', but he constantly refers to ignorance of things as a hindrance to scriptural interpretation; whether that be numbers, music, zoology, and so on.[80] Put succinctly, Augustine offers a scheme of 'doctrina' centred on apprehending and loving God, one that incorporates the utility of secular learning. When engaged in this process of learning, therefore, it is essential that ignorance does not hinder the reader's ability to comprehend an important rule: that the divine may be contained within the figurative sense of things, exposing a deeper sense of reality. In short, divine Wisdom can only be seen to those who are able to practice a deeper sense of seeing; even a seeing beyond seeing.

Consideration of Augustinian exegetical practice is essential to understanding how Neckam crafted his own expositions, and how he intended them to be read by others. It has already been shown that Neckam, like Anselm, used visual examples to a moral end where divine truth was of greater importance than the immediate, or apparent, truth of what the physical senses report.[81] It has also been shown that Neckam perceived things to have a utility

[77] DDC, Lib. ii, pp.62-3. Augustine states: 'It is a wonderful and beneficial thing that the Holy Spirit organized the holy scripture so as to satisfy hunger by means of its plainer passages and remove boredom by means of its obscurer ones'; 'Magnifice igitur et salubriter spiritus sanctus ita scripturas sanctas modificavit, ut locis apertioribus fami occurreret, obscurioribus autem fastidia detergeret.'
[78] DDC, Lib. ii, pp.62-3.
[79] Whilst this is certainly a feature of his *De doctrina christiana*, it may be that Augustine sees 'ambiguities' as a providential stumbling block, alerting humans to search for truth.
[80] This occurs throughout book two of the *De doctrina christiana*.
[81] See the discussion above.

in discovering the Wisdom and Goodness of God, akin to Augustine's approach to all useful things. The extent of Augustinian reception in Neckam's writings, however, is further seen in a number of methodological similarities that pervade Neckam's works. For instance, Neckam's conception of the various senses of scripture aligned with Augustine's, in that 'historia' formed the foundation for the broadly figurative senses of 'allegoria' and 'tropologia'; or that the spiritual-figurative sense lay within the historical-literal sense of its words.[82] For Augustine, the importance of the figurative sense of scripture is conveyed in his *Confessiones* when he meets Ambrose, and becomes acquainted with a new mode of biblical exegesis.[83] In Augustine's own words, Ambrose 'took away the mystical veil and opened the spiritual sense of things' contained in scripture.[84] This new way of reading scripture stood in sharp contrast to the follies of Augustine's former Manichaean teacher, Faustus, the literalist and fundamentalist.[85] Likewise, in book one of Neckam's *Suppletio Defectuum*, a supplementary treatise on plants, birds, and animals, Neckam also uses Faustus to represent the rigidly-literal approach to scripture; one which stands in contrast to seeing a deeper truth. It is here that Augustine's influence on Neckam's approach to scripture is undeniably present, where

[82] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister,* 96-7.

[83] On Augustine's place in what is sometimes referred to as the Alexandrian tradition of biblical exegesis, and the basic approach to letter and spirit, see: D. Turner, 'Allegory in Christian late antiquity', in *the Cambridge Companion to Allegory,* 71-2. 'The broad distinction between "literal" and "spiritual" senses is there in general terms in Origen's *On First Principles* in the early fourth century, in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* in the early fifth, and the distinction of the four senses in almost the exact terms in which Nicholas reports them is found in Gregory the Great in the late sixth century'. As seen below, Augustine's encounter with Ambrose initiated his involvement with this tradition.

[84] Conf., Lib. vi, Cap. iv, Par. vi, pp.246-9. 'I also began to rejoice because the old Scriptures of the law and the prophets were no longer set before me to read with that scrutiny which had once found them ridiculous back in the days when I used to reproach your saints for opinions they did not actually hold. I was delighted to hear Ambrose, when preaching to the people, often urgently recommending this as their rule: "the letter kills, but the spirit gives life." He took away the mystical veil and opened the spiritual sense of things which seemed, according to the letter, to inculcate what was unreasonable'; 'Gaudebam etiam quod vetera scripta legis et phrophetarum iam non illo oculo mihi legenda proponerentur quo antea videbantur absurda, cum arguebam tamquam ita sentientes sanctos tuos, verum autem non ita sentiebant. et tanquam regulam diligentissime commendaret, saepe in popularibus sermonibus suis dicentem Ambrosium laetus audiebam: "littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat," cum ea quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoto mystico velamento, spiritaliter aperiret, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamvis ea diceret quae utrum vera essent adhuc ignorarem.'

[85] Conf., Lib. v, pp.199-227. In this part of his *Confessiones*, Augustine speaks about meeting Faustus whilst a 'hearer' for the Manichaean faith, and details his dissatisfaction with their mode of scriptural interpretation. This would continue until he would later become acquainted with Ambrose in Milan.

'deficient eyesight' and 'blind heresy' are used figuratively to describe what the faithless cannot see:

> The bread that strengthens the heart of mankind, reading the holy book, brings no pleasure to your palate, faithless Faustus. The heavenly book offers you no delight; enjoy the earth. In your mouth earthly knowledge has a sweet taste. Because of deficient eyesight moles have dug lairs, while blind heresy as a rule skulks in hidden recesses.[86]

To return to Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, the section that follows Neckam's *De visu* features an exposition on a mirror. Like the stick in water, the mirror also demonstrates Neckam's use of visual examples present in both Augustine and Anselm.[87] Most importantly, however, Neckam uses the example of a broken mirror to represent the many potential readings of scripture. Here, the relevance of this section is found in Neckam's *use* of a visual example, rather than the visual example itself.[88] To quote Neckam:

> When a mirror is whole, there being but one observer, only one image is produced; but should the glass be broken into several pieces, there appear as many images as there are breaks. And thus in Holy Scripture, as many understandings shine forth as there are expositions. But, marvelous thing!, remove the lead placed behind the glass; immediately no image is visible to

[86] SD, Lib. i, Lin. 1425, pp.90-1.'Hinc est quod terra tantum recreatur in esum; Ecce grauem culpam pena secuta grauis. Panis confirmans hominis cor, lectio sacra Deliciosa minus, perfide Fausta, tibi est. Pagina celestis tibi displicet; utere terra. Disciplina tibi terrea dulce sapit; Luminibus capti fodere cubilia talpe Et latebris heresis ceca latere solet.'

[87] Augustine, Anselm, and Neckam all employ the visual imagery of sticks, glass, and mirrors in their respective texts.

[88] This section is included in Grant's edition. However, the only three footnotes that accompany the translation are: 1) a reference to 1 John 1.8; 2) A note on Neckam's 'primitive understanding of mirrors and their properties'; and 3) a declaration that nothing further of optical interest features in this section. There is no comment at all on Neckam's spiritual exposition. It can only be concluded that, that Neckam's spiritual exposition on the mirror only features in the translation because it is inseparable from the passage that deals with his conceptualisation of the mirror itself.

> the observer. [Likewise,] remove the foundation of the faith, and immediately you will no longer see yourself clearly in Holy Scripture. The lead can be understood to represent sin; thus in the mirror of Holy Scripture you will discern yourself less clearly unless you confess yourself to be a sinner. For if we say that we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.[89]

That this section is exegetical in nature is shown in Neckam's citation of 1 John.[90] Here Neckam demonstrates that his *use* of the mirror serves as a commentary on a biblical verse: the idea that when humans deceive themselves, they cannot see the truth within them. It is here, therefore, that Neckam's approach as an exegete is comparable to Anselm. In chapter six of Anselm's *De veritate*, for instance, Anselm reveals his wider treatise seeks to prove the veracity of John 3 (that he who does evil hates the light, but he that does good, or does things correctly as they ought, comes into the light).[91] Further, in chapter two of the *Proslogion*, which contains the ontological argument, it is clear Anselm sought to prove the foolish nature of the fool of Psalm 13.[92] Like Anselm, Neckam too was engaged in figurative exegesis where he drew upon visual examples from the natural world (in the same way Anselm used logic) to reveal and articulate the truth of scripture. What Anselm provides for the reader of Neckam, therefore, is that Neckam too operated in an Augustinian framework where divine truth lay within a

[89] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliv, '*De speculo*', p.239. 'Dum integrum est speculum, unica uno solo inspiciente resultat imago; frangatur in plures vitrum, quot sunt ibi fractiones, tot resultabunt imagines. Sic et in Sacra Scriptura, quot sunt expositions, totidem relucent intelligentiae. Sed, mira res ! subtrahe plumbum suppositum vitro, iam nulla resultabit imago inspicientis. Subtrahe et fundamentum fidei, iam teipsum in Sacra Scriptura non videbis dilucide. Potest et per plumbum intelligi peccatum. In speculo igitur Sacrae Scripturae minus limpide teipsum cernes, nisi te esse peccatorem fatearis. Si enim dixerimus quia peccatum non habemus, nos ipsos seducimus, et veritas in nobis non est.'

[90] I John 1.8. 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us'; 'Si dixerimus quoniam peccatum non habemus, ipsi nos seducimus, et veritas in nobis non est.'

[91] De.Ver.,, Cap. v, p.156. In relation to his theory on truth, Anselm quotes John 3:20.

[92] Pros., Cap. ii, Lin. ii, p.101. In the beginning of the argument 'Quod vere sit deus' (that God truly exists) Anselm quotes Psalm 13:1: 'An ergo non est aliqua talis natura, quia "dixit insipiens in corde suo: non est deus"?' This is revisited in chapter four where Anselm concludes (through logical deduction) that the fool has said in his heart what cannot be thought: 'Quomodo insipiens dixit in corde, quod cogitari non potest.'

figurative exposition, whether that is found in the examples water, glass, or the mirror, or beyond.

A recognition of Augustinian reception in Neckam's thought and writings is reflective of his place within the intellectual climate of the twelfth century. Hugh of St Victor opened his *Didascalicon*, modelled on Augustine's *De doctrina christiana,* with the declaration: 'Of all things to be sought, the first is that Wisdom in which the Form of the Perfect Good stands fixed.'[93] What is more, Hugh would open book two of his text in comparable fashion, defining philosophy as the love of divine Wisdom: 'Philosophy is the love of that Wisdom which, wanting in nothing, is a living Mind and the sole primordial Idea of Pattern of things.'[94] Hugh's interest in the arts occupies the first three books of his text, with the latter three books dealing with scripture. However, at the heart of the entire text lay Hugh's desire for students to engage in the pursuit and love of divine Wisdom.[95]

Comparison between Hugh and Augustine is common within modern scholarship, especially in relation to the *De doctrina christiana* and the *Didascalicon*.[96] Therefore, the extent to which both authorities inform the exegetical practice of Neckam (later in the twelfth century) should not be underestimated. The pursuit of Wisdom is not only a feature of the *De naturis rerum*, but is also found in Neckam's *Meditatio de Magdelena* where the beginning of the text opens with the first verse from the Song of Songs, and shows Penitence confessing to

[93] Didas.*,* Lib. i, Cap. i, p.4. 'Omnium expetendorum prima est sapientia, in qua perfecti boni forma consistit.' It is also noteworthy that Hugh begins chapter two of book one with the phrase 'that philosophy is the study (or pursuit) of Wisdom'; 'Quod studium sapientie philosophia sit.' (liber i, cap. ii, 6).
[94] Didas.*,* Lib. ii, Cap. i, p.23.'Philosophia est amor sapientie, que nullius indigens, uiuax mens et sola rerum primaeua ratio est.'
[95] Didas. Lib. i, Cap. ii, p.6.
[96] Smalley, *Study of the* Bible, 86-97; F. Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', *Augustinian Studies,* 37:2, (2006), 219-46; E. Sweeney, 'Hugh of St. Victor: The Augustinian Tradition of Sacred and Secular Reading Revised', in *Reading and Wisdom: The De Doctrina Christiana of Augustine in the Middle Ages*, ed. E. D. English (Notre Dame, 1995), 61–83; M. Gibson, 'The De Doctrina Christiana in the School of St. Victor', in *Reading and* Wisdom, 41–47; G. Zinn, Jr., 'The Influence of Augustine's De Doctrina Christiana upon the Writings of Hugh of St. Victor', in *Reading and* Wisdom, 48–60; B. Fitzpatrick, 'Medieval Theories of Education: Hugh of St Victor and John of Salisbury', *Oxford Review of Education*, 35:5, (2010), 575-88.

Wisdom.[97] Like his figurative expositions contained in the *De naturis rerum*, Neckam's many moral exercises show he primarily has the spiritual welfare of the reader in mind in their theological pursuit of love and Wisdom. As McDonough observes in relation to the *De naturis rerum*: '[Neckam] generates a complex of observations that embrace the dissemination of wisdom, the efficacy of love and charity, the action of the Holy Spirit… Throughout, natural phenomena serve as examples to stimulate teachings about morality and to intimate deeper meaning.'[98] A closer look at Hugh's influences on Neckam, therefore, provides one with a heuristic tool with which to decipher such moral exercises.

Given the context of received exegetical practice, Neckam's own figurative expositions in *De visu* are illuminated by two heuristic rules in the *Didascalicon* where Hugh expands on the mode of reading, and the meaning of 'things' ('res') in scripture. The first is found in book three and utilises the language of universals and particulars to instruct the student in reading. After Hugh defines reading as being primarily concerned with the finite, leading gradually to the infinite, Hugh then discusses the nature of 'doctrina', which 'begins with those things which are better known and, by acquainting us with these, works its way to matters which lie hidden.'[99] Hugh then teaches:

> Furthermore, we investigate with our reason (the proper function of which is to analyse) when, by analysis and investigation of the natures of individual things, we descend from universals to particulars. For every universal is more fully defined than its particulars: when we learn, therefore, we ought to begin with universals, which are better known and determined and inclusive; and then, by descending little by little from them and by distinguishing

[97] Neckam, *Meditatio de Magdalena*, (ed.) T. Bestul, 8.
[98] McDonough, *Neckam on plants, birds and animals*, xxiv.
[99] Didas., Lib. iii, Cap. ix, p.59.'doctrina autem ab his que magis nota sunt incipit, et per eorum notitiam ad scientiam eorum que latent pertingit.'

> individuals through analysis, we ought to investigate the nature of the things those universals contain.[100]

Here, Hugh uses the language of universals and particulars to unfold a process of learning, whereby the 'universal' should always be kept in mind when investigating the natures of things. When a student reads a text they ought to do so carefully and first distinguish the letter and the sense of words, but this is always done with a view to explicate the deeper universal meaning signified in the natures of particular things.[101]

The rule Hugh discusses here is revisited in book five when he moves his discussion on to scripture. With the student already instructed in the rules for expounding a text (moving from letter, to sense, to inner meaning), Hugh then posits that:

> And the divine Wisdom, which the Father has uttered out of his heart, invisible in Itself, is recognised through creatures and in them. From this is most surely gathered how profound is the understanding to be sought in the Sacred Writings, in which we come through the word [vocem][102] to a concept, through the concept to a thing, through the thing to its idea, and through its idea arrive at Truth.[103]

[100] Didas., Lib. iii, Cap. ix, p.59. 'preterea ratione inuestigamus, ad quam proprie pertinet diuidere, quando ab uniuersalibus ad particularia descendimus diuidendo et singulorum naturas inuestigando. omne namque uniuersale magis est determinatum suis particularibus. quando ergo discimus, ab his incipere debemus que magis sunt nota et determinata et complectentia, sic que paulatim descendendo, et per diuisionem singula distinguendo, eorum que continentur naturam inuestigare.'

[101] Didas., Lib. iii, Cap. viii, p.58. In the previous chapter of book three, Hugh states that: 'the order of inquiry is first the letter, then the sense, and finally the inner meaning. And when this is done, the exposition is complete'; 'in his ordo est, ut primum littera, deinde sensus, deinde sententia inquiratur. quo facto, perfecta est expositio.'

[102] Whilst I have left Taylor's English translation 'word' in the text, it is interesting that the Latin term here is 'vocem' meaning 'voice'.

[103] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97. 'et diuina sapientia, quam de corde suo Pater eructauit, in se inuisibilis, per creaturas et in creaturis agnoscitur. ex quo nimirum colligitur, quam profunda in sacris litteris requirenda sit intelligentia, ubi per uocem ad intellectum, per intellectum ad rem, per rem ad rationem, per rationem peruenitur ad ueritatem.'

Applied to the reading of scripture, Hugh's rule takes on greater significance. It is not the case that Hugh envisions reading the bible as an isolated exercise; rather, he posits that all learning of words, concepts, things, and ideas lead the student to the Truth. Yet this truth is present in all things, and requires a utilisation of all useful things in an ordered process of learning and reading. Above all, this process of learning and reading enables a recognition of divine Wisdom uttered from the heart of the Father.

The essence of Hugh's rules for scriptural interpretation are found in secondary, rather than primary, intentions. As Hugh laments in book five, there are some students who do not know there is any sense beyond the letter.[104] Whilst Hugh is also sceptical of those who spiritualise scripture without the foundation of history, his main point is that 'historia' is a necessary step to the three spiritual/figurative senses of 'allegoria', 'tropologia', and 'anagoge'.[105] The primary reading should always be history ('histora') before secondary figurative readings expose the allegorical intentions of a passage. Since the three spiritual/figurative senses are all broadly allegorical in nature, some moral and others prophetic, it is worth emphasising the meaning of allegory. As a universally accepted literary mode, the allegorical presents two, or more, meanings simultaneously. To use a modern definition, central to allegory is the idea that the reader is delighted and taught through the use of affective language. This happens first through a literal/historical meaning, and second through abstract/obscure moralistic meanings that 'depend for clarity and interpretation upon the [first] primary meaning.'[106] This notion of the allegorical corresponds with both Hugh and Augustine's conception of the letter and the spirit, with Augustine declaring that: 'no one disputes that it is much more pleasant to learn lessons presented through imagery, and much

[104] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97. 'nisi solam littere superficiem.'
[105] Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 100-3. In her section on Hugh and the Victorines, Smalley summarises Hugh well when saying: 'His great service to exegesis was to lay more stress on the literal interpretation *relatively* to the spiritual.' The word '*relatively*' (Smalley's emphasis) is crucial.
[106] Bloom, 'The Allegorical Principle', 163-90.

more rewarding to discover meanings that are won only with difficulty.'[107] In Augustine and Hugh, therefore, the central aim of reading figurative expositions (and indeed in creating them) was to discover divine Wisdom in the secondary intentions of a passage, whether that be a passage about a lion, snake, stick, stone, or even a horse stricken with a moon ray.[108] This was the Victorine approach to reading and writing.

Neckam's precise connection with the Victorines is difficult to establish. A personal link to the school in Paris is possible, although the fact that Neckam is thought to have arrived in Paris during Walter of St Victor's time as abbot of the house c.1175 might give pause for thought. Walter was particularly sceptical of the place of dialectic within theological inquiry which would not have appealed to the English master.[109] The Victorine presence in Herefordshire, at the priory in Shobdon/Wigmore, makes it possible, though no more likely, for Neckam to have encountered Andrew of St Victor in an English context.[110] More probable is that Neckam was familiar with the methods of the Victorines from book-learning.[111] In any case, Neckam produced his exegetical works during his time as an Augustinian Canon at Cirencester c.1197 and, as Dunning has recently suggested, embodies the Victorine approach to reading and understanding throughout his meditations.[112]

That Neckam begins book two of his *De naturis rerum* in a way remarkably similar to Hugh's guidance on the discovery of meaning in scripture, suggests that a meaningful connection with the Victorines is present methodologically, if not through formal association.

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[107] DDC, Lib. ii, pp.62-3. 'Nunc tamen nemo ambigit et per similitudines libentius quaeque cognosci et cum aliqua difficultate quaesita multo gratius inveniri.'
[108] This is especially relevant to Neckam's horse in *De visu*.
[109] M. Colish, 'Christian Nihiliansim in the Second Half of the Twelfth Century', *Recherches de théologie ancienne et médiévale*, 63, (Janvier-Décembre, 1996), 146-55.
[110] Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 1-18; Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 112-95. 173-85. Russell in particular made much of the connection between Neckam and the intellectual tradition at Hereford, though that is mostly from the period in which Neckam was Abbot of Cirencester: J. Russell, 'Hereford and Arabic Science in England about 1175-1200', *Isis*, 18:1, (1932), 14-25; J. Russell, 'Alexander Neckam in England', *The English Historical Review,* 47:186, (1932), 260-8.
[111] On Andrew's influence, see: Smalley, *Study of the Bible*, 173-85.
[112] Dunning, 'Alexander Neckam's Manuscripts', 10, 35. See especially the section titled 'Meditation and the Augustinians': 43-6.

To return to the above quotation from book five of the *Didascalicon*, a close look at Hugh's phrase 'divine Wisdom, which the Father has uttered out of his heart' bears resemblance with the language of Psalms 44, which reads: 'my heart hath uttered a good word.' Initially, the similarity between Hugh and the Vulgate is seen in the idea that the heart ('cor') has the ability to utter ('eructare').[113] If Hugh is, in fact, drawing upon the biblical Psalm, it is clear that he adjusts the subject and object of the verse, with the heart of the Father ('Pater') uttering 'divine Wisdom' ('divina Sapientia') rather than 'a good word' ('verbum bonum').[114] Comparatively, looking to the opening of book two of Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, the resemblance between Hugh and the Vulgate is strengthened. This is evident in two things. First, Neckam confirms his familiarity with the same verse of the Vulgate by quoting the latter part of the verse verbatim 'calamus scribae velociter scribentis.'[115] Second, and more significantly, Neckam too uses the language of the uttering heart found in both Hugh and the Vulgate. However, as the Vulgate speaks about a heart uttering a good word, and Hugh speaks about the heart of the Father uttering divine Wisdom, Neckam combines both into one Christological reading of Old Testament verse where the 'heart of the Father utters the good word' which, being born of the eternal Father, is equal in likeness.[116] Following on from this, Neckam writes:

> Yet, in fact, this Word is the pen of the scribe who writes swiftly, because the Wisdom of the Father inscribes all, in such a way that the Wisdom of God shines forth in all things.[117]

Neckam connects, seemingly, Hugh's adaptation of the Psalm with his own reading. This is conducted in such a way that Neckam, like Hugh, reveals the basis of his interest in 'things'

[113] Hugh's wording is 'et diuina sapientia, quam de corde suo Pater eructauit' which is comparable to Psalms 44:2 which reads: 'Eructavit cor meum verbum bonum'.
[114] See note above.
[115] Compare Psalms 44:2 with: DNR, Lib. ii, p.125.
[116] DNR, Lib. ii, p.125. 'Eructavit cor Patris verbum quod bonum est'.
[117] DNR, Lib. ii, pp.125-6. 'Est etiam verbum istud calamus scribae velociter scribentis, quia sapientia Patris omnia inscribit, ita quod in rebus sapientia Dei elucet.'

('res') being divine Wisdom; one sent from the Father which illuminates all things. Further, the imagery of God as scribe resonates with both Hugh and Neckam's approach to text: Hugh in relation to reading, and Neckam in relation to writing. Forming the introduction to book two of his *De naturis rerum*, which deals extensively with figurative expositions on things such as sticks, stones, coins, luminaries, and animals, Neckam therefore reveals his hand: that his aim in writing was to both capture and articulate divine Wisdom and Truth that was to be found in all created things. To Neckam, then, the significance of 'the nature of things' is found in the deeper figurative meanings of their secondary intentions.

On Sight and Zoology: Revisiting Neckam's Horse

Neckam's *De visu* transports his visual examples to a moralistic end. The sight he is interested in is not physical, but spiritual. This is communicated clearly in relation to a brief discussion on the intersections of visual rays in the act of seeing: 'just as without faith in the cross the inner man does not see well, so neither is exterior vision achieved without the form of a cross.'[118] The main point here is that inner vision sees only through faith in the cross of Christ. In this, the purpose of the visual example of physical sight is that is contains and expresses a deeper figurative intention. Neckam's text is therefore much closer in methodology to Peter of Limoges' later *Moral Treatise on the Eye*, than it is to optical science.[119]

With this considered, the horse of Neckam's *De visu* becomes integral to the entire section, and concludes well his collection of moralisations on his figurative exposition on sight. Neckam's central point in this last passage is that:

> The poison of hidden detractions spreads slowly and it is the more harmful because an audacious assertion, when it is clandestine, does not fear to be

[118] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238. 'et sicut sine fide crucis non bene videt homo interior, ita nec sine figura crucis visus exterior perficitur.'
[119] R. Newhauser, 'Peter of Limoges, Optics, and the Science of the Senses', *The Senses and Society*, (2010), 5:1, 28-44. Though Newhauser suggests that Peter of Limoges demonstrates a scientific interest in optics, his text is really a large collection of moralisations using the visual imagery of previous optical thought.

> accused of falsehood. Published abuse is repelled, and mendacious iniquity is confounded.[120]

Given the authorial intention in this passage, one found in Neckam's open exposition of his figurative secondary intentions, it would be a misunderstanding, to say the least, to call into question the veracity of his account of moon rays and horses in the sentences which precede. For one, it was common practice for Neckam and his contemporaries to craft their own figurative expositions, especially on animals. Gerald of Wales, for instance, crafted his own figurative expositions on eagles and eaglets when composing *De principis instructione* and was transparent about his invention of animal expositions throughout his *Topographia Hibernica*.[121] For another, a reading that sees the historical narrative as a basis for uncovering an array of potential secondary intentions gives Neckam's horse greater meaning. The first horse of Neckam's *De visu* resides in a dark room, where the light of the moon (concentrated through a small aperture) causes injury. Understood historically, the literal language is zoological, in that the nature and effect of light on an animal corresponds with the previous discussion on the way different animals emit visual rays when sensing.[122] However, a striking feature of this figurative exposition is that it is optical as well as moral. Neckam demonstrates some familiarity with Euclid's geometry throughout his works, and so it is fitting that the first scenario of the horse in a dark room figuratively indicates the idea of the *camera obscura*.[123] In recreating this visual example, however, Neckam transforms the optical concept into a moral

[120] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238. 'Serpit virus latitantium detractationum, et eo magis nocivae sunt, quod temeraria assertio, dum clandestina est, argui falsitatis non metuit. Repelluntur convitia publicata, et confunditur iniquitas sibi mentiens.'
[121] L. Slater, *Art and Political Thought in Medieval England c.1150-1350,* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2018), 1-4; Hunt, *Schools and the Cloister*, 73. Slater and Hunt reveal how invented Gerald's animal expositions.
[122] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, pp.235-7.
[123] Alexander Neckam, *Sacerdos ad altare*, Cap. xiii, 'de geometria', p.198. Neckam demonstrates a familiarity with Euclid on geometry. Also, Hugh confirms Euclid's reputation in his text: Didas. Lib. iii, Cap. ii, p.49. 'Geometry, they say, was first discovered in Egypt: its author among the Greeks was the great Euclid'; 'geometriam apud Egyptum primum dicunt esse repertam, cuius auctor apud Grecos optimus Euclides fuit.'

one, where the *camera obscura* describes the clandestine environment of heretical activity, as a unique figurative exposition.

The irony of Grant and Lindberg's omission is that, in their quest to find meaning in the rigidly-literal, coupled with their disinterest in the moral significance of Neckam's secondary figurative intentions, they do not see the deeper optical significance of Neckam's zoological *camera obscura*. Neither do they see that Neckam composed each of his visual examples with divine Wisdom in mind, where truth lay beyond the capabilities of physical sight.

Conclusion: Seeing Neckam through an Anselmian Lens

In conclusion, the historiographical conception of Neckam as a 'dual personality', caught between the worlds of natural science and biblical commentary, ought now to be redundant. It is clear from his Cirencester period of writing, the visual examples he employed in his figurative expositions, his explicit methodology, and his creative use of Augustine and Victorine learning, that Neckam's *De visu* was, in fact, part of a broader effort in biblical exegesis. His use of Anselm and Augustine in the composition of such figurative expositions enables one to consider Neckam as part of an inherited tradition of exegetical practice that utilised the tools of secular learning. This lends itself to a fuller consideration of the influence of Hugh of St Victor's rules for scriptural interpretation in Neckam's own expositions, and provides an exegetical basis for Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, especially in book two, where secondary figurative intentions prevail over primary/literal observations. Neckam's primary concern, therefore, is found in the deeper sense of his moralisations, which sought to expose the reality of divine Wisdom.

In making this argument, this chapter makes a small contribution to a number of already resistant voices to Neckam the 'scientist', found in the writings of McDonough, Bestul,

Dunning, and Smalley.[124] It is most intriguing, though entirely unsurprising, that Smalley had indicated the need to situate Neckam within the Victorine tradition as early as 1960.[125] In a letter to Hunt, recommending revisions to his pre-published manuscript, she stated:

> I only suggest preparing or adding an account of A.N.'s significance. He strikes me now… as marking the very end of the Victorine tradition with the whole trunk bursting open and scattering its contents over the railway station. Does any scholar of the turn of the century sum up so many divergent trends as A.N.? He's both secular scholar and monk or rather canon… He seems to have been the last of the great non-specialists except for Grosseteste.[126]

In this, Neckam perfectly embodies the Augustinian Canon Regular who navigated a 'middle way' (to borrow Wei's terminology),[127] and utilised the tools of secular learning to expose the hidden meaning of Truth and Wisdom, invisible to physical sight. It is only fitting, therefore, that a fourteenth-century preacher's handbook would conceive of Neckam in a manner he, himself, would have recognised. Produced anonymously c.1300, the Franciscan *Fasciculus morum* presents Neckam's entire *De naturis rerum,* especially his zoological expositions, as a commentary on vice alongside the works of Augustine, Jerome, Gregory, and Isidore.[128] Here, there is no such evidence of interpretative difficulties, or seeming conflict between natural science and biblical commentary (more specifically, one connected to vanity or vice). Rather, Neckam's reception in the fourteenth century would view the *De naturis rerum* as an extended exercise in biblical exegesis; the figurative expositions of which intentionally entailed a deeper sense of seeing, even a seeing beyond seeing.

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[124] These authors have been cited throughout.
[125] A. Dunning, 'Beryl Smalley to R. W. Hunt on the Significance of Alexander Neckam', *Notes and Queries,* 64 (2017), 176-8. The discovery of this letter was made by Dunning, and appears both in his doctoral thesis and in a short, but valuable, publication on Neckam's significance in the twelfth century.
[126] Dunning, 'Smalley to Hunt', 177.
[127] I. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100-1330,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 78-86.
[128] *Fasciculus morum*, (ed.) S. Wenzel, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), pars vii, 'de luxuria', 658-9; 678-9.

Chapter Two

Fruit-Trees and Charlemagne: The Unobvious Authority of Scripture and the Fathers in the High Middle Ages

The interpretation of Alexander Neckam's optical interests in *De visu* as a form of figurative exposition, rather than a proto-effort in the history of science, prompts questions about how medieval authors thought and wrote about what might best be termed 'natural phenomena'. To provide adequate context to the thought of Neckam and his high-medieval contemporaries, as well as a heuristic model through which 'zoological' writings can be viewed in subsequent analysis, the intention of the current discussion is to trace the historical development of a culture of scriptural authority that gave precedence to the writings of Latin patristic authors in high-medieval treatises.

The following discussion is organised in a threefold manner: first, the early-medieval origins of the authority of scripture ('auctoritas scripturae') and the authority of the fathers ('auctoritas patrum'); second, the reception of Augustinian exegetical practice in prominent high-medieval writings, especially those not obviously (or traditionally conceived as) exegetical in nature. A key example here is the scriptural language of Eden, featuring fruit-trees and thorn-bushes, especially with respect to Augustine's *Confessiones*. This opens up figurative interpretations of autobiographical texts in the high-middle ages, revealing their exegetical nature in the way they, too, employ figurative language and appeal to authority. Third, in light of 'auctoritas scripturae' and 'auctoritas patrum', the horse of Neckam's *De visu* can be revisited as a moral exposition on the avoidance of novelty, suggesting alternative ways in which to view and interpret moralised 'zoology' in the high-middle ages (the subject of the subsequent chapters of the thesis), as one which is ever shaped and informed by the authority of patristic exegetical practice.

Why Augustine? Uniformity and Authority Since Charlemagne

The programme of learning originally put forward in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, notably book two, identifies the secular as a useful tool for biblical exposition.[1] On a basic level, this notion that the secular was useful in the broader service of biblical exegesis was to be realised across the lives and legacies of several succeeding early-medieval generations of monks, clerics, and schoolmen who each undertook studies in the 'artes liberales' as well as the 'sacra pagina'.[2] As already indicated in the previous chapter, Augustinian Canon Regulars, especially those schooled in the Victorine tradition, were to become model examples of Augustine's exegetical programme in practice,[3] and have subsequently been depicted (in recent historiography) as a high-medieval hybrid between monk and schoolman in their application of secular philosophies to sacred learning.[4]

How Augustine's works came to such a prominent place in high-medieval thought and learning remains a good question. In many ways, the medieval implementation of Augustine's programme of learning was initiated by Charlemagne in what has since been termed the Carolingian renaissance of the late-eighth and early-ninth centuries.[5] Broadly conceived, the Carolingian renaissance sought to combat general clerical ignorance by emphasising the importance of philosophical and patristic writings alongside biblical study.[6] Despite Charlemagne's political intentions, it is notable that the period of religious reform prioritised a

[1] B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages,* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1964), 45.
[2] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 45.
[3] See the section in chapter one of the thesis: 'A Tropological Turn: Augustine, Neckam, and the Victorines'.
[4] I. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100-1330*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 72-86. On Augustine's massive reception in the High Middle Ages, see: K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). This work witnesses Augustine's abiding influence on monks, scholars, and medicants across the Middle Ages (from Alcuin and Bede, through to Meister Eckhart and beyond), establishing Augustine as a common authority despite institutional or political differences.
[5] B. Zaczynski, 'The Authority of the Fathers: Patristic Texts in Early Medieval Libraries and Scriptoria', *Journal of Medieval Latin,* 16, (2006), 5. Zaczynski demonstrates how Charlemagne loved to read the works of Augustine, particularly the *De civitate Dei*.
[6] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 37. See also, C. Chazelle & B. Van Name Edwards, (eds.), *The Study of the Bible in the Carolingian Era* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003); M. Gorman, 'The Commentary on Genesis of Claudius of Turin and Biblical Studies under Louis the Pious', *Speculum*, 72 (1997): 279–329.

more standardised liturgy and biblical text. The latter heavily based upon the Vulgate of St Jerome, would become a uniform authority across the middle ages.[7] Most significantly, the process of developing such a biblical text attracted much intellectual interest in the sacred page and its Latin patristic commentators, itself provoking an extensive effort in manuscript production through the copying programme of Alcuin of York.[8]

At least historically, the Carolingian renaissance brought about a uniformity within the Roman church in relation to two things: 'auctoritas scripturae', and 'auctoritas patrum' ('the authority of scripture', and 'the authority of the fathers'), both of which were essential elements of what has been termed a 'culture of authority' in western Christendom.[9] Whilst Charlemagne's empire was short-lived politically, Carolingian learning was absorbed completely into the surrounding Latin intellectual culture.[10] Such a strong emphasis on studying antiquity placed Latin language and learning at the centre of intellectual and ecclesiastical life. This brought the trivium and the quadrivium into Cathedral schools across Europe, equipped the Christian church with a unified language and an edition of the Latin bible, and placed great emphasis on the writings of the Church Fathers, especially those who had produced Latin biblical commentaries.[11]

Further, the model of Carolingian learning described can be gleaned from Alcuin's career and writings throughout the period. For one thing, Alcuin's own renown for learning, and his vast knowledge of patristic authorities, saw him appointed as a trusted adviser to

[7] C. de Hamel, *The Book. A History of the Bible,* (London: Phaidon Press, 2001), 34-8.
[8] de Hamel, *The Book. A History of the* Bible, 36-7.
[9] J. Ziolkowski, 'Cultures of Authority in the Long Twelfth Century', *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology,* 108:4, (2009), 428 & 435.
[10] R. van Nieuwenhove, *An Introduction to Medieval Theology,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 57-8.
[11] T. Janson, *A Natural History of Latin,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 95-6; J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine Vol. 3, The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300),* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 15. Pelikan observes: 'In view of the widespread incapacity of the East and West to read each other's languages and to understand each other's writers, it is not surprising to find that the Latin fathers predominated in the Western compilations.'

Charlemagne with whom his educational ideals were aligned.[12] For another, Alcuin's educational ideals matched those of Charlemagne to such an extent that the scholars Mabillon, Mullinger, and West, have speculated that Charlemagne's *Epistola de litteras colendis* may, in fact, have been authored by Alcuin himself.[13] Importantly, in both the thought of Alcuin and Charlemagne, a proper use of the 'artes liberales' as propagated by Augustine and other accepted authorities, was integral to a study of scripture, and, accordingly, an important part of the intellectual ascent to divine Wisdom.[14]

Alcuin's works, particularly his *Versus de patribus, regibus, et sanctis Euboricensis ecclesiae*, offer a model of Carolingian learning. Here, the authority of the arts and the fathers in the study of scripture is well attested. For instance, at a crucial point in his work, Alcuin alludes to the existence of an eighth-century library that housed 'under one roof' authoritative collections transmitted into Latin, and which poetically brought the works of philosophy into dialogue with the works of scripture.

> There you will find the legacy of the ancient fathers: all the Romans possessed in the Latin world, whatever famous Greece has transmitted to the Latins, draughts of the Hebrew race from Heaven's showers, and what Africa has spread abroad in streams of light.[15]

In speaking of diverse works housed in one space, Alcuin here divides the eighth-century Latin library collections into four categories. The first is 'all the Roman possessed in

[12] M. Garrison, 'The Library of Alcuin's York' in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain,* (ed.) R. Gameson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 634; L. Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne: Studies in Carolingian History and Literature*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1959), 210-1.
[13] This argument is made by Wallach: 'The similarities in educational ideals and in style between the mandate and the writings of Alcuin, Charlemagne's close associate in educational matters, induced the great French diplomatist Jean Mabillon to suggest that Alcuin may have been the author of the letter. This assumption has been repeated frequently, but nobody has proved it.' Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, 199-200.
[14] Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, 210-1.
[15] VDP, Lin. 1536, pp.122-3. 'Illic invenies veterum vestigia patrum: quicquid habet per se Latio Romanus in orbe, Graecia vel quicquid transmisit clara Latinis, Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit imbre superno, Africa lucifluo vel quicquid lumine sparsit'.

the Latin world', that is to say, secular learning produced in the Latin language.[16] The second is the transmission of 'whatever famous Greece has transmitted to the Latins', which includes the writings of Plato, Aristotle, and other Greek philosophers.[17] The third, the 'draughts of the Hebrew race from Heaven's showers', is a poetic expression for the biblical books of St Jerome's Latin Vulgate.[18] And it can be convincingly argued that the fourth, 'what Africa has spread abroad',[19] refers to the scriptural commentaries of the north African bishop, St Augustine of Hippo, which themselves drew upon a range of the ancient and contemporary sources made available in Latin through grammarians of late antiquity, such as Marius Victorinus (an authority explicitly named by both Augustine and Alcuin).[20]

In addition to the above, and following a categorical discussion of diverse authoritative works, Alcuin goes on to list authors who correspond with the four categories. Whilst his list is extensive, for context it is worth reproducing a portion of the many authorities Alcuin cites, in connection to the development of the Carolingian programme of learning. For it is here that Alcuin draws attention to:

> …the perceptions of father Jerome and of Hilary, of bishop Ambrose, Augustine, and of saint Athanasius, the writings of astute Orosius, the teachings of Gregory the Great and of pope Leo, the glowing words of Basil and Fulgentius, of Cassiodorus and John Chrysostom; the teaching of

[16] VDP, Lin. 1537, pp.122-3. 'quicquid habet per se Latio Romanus in orbe'.
[17] VDP, Lin. 1538, pp.122-3. 'Graecia vel quicquid transmisit clara Latinis'.
[18] VDP, Lin. 1539, pp.122-3. 'Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit imbre superno'. Jerome is specifically mentioned as a source here. Further, in Augustine's *De doctrina,* the 'Hebrew race' is mentioned in relation to possible connections between Jewish monotheism and the Greek philosophers, which Augustine's aims to debunk. Augustine makes similar reference through the phrase 'gentis Hebraeorum'. See: DDC, Lib. ii, 28(43), pp.106-7.
[19] VDP, Lin. 1540, pp.122-3. 'Africa lucifluo vel quicquid lumine sparsit'. Following this, Augustine is specifically mentioned as a source, see note below.
[20] VDP, Lin. 1542; 1548, pp. 122-3; 124-5. Alcuin specifically refers to Augustine and Victorinus.
Augustine mentions Victorinus by name in both book eight of the *Confessiones* and in question 46 of his *De diuersis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*. Given Augustine's mention of Aristotle's *Categories* in book four (Conf. Lib. iv, 16(28), pp.176-7), and the fact that Victorinus – a Neoplatonist – had translated them into Latin, perhaps Victorinus is mentioned in relation to where Augustine says, in the previous book of his *Confessiones,* 'I had read the books of the Neoplatonists', 'lectis platonicorum illis libris'. See: Conf. Lib. viii, 2(3-4), 360-3; DDQ, Qu. xlvi, Lin. i.

> Aldhelm and of Bede the master, the writings of Victorinus and Boethius, and the ancient historians Pompey and Pliny, of keen-minded Aristotle and of Cicero the great rhetorician; all the poetry of Sedulius and Juvencus, of Alcimus Avitus and Prudentius, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator, the works of Fortunatus and Lactantius, the authoritative writings of Virgil, Statius, and Lucan; and the masters of the grammatical art; the works of Probus and Focas, Donatus and Priscian, Servius, Eutyches, Pompeius and Cominianus. There, reader, you will find many others, teachers outstanding for their learning, art, and style, who wrote many volumes with clear meaning. But to include all their names in this poem would take longer than poetic usage demands.[21]

The list of authors Alcuin here provides is extensive. But naturally, this demonstrates the interconnectedness of the four categories of collections he outlines, intermingling the secular works of Pliny, Aristotle, and Cicero with the exegetical contributions of Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory the Great, Basil, and Bede. To this end, within the works of biblical exegetes such as Ambrose, Augustine, Gregory, Basil, and Bede, the secular learning of Greece and Rome, that is to say the 'artes liberales' spoken of in Charlemagne's *Epistola de litteras colendis*, is incorporated into a Latin programme of learning and study, for the benefit of the church.[22] In other words, Alcuin here gathers a host of diverse authorities under one roof, in

[21] VDP, Lin. 1541-1562, pp.122-7. '…quod pater Hieronymus, quod sensit Hilarius atque Ambrosius praesul, simul Augustinus et ipse sanctus Athanasius, quod Orosius edit acutus, quicquid Gregorius summus docet et Leo papa, Basilius quicquid Fulgentius atque coruscant, Cassiodorus item, Chrysostomus atque Iohannes; quicquid et Althelmus docuit, quid Beda magister; quae Victorinus scripsere Boethius atque historici veteres: Pompeius, Plinius; ipse acer Aristoteles, rhetor quoque Tullius ingens; quid quoque Sedulius vel quid canit ipse Iuvencus, Alcimus et Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator, quid Fortunatus vel quid Lactantius edunt, quae Maro Virgilius, Statius, Lucanus et auctor; artis grammaticae vel quid scripsere magistri, quid Probus atque Focas, Donatus Priscianusve, Servius, Euticius, Pompeius, Cominianus. Invenies alios perplures, lector, ibidem egregios studiis, arte et sermone magistros plurima qui claro scripsere volumina sensu, nomina sed quorum praesenti in carmine scribi longius est visum quam plectri postulat usus.'

[22] VDP, Lin. 1541-1562, pp.122-7; Wallach, *Alcuin and Charlemagne*, 210-1. Alcuin's reforms are very much in line with what Hugh of St Victor will later phrase 'the authority of the universal church' ('auctoritas universalis ecclesie'). See: Didas. Lib. iv, Cap. i, Lin. 21 & 24, p.70.

order to attest to an authoritative model of learning and study comprised of both the secular and the sacred. This is not to miss the nuanced development of Alcuin's own thought in relation to particular ancient authorities, as can be seen in his changing interpretation of suffering in the Book of Job in light of contemporary events.[23] However, Alcuin's citation of these diverse authorities in one place, by presenting to his reader the language of a library, serves to identify an important model of learning, the relevance of which transcends Alcuin himself and extends across medieval Europe.

The model of learning found in Alcuin, whereby the secular may function in the service of the sacred, is undoubtedly informed by the one presented in the second and fourth books of Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*. In his fourth book, Augustine shows how the eloquence of both Roman and Christian authors means there 'is no shortage of ecclesiastical literature, even outside the canon which has been raised to its position of authority ['autoritatis'] for our benefit' – the benefit being for those who 'read and listen' in the church.[24] This is not to say that Augustine sees value in all secular literature, as shown in his discussions of particular subjects in book two of his *De doctrina christiana*.[25] Nor does it dismiss the juxtaposition between sacred writings and secular literature in the climate of Rome, Carthage, and proconsular Africa, to which he belonged.[26] But it would seem that the early- and high-medieval reception of Augustine's writings was such that his approach to Christian and classical texts was appropriated and adopted during periods of revived interest in classical philosophy and biblical exegesis.[27]

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[23] M. Garrison, 'The Bible and Alcuin's Interpretation of Current Events', *Peritia*, 16 (1992), 68-84.
[24] DDC, Lib. iv, 3(4), pp.198-200. 'Nec desunt ecclesiasticae litterae, etiam praeter canonem in auctoritatis arce salubriter colloctum…' Note, I have modified Green's translation so that 'ecclesiasticae litterae' reads: 'of ecclesiastical litterature' rather than 'of Christian literature'. Further, the Latin for those who 'read and listen' is: '…legentibus et audentibus'.
[25] DDC, Lib. ii, 17(27)-39(58), pp.88-123.
[26] P. Brown, Augustine of Hippo: A Biography, (London: Faber & Faber, 2000), 303-11.
[27] In addition to this being seen during the Carolingian renaissance (under Charlemagne's programme of learning, and Alcuin's library), an example of this kind is discussed by Smalley in relation to Hugh of St Victor. See: Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 86. Smalley writes: 'Hugh's problem, therefore, was to recall rebellious

With this in mind, Augustine's use of secular literature finds some relevance. In the second book of his *De doctrina*, for instance, Augustine speaks of sacred uses of the secular through an analogous reading of Exodus, where the people of Israel appropriating Egyptian gold represents the exegete utilising secular philosophical learning.[28] With explicit reference to Platonist philosophers, Augustine writes:

> Any statements by those who are called philosophers, especially the Platonists, which happen to be true and consistent with our faith should not cause alarm, but be claimed for our own use, as it were from owners who have no right to them. Like the treasures of the ancient Egyptians, who possessed not only idols and heavy burdens, which the people of Israel hated and shunned, but also vessels and ornaments of silver and gold… similarly all the branches of pagan learning contain not only false and superstitious fantasies and burdensome studies that involve unnecessary effort, which each one of us must loathe and avoid as under Christ's guidance we abandon the company of pagans, but also studies for liberated minds which are more appropriate to the service of the truth, and some very useful moral instruction, as well as the various truths of monotheism to be found in their writers.[29]

Setting Augustine's appropriation of non-Christian learning against the sources and categories of Alcuin's library shows a continuity of approach in the medieval exegetical tradition where

learning back to the scriptural framework of the *De doctrina christiana,* adapting the teaching of Rome and Carthage to the very different climate of twelfth-century Paris.'

[28] DDC, Lib. ii, 40(60), pp.124-5.

[29] DDC, Lib. ii, 40(60), pp.124-5. 'Philosophi autem qui vocantur si qua forte vera et fidei nostrae accommodata dixerunt, maxime Platonici, non solum formidanda non sunt sed ab eis etiam tamquam ab iniustis possessoribus in usum nostrum vindicanda. Sicut enim Aegyptii non tantum idola habebant et onera gravia quae populus Israel detestaretur et fugeret sed etiam vasa atque ornamenta de auro et de argento et vestem…sic doctrinae omnes gentilium non solum simulata et superstitiosa figmenta gravesque sarcinas supervacanei laboris habent, quae unusquisque nostrum duce Christo de societate gentilium exiens debet abominari atque devitare, sed etiam liberales disciplinas usui veritatis aptiores et quaedam morum praecepta utilissima continent, deque ipso uno deo colendo nonnulla vera inveniuntur apud eos.'

'artes liberales' and 'auctoritas patrum' were effectively utilised in the service of scriptural interpretation, although with particular cultural inflection.

The case for exegetical continuity is further strengthened by the evidence of other important exegetes of the Early Middle Ages. Alongside Alcuin is Bede, whose interest in the 'artes liberales' comprised but one part of his exegetical work.[30] Bede's biblical commentaries, rather than his *Ecclesiastical History*, are the key to understanding his world-view.[31] This is also something made explicit by Bede himself in the autobiographical note he inserts at the very end of his *Ecclesiastical History* where he gives details of the ancient traditions and authorities, mentioning Augustine by name, that have informed his life's work; a work that deals extensively with allegory, tropes, and figures contained in scripture.[32] Moreover, looking at Bede's exegetical commentaries, Augustine's influence appears in various ways including Bede paraphrasing or directly citing from Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, *De doctrina christiana,* and *De civitate Dei*.[33] Alongside Gregory the Great, Augustine was the most important authority for Bede, and to this extent he presages the Carolingian reforms which placed such heavy emphasis on Latin exegetical works.[34]

Authority, Novelty, and Scripture in the High-Middle Ages

The high medieval reception of Augustine should be seen both on its own terms and those of the individual scholars who engaged with his works, and as part of a longer continuity. This is an important background for analysis of the presence of Augustine in the thought of Hugh of St Victor in particular.[35] The parallels between the rules for interpreting scripture in

[30] R. Southern, *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies,* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970), 5-6.
[31] Southern, *Medieval Humanism,* 5-6.
[32] L. Martin, (ed.), *The Venerable Bede: Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles,* (Minnesota: Cistercian Publications, 2008), xvi; HEG, Lib. v, 24.
[33] This is noted by Faith Wallis in the introduction to her recent translation of Bede's *Expositio Apocalypseos* where she also notes the work of Alan Thacker. See: F. Wallis, (tran.), Bede Commentary on Revelation, (Liverpool: University of Liverpool Press, 2013), 2.6 'Bede's Borrowings from Augustine', 32-3.
[34] Wallis, *Bede Commentary on Revelation,* 2.6 'Bede's Borrowings from Augustine' & 2.7 'Bede Reads Jerome and Gregory', 32-4.
[35] On noting the presence of Augustine in Hugh of St Victor, see: F. Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', *Augustinian Studies,* 37:2, (2006), 219-46; E. Sweeney, 'Hugh of

Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* and Hugh of St Victor's hugely influential *Didascalion*, so much so that other works composed by Hugh have been misattributed to Augustine, have already been noted.[36]

In this connection it is worth considering the lists of authorities Hugh prescribes for students of scripture in the twelfth-century schools. Such a consideration reiterates the continuity of thought received through the intellectual reforms of Alcuin and Bede. For instance, in book four of his *Didascalicon,* Hugh lays out a list of authors who claim an important place in the history of Christian exegesis naming (among others) Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Athanasius, Gregory, and Bede.[37] Of these, however, Hugh places special emphasis on Augustine, asserting that he alone has surpassed the learning of all others.[38] Not only is Augustine elevated in Hugh's list of exegetical authorities, but the authorities he names are strikingly comparable to those identified by Alcuin and Bede.[39] What is more, Hugh's mention of Isidore, Gregory, and Bede in his own treatise on scripture establishes exegetical continuity through to the twelfth century schools, where virtually all exegesis was composed and circulated in Latin, and where various authors paid homage to Augustine.[40] It is Hugh's *Didascalicon*, therefore, that stands out amongst high-medieval exegetical treatises in that its style and approach to scriptural interpretation draw faithfully, yet creatively, on Augustine's *De doctrina*, and establish a Latin exegetical method for future generations.[41]

St. Victor: The Augustinian Tradition of Sacred and Secular Reading Revised', in *Reading and Wisdom: The De Doctrina Christiana of Augustine in the Middle Ages*, ed. E. D. English (Notre Dame, 1995), 61–83; M. Gibson, 'The De Doctrina Christiana in the School of St. Victor', in *Reading and Wisdom*, 41–47; G. Zinn, 'The Influence of Augustine's De Doctrina Christiana upon the Writings of Hugh of St. Victor', in *Reading and Wisdom*, 48–60.

[36] This is discussed in the section of chapter five of the thesis: 'Sacrament, Sound, and Scripture: Augustine and Hugh of St Victor'. See also: PL 177.563D–565A; 40.846–48; H. Feiss, et al. (eds.), *On Love: A Selection of Works of Hugh, Adam, Achard, Richard, and Godfrey or St Victor,* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011), 178.

[37] Didas. Lib. iv, Cap. xiv, p.115.

[38] Didas. Lib. iv, Cap. xiv, p.115-6.

[39] Compare with the lists of Alcuin and Bede mentioned earlier in the chapter.

[40] K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (eds.), *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013). Several examples can be found across this work.

[41] Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', 219-46.

In book four of his *Didascalicon,* Hugh employs the term 'auctoritas' a number of times in relation to scripture, and uses the concept of the 'authority of the universal church' ('auctoritas universalis ecclesie') in relation to both scripture and the fathers of the church.[42] Here, such a special emphasis was placed on 'the writings of the holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church: Jerome, Augustine, Gregory, Ambrose, Isidore, Origen, Bede', and many other orthodox authors, that Hugh rather unusually groups these authors as part of New Testament scripture, stating: 'the New [Testament] contains the Gospel, the Apostles, and the Fathers.'[43] Not only does Hugh's assertion confirm the success of the Carolingian reforms in relation to standardising the scriptural canon and its (mostly Latin) commentators, but it further attests to a culture of authority that was to dominate the way in which medieval exegetes thought about, and composed, their works – even those not obviously exegetical in nature.

As a term, 'auctoritas' has received much attention in medieval scholarship. In the works of Peters and Ziolkowski especially, it encapsulates an idea that underpins the thought and writings of high-medieval exegetes. According to Peters, 'auctoritas' could mean the difference between an author being considered orthodox or heterodox, as the 'distinction between orthodoxy and heterodoxy' across the intellectual writings of high-middle ages, is found in a respective author's use of 'authority' ('auctoritas').[44] In the work of Ziolkowski, a similar conceptualisation of 'auctoritas' is found, in that:

> …a constituent feature of medieval civilization seems to have been recourse to *auctoritas*. Indeed it is entirely reasonable to describe medieval culture as being a "culture of authority"… That culture rested upon texts, first

[42] Didas. Lib. iv, Cap. i, Lin. 21 & 24, p.70. Hugh uses the phrase 'auctoritas universalis ecclesie' twice in this part of his treatise.
[43] On this point in Taylor's translation of the *Didascalicon,* he refers the reader to the work of Ludwig Ott who too notes Hugh's originality in this regard. See: Taylor, *Didascalion of Hugh of St Victor,* 'Notes to Book Four', 217.
[44] E. Peters, 'Transgressing the Limits set by the Fathers: Authority and Impious Exegesis in Medieval Thought', in *Christendom and its Discontents: Exclusion, Persecution, and Rebellion, 1000-1500,* (eds.) S. Waugh & P. Diehl, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 338-62.

and foremost Scripture and liturgy but also canonical texts drawn from both ancient and medieval literature.[45]

In a related vein Smalley comments on the complexity of the 'new' ('novum').[46] Although the meaning of 'novum' shifts across time, and according to context, Smalley demonstrates how, to medieval theologians at least, the term was treated with caution, lest a high-medieval author be found to have breached the established authority of the fathers.[47] Certainly, such a response to the 'new' was enough to discourage readings of Aristotle's natural philosophy by papal decree in the schools and, later, the University of Paris, as these were writings that presented a 'new' way of conceptualising the created world compared to that contained in scripture, and documented in hexameronic literature.[48] The dominance of these attitudes to thought and learning in the high-middle ages indicates the centrality of 'auctoritas scripturae' and 'auctoritas patrum' to works composed by medieval exegetes, even and especially works that transcend the strictly exegetical.

Any discussion on scripture and authority in the High Middle Ages must acknowledge the existence of the medieval *Glossa ordinaria*. As an authoritative compilation of biblical texts alongside commentaries, the medieval gloss emerged as a standard aid for biblical study, comprising several volumes and authored by numerous editors. To this end, book four in Hugh's *Didascalicon* becomes an important insight into the nature of this tradition, in that it lays out the accepted patristic authorities, and defines the scriptural canon, for students entering the field. Whilst the medieval gloss would develop considerably under Peter Lombard in the

[45] Ziolkowski, 'Cultures of Authority', 423.
[46] B. Smalley, *Studies in Medieval Thought and Learning: From Abelard to Wycliff,* (London: The Hambledon Press, 1981), see esp. 'Ecclesiastical Attitudes to Novelty c.1100-c.1250', 97-115
[47] Smalley, 'Ecclesiastical Attitudes to Novelty', 110.
[48] This consideration features in chapter three of the thesis, in relation to a theological taxonomy of fish connected to a scriptural understanding of the created world. This is located in Abelard's *Hexameron* which refers to Adam naming creatures according to their association with the elements of water, air, and land, as the theological basis for conceptualising the created world. See: Hex. PA, Expos. 474-9, pp.116-7. On the banning of the reading of Aristotle's natural philosophy in public, see: *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, I, 70-79 in L. Thorndyke, (tran.), *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975), 26-30.

latter parts of the twelfth century, scholastic figures such as Anselm of Laon and Gilbert of Poitiers would prove central to its development in the Parisian schools of the early-twelfth century, bringing the authorised scriptural canon and the Latin fathers into the very heart of theological orthodoxy for scholastic, as well as monastic, readers and listeners.[49] The process of 'integration', to borrow Robertson's terminology, whereby a standardised and authoritative tradition of reading and interpreting scripture made its way into the scholastic landscape of the high-middle ages can only be gleaned from exploring the works of its most prominent thinkers. However, the fact that Hugh of St Victor and John of Salisbury would both go on to comment on the institutional identities of high-medieval exegetes, as well as on their philosophical persuasions, indicates both the universal nature of scriptural authority, and its centrality to theological outputs.[50]

A close reading of Peter Abelard's encounter with Anselm of Laon as found in the *Historia calamitatum* shows how closely related was the development of the twelfth-century gloss to the reception of Carolingian exegesis. Throughout the encounter, the standardised exegetical practice of the Laon-Paris schools, embodied by the medieval gloss, is key to understanding Abelard's language and reasoning.[51] Since 'auctoritas' is obviously central to the medieval gloss, but not always obvious in works that are not explicitly fashioned on the rule for exegetical engagement, such a reading of Abelard provides a way of reconsidering both the nature of his autobiographical text, as well as the broader theological landscape of which he was part.

Despite Anselm of Laon's reputation, Abelard describes their first meeting as disappointing, not entirely dissimilar from Augustine's frustrations with Faustus in the

[49] D. Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading,* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), 203-12.
[50] The polemic between Abelard and Bernard, and the connected issue of political and institutional identity, is noted in the *Didascalicon* and the *Metalogicon*. See: Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris,* 77-86.
[51] C. Giraud, 'Anselm of Laon in the Twelfth-Century Schools: Between Fama and Memoria', in *The Making of Memory in the Middle Ages,* (ed.) L. Doležalová, (Leiden: Brill, 2010), 329-45.

Confessiones.[52] As Abelard alleges, Anselm had a general inability to understand and answer complex philosophical questions, leading Abelard to represent Anselm through the arboreal language of scripture, stating: 'I had come to this tree to gather fruit, but I found it was the fig tree which the Lord cursed.'[53] Further, it was this encounter, largely due to Abelard's youthful arrogance, that led Anselm to challenge Abelard to lecture on an obscure passage from Ezekiel. In turn, this initiated a rivalry between Abelard and Anselm's student, Alberic of Rheims; a rivalry which would see Abelard and Alberic meet again, years later, disputing with each other on the subject of scripture.[54]

Following his castration, Abelard describes resuming his studies not for the disorderly love ('cupiditas') of wealth or praise, but for the 'love of God' ('amor Dei').[55] And it is here that he speaks of using the Scriptures as a way of instructing others in philosophy, citing the authority of Origen for support.[56] In Abelard's words, as he resumed his studies of scripture and composed a treatise on the Trinity, his enduring infamy once again attracted the attention of his old rival, Alberic. On this occasion, and again according to Abelard's version of events, Alberic formed a Council to condemn Abelard for his treatment of Trinitarian theology, and then sometime afterwards sought Abelard out personally to challenge him on the theological suggestion that God had not begotten himself. Specifically, Alberic's issue with Abelard was that he did not rely on established authorities to support his theological positions, especially those developed from a novel reading of scripture. For clarity, Alberic's precise response to Abelard's Trinitarian position was: 'we take no account of human reason… nor of your

[52] Compare *Confessiones* with the *Historia*. HC, Par. x, pp.16-7; Conf. Lib. v, 6(10-11), pp.198-201.
[53] HC, Par. x, pp.16-7. 'Ad hanc [Arbor] itaque cum accessissem ut fructum inde colligerem, deprehendi illam esse ficulneam cui maledixit Dominus…'
[54] HC, Par. 12-3, pp.20-1; Par. 39, pp.60-1.
[55] HC, Par. 32, pp.50-1.
[56] HC, Par. 34, pp.52-3.

interpretation in such matters; we recognise only the words of authority ('auctoritatis uerba').'[57] Alberic's challenge to Abelard was to find an authority to support his theological claims.

The above discussion on Abelard, Anselm of Laon, and Alberic of Rheims becomes a valuable insight into the exegetical landscape of which they were all part. It is noteworthy that what Abelard is describing in his encounters with both Anselm of Laon, who challenges him to exposit an obscure passage in Ezekiel, and Alberic of Rheims, who challenges Abelard to provide an authority to support his theological claims, both relate to the ongoing practice of bibliomancy across the High Middle Ages.[58] Comparable to the passage in the *Confessiones,* where Augustine suggests God's voice is found within the playful children of Milan, before guiding him to the exact page in scripture that was to complete his conversion to God, it is fitting that Abelard would appeal to the authority of God through similar instances of bibliomancy, and thereby bringing Augustine, although not explicitly, into the conversation.[59]

Further, when Anselm of Laon presents the challenge to Abelard to exposit a book of scripture, he selects, as if at random, an obscure passage of the Old Testament in the hope that this would prove Abelard to be exegetically incompetent; though, in Abelard's words, the exact opposite is true.[60] The random selection of a scriptural passage also becomes a type of bibliomancy that furthers Abelard's autobiographical narrative. What is more, Abelard's later encounter with Anselm's student, Alberic of Rheims, sees Abelard drawing more obviously on the language of bibliomancy in order to defend the orthodoxy of his thought. For, when challenged to present an authority, Abelard quickly responds: 'Turn the page… and you will find the authority.'[61] Not only does Abelard's use of the imperative 'uertite' in the phrase

[57] HC, Par. 39, pp.60-1.
[58] J. Elukin, 'The Ordeal of Scripture: Functionalism and the *Sortes Biblicae* in the Middle Ages', *Exemplaria*, 5:1, (1993), 135-60.
[59] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29), pp.408-11. This famous episode is also mentioned in the opening sections of the following articles on medieval bibliomancy: Elukin, 'The Ordeal of Scripture', 135-6; L. Chardonnens, 'Mantic Alphabets in Medieval Western Manuscripts and Early Printed Books', *Modern Philology*, 110:3, (2013), 340.
[60] HC, Par. 39, pp.60-1.
[61] HC, Par. 39, pp.60-1.

'uertite… folium libri' (literally 'Turn the page!') echo Augustine's use of the imperative in the famous phrase 'Tolle lege' ('Take up and read!'),[62] but he further goes on to declare that God guided him to the exact passage he needed in order to properly respond to Alberic's challenge:

> There was a copy of the book at hand, which he had brought with him, so I looked up the passage which I knew but which he had failed to see, as if he had looked only for what would damage me. *By God's will I found what I wanted at once*: a sentence headed 'Augustine, *On the Trinity*, Book I': 'Whosoever supposes that God has the power to beget Himself is in error…'[63]

In strikingly similar fashion to Augustine's confessional episode where he finds the words of Paul, Abelard's description of finding, by God's will, the correct passage in Augustine, becomes a way of asserting his authority, both patristic and divine. In so doing, Abelard attempts, albeit with limited success, to fully entrench his autobiographical narrative into the accepted culture of authority in which he lives and operates, and in a twist of literary brilliance (that was, perhaps, lost on many of his contemporaries), suggests that Alberic is the one who is in error, in very similar fashion to his responses to Bernard for accusations of novelty.[64] This constant recourse to the 'auctoritas patrum', it would seem, was Abelard's preferred method, and is strikingly comparable to the way he cites Bede to the monks of St Denis, stating simply: 'I replied that the authority of Bede, to whose writings all the Latin churches have recourse, carried more weight with me.'[65]

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[62] On this compare: HC, Par. 39, pp.60-1; Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29), pp.408-11.
[63] HC, Par. 39, pp.60-1. 'Et erat presto liber quem secum ipse detulerat. Reuoli ad locum quem noueram, quem ipse minime compererat ut qui non nisi mihi nocitura querebat; et uolantas Dei fuit, ut cito mihi occurreret quod uolebam. Erat autem sentencia intitulata 'Augustinus, *De Trinitate* libro primo: "Qui putat eius potentie Deum ut se ipsum ipse genuerit, eo plus errat…'
[64] J. Ziolkowski, (tran.) *Letters of Peter Abelard: Beyond the Personal*, (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2008), 'Letter 10. To Bernard of Clairvaux', 75-97.
[65] HC, Par. 47, pp.74-5. '…respondi Bede auctoritatem, cuius scripta uniuerse Latinorum frequentant ecclesie, grauiorem uideri.'

Abelardi Calamitates. 'Historia' or 'Figura'?

Consideration of Abelard's encounters with Anselm, Alberic, and Bernard raises the centrality of 'auctoritas' in the intellectual landscape of the High Middle Ages, even (and perhaps especially) for those accused of novelty or innovation (or heresy), or those writing works that are not obviously exegetical in nature. To this end, the next part of the chapter seeks to tease out the scriptural language of Eden in Augustine's *Confessiones*, featuring fruit-trees and thorn-bushes, as a way of opening up figurative interpretations of autobiographical texts composed in the High Middle Ages, especially ones not obviously, or primarily, exegetical in nature. By revealing the way particular high-medieval texts employ figurative scriptural language and appeal to authority, this part of the chapter demonstrates the presence of 'auctoritas' in the thought of high-medieval authors operating out of both the schools and monasteries.

In the second paragraph of his *Historia*, Abelard speaks about the place of his birth, and his father's learning and career in relation to his own.[66] At first, Abelard's account simply appears to be documenting his adolescent life from the perspective of fully-fledged adulthood. But beneath the surface of this part of his *Historia* lies another, more significant, intention of meaning.

> I was born on the borders of lower Brittany, about eight miles, I think, east of Nantes, in a town called Le Pallet. I owe my volatile temperament to my native soil and ancestry and also my natural ability for learning letters. My father had acquired some knowledge of letters before he was a knight, and later on his passion for learning was such that he intended all his sons to have instruction in letters before they were trained to arms. His purpose was fulfilled. I was his firstborn, and being specially dear to him had the greatest

[66] HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5.

> care taken over my education. For my part, the more rapid and easy my progress in my studies, the more eagerly I applied myself, until I was so carried away by my love of letters that I renounced the glory of a soldier's life, made over my inheritance and rights of the eldest son over to my brothers, and withdrew altogether from the court of Mars in order to be brought up in the bosom of Minerva. I preferred the weapons of dialectical reasonings to all the teachings of philosophy, and armed with these I chose the conflicts of disputes instead of the trophies of war.[67]

Precisely what Abelard is doing in the opening of his *Historia* has been the subject of a number of different analyses.[68] Here, Abelard broaches the issues of learning, primogeniture, and vocation in the twelfth century, suggesting his birth and education were channelling him into the knightly tradition of his family before he forsook that tradition to pursue a scholastic career.[69] Further, by using the language of volatility, Abelard speaks to the unpredictable character of the schools of twelfth-century France, the setting of his imminent scholastic career in Paris.[70] These observations reflect the challenges of twelfth-century scholarly life and the implications for family.

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[67] HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5. 'Ego igitur oppido quodam oriundus quod in ingressu minoris Britannie constructum, ab urbe Nannetica uersus orientem octo, credo, miliariis remotum, proprio uocabulo Palatium appellatur, sicut natura terre mee uel generis animo leuis, ita et ingenio extiti ad litteratoriam disciplinam facilis. Patrem autem habebam litteris aliquantulum imbutum antequam militari cingulo insigniretur; unde postmodum tanto litteras amore complexus est, ut quoscumque filios haberet litteris antequam armis instrui disponeret. Sicque profecto actum est. Me itaque primogenitum suum quanto cariorem habebat tanto diligentius erudiri curauit. Ego uero quanto amplius et facilius in studio litterarum profeci tanto ardentius eis inhesi, et in tanto earum amore illectus sum ut militaris glorie pompam cum hereditate et prerogatiua primogenitorum meorum fratribus derelinquens, Martis curie penitus abdicarem ut Minerue gremio educarer; et quoniam dialecticarum rationum armaturam omnibus philosophie documentis pretuli, his armis alia commutaui et tropheis bellorum conflictus pretuli disputationum.'

[68] M. Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 135-8; D. Luscombe, 'Peter Abelard', *The Historical Association*, 95, (1979), 8; Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris,* 9-12; C. Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual, 1050-1200,* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 47-8.

[69] For a discussion on knightly vocation in Abelard's family, in medieval context, see: Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 136-7.

[70] Wei makes this point in his monograph, saying: 'Abelard gave up his prospects as an oldest son and the life of a knight in order to study. It is clear that he took with him the knightly taste for combat, and the martial imagery conveys the extent to which scholarly competition was a substitute for battle.' Wei's observation is very significant, but it is important to note that Abelard did not give up his knightly career *in order to study*, but

When interrogating Abelard's account more closely, however, three grammatical subtleties begin to emerge which each speak to the wider issues of scripture and authority. To explain, the first is that his birth, his very entrance into human existence, is connected to a natural 'volatile temperament'. Rooted in both Abelard's 'native soil and ancestry' as well as his 'natural ability' for learning, this 'volatile temperament' would later lead to many of his life's calamities.[71] Second, Abelard's newly-chosen scholastic career is visually contrasted with, and articulated through, the language of a knightly vocation.[72] Since Abelard applies this knightly language to the life of a secular philosopher rather than to the religious devotion of a pious monk (as Bernard of Clairvaux and his monastic contemporaries would do), this contrast becomes a novel way of articulating the division between secularity and the sacred through autobiography.[73] Third, in all this, Abelard uses the language of love. It is his father's love ('amor') for learning that was supposed to guide his sons into the knightly life, and it is Abelard's love ('amor') of letters that allures him away from it, yet both of these 'loves' are worldly distortions of the love 'amor/caritas' that ought to be directed to God.[74]

When considered together, the ideas of *nature*, *vocation*, and *love* in Abelard's *Historia* indicate a deeper layer of intention at play. For the scene Abelard presents to the reader is one of his human self, who has inherited a volatile nature, and has subsequently forsaken the vocational remedy for that natural volatility by loving something *other* than he ought.[75] In other

undertook study *in order to become a knight*. Once absorbed in studies, Abelard then renounces the knightly life to become a philosopher. See: Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris*, 11.

[71] HC, Par. ii, 2-3. 'sicut natura terre mee uel generis animo leuis, ita et ingenio extiti ad litteratoriam disciplinam facilis.'

[72] Again, see: Wei, *Intellectual Culture*, 11.

[73] On Bernard's use of knightly language in the twelfth century, see: K. Allen Smith, 'Saints in Shining Armour: Martial Asceticism and Masculine Models of Sanctity, ca. 1050-1250', *Speculum*, 83 (2008), 572-602.

[74] Luscombe's revision of Betty Radice's translation presents 'amor' as passion in relation to Abelard's father, but as 'love' in relation to Abelard himself. For consistency, I have presented both as 'love'. See: HC, Par. ii, pp.4-5. Interestingy, in Augustine's *De civitate Dei*, he speaks of love used in Latin scripture, where 'caritas' ('charity') is also expressed as 'amor'. In the context of Abelard's use of 'amor' (above), it may be significant that Augustine says 'amor' can be used both to refer to Godly love, and illicit desire, depending on context. See: DCD, Lib. viii, Cap. vii, pp.556-8.

[75] HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5.

words, instead of channelling his violent tendencies into a life of fighting, Abelard channels them into other pursuits: the dialectician being the first of many of his life's transitions. The narrative Abelard presents to the reader, therefore, is not simply a matter of autobiography, but a carefully crafted exposition that puts the alleged happenings of his early life into conversation with scripture. This is captured by the fact that Abelard, like Eve, forsakes the intended purpose of his creation and, through disordered love, pursues something *other* than he ought.[76] In fact, it is precisely this state of disorder, first found in Abelard's disordered love toward dialectic, or perhaps toward the *artes liberales* more generally, that becomes the common theme throughout his life's narrative.

As Abelard's *Historia* progresses, his volatile nature or his state of dis-relation, expressed through the language of disordered love, undergoes a series of transitions where contrasting things are loved improperly until Abelard becomes converted to God: moving from knight to scholar; from scholar to lover; and from lover to monk.[77] Abelard's transition from scholar to lover, where Abelard's militant nature was once expressed through an inordinate love for logic (the language of the knightly scholar), the reader now discovers Abelard using the language of learning to articulate his improper love for sexual relations with Heloise (the scholarly lover). This is seen in a grammatical construction where (*a*) and (*b*) are contrasted with one another, and where (*a*) = the language of study and (*b*) = the language of love. For clarity, it is worth presenting the passage according to its grammatical construction:

(a) …with our lessons providing the opportunity,

(b) we abandoned ourselves entirely to love.

(a) Her studies allowed us the private seclusion

(b) that love desired and then,

[76] Compare Genesis 3.2-7 with HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5. Also note how in his *Hexameron* Abelard comments on the purpose of human existence in terms of loving God after the sin of Eden. Hex. PA, Expos. 453, p.113.
[77] These transitions in Abelard's *Historia* are discussed in greater depth below. But see the contrasting language used in each of these transitions, seen here: HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5; Par. xviii-xix, pp.xxviii-xxix; par. xxxii, pp.50-1.

(a) with our books open before us,

(b) more words of love

(a) than of reading passed between us,

(b) and more kissing

(a) than ideas.

(b) My hands strayed oftener to her bosom

(a) than to her books;

(b) love drew our eyes to look on each other more

(a) than reading kept them on our texts.

…

(b) Now the more I was taken up with these pleasures,

(a) the less time I could give to philosophy and the less attention I paid to my school. It was utterly wearisome for me to have to go to the school or to be there, and as hard too to spend my days on study

(b) when my nights were sleepless with lovemaking.[78]

In all this, Abelard's natural volatility, that is to say his postlapsarian and dis-related human *nature* (paralleling the fallen human condition of the bible), gives rise to a disordered *love* of things; and it is this disordered love of things which is then articulated through the autobiographical language of several calamitous episodes.[79] What is more, this grammatical construction, first present in his forsaking of the knightly life, and then more pronounced in his scholastic affair with Heloise, also offers a rationale for Abelard writing specifically and at

[78] HC, Par. xviii-xix, pp.28-9. 'Sub occasione itaque discipline, amori penitus uaccabamus, et secretos recessus, quos amor optabat, studium lectionis offerebat. Apertis itaque libris, plura de amore quam lectione uerba se ingerebant, plura erant oscula quam sententie; sepius ad sinus quam ad libros reducebantur manus, crebrius oculos amor in se reflectebat quam lectio in scripturam dirigebat… Et quo me amplius hec uoluptas occupauerat, minus philosophie uaccare poteram et scolis operam dare. Tediosum mihi uehementer erat ad scolas procedere uel in eis morari; pariter et laboriosum, cum nocturnas amori uigilias et diurnas studio conseruarem.'

[79] Abelard's calamitous transitions are reminiscent of Augustine's *Confessiones*, as presented in this chapter.

considerable length about his relationship with Heloise in his *Historia,* both a student *and a lover*; but not at all about his student-teacher relationships with other prominent individuals such as Geoffrey of Auxerre and John of Salisbury.[80]

Fruit Trees and Human Nature: Turning to the Confessiones

When attempting to make sense of the way Abelard opens his *Historia*, it is noteworthy that there are striking similarities between Abelard's *Historia* and Augustine's *Confessiones*. Augustine also uses autobiographical episodes to reimagine scriptural scenes and continually explore the idea of disordered love through a series of narratives before he discovers God in a Milan garden.[81] Such episodes, worthy of comparison, include the way Augustine speaks of his 'intellectual ability' and the manner in which he, like Abelard's descriptions centuries later, 'squandered it on such absurdities.'[82] In fact, in the first book of his *Confessiones* prior to his own adolescent episodes, Augustine introduces the concept of a 'disordered mind' ('inordinatus animus') which, like Abelard's volatile nature, seems central to later entanglements with sin and vice.[83] Also worthy of comparison is the way each author boasts of how easily they grasped the *Categories* of Aristotle compared to their peers.[84] And in both the *Confessiones* and the *Historia*, Augustine and Abelard select sexual partners outside of the confines of marriage, and both refuse to enter into a proper marital arrangement once their

[80] On this, see: Geoffrey of Auxerre, *On the Apocalypse*, (tran.), J. Gibbons, (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Pulications, 2000), 'Translator's Introduction', 9; Also see: John of Salisbury, *Metalogicon*, (tran.), D. McGarry, (Mansfield Centre, CT: Martino Publishing, 2015), 'Introduction', xvi; Meta. Lib i, Cap. v, pp.21-2. In the text, John refers to Abelard as '*Peripateticus Palatinus'* meaning the 'Peripatetic from Pallet.'

[81] On the mirroring of scriptural scenes in Augustine, both in the forbidden pear orchard and in the Milan garden, see Ferrari's argument on the biblical nature of Augustine's polarised arboreal language:

[82] Conf. Lib. i, 17(27), pp.48-9. To quote the fuller passage: 'O my God, let me say something about my intellectual ability, which was your gift to me, and the way I squandered it on such absurdities', 'Sine me, deus meus, dicere aliquid et de ingenio meo, munere tuo, in quibus a me deliramentis atterebatur.'

[83] Conf., Lib. i, 12(19), pp.34-5. Augustine again returns to the disordered state of his mind in the fourth book. See: Conf. iv, 15(25), pp.172-5.

[84] Again, in the fourth book on the *Confessiones*, Augustine boasts how easily he grasped the logical rules of the *Categories* despite reading them unaided. Such confidence mirrors that of Abelard, who alludes to his own superior natural abilities when challenging William of Champeaux on the subject of Universals; and again repeats how, despite his lack of training when reading scripture, was easily able to outshine the revered Anselm of Laon. See: Conf. Lib. iv, 16(28), pp.176-7; HC, Par. iii, pp.4-7; Par. xi-xii, pp.14-21. In his later exchange with Anselm of Laon, Abelard again brings William of Champeaux's inferiority back into the conversation.

sexual relationships commence and they produce children, despite the injunctions of scripture.[85] In both, therefore, the autobiographical narrative episodes of disordered love (contained within the text) essentially form a commentary on human nature as found in scripture. With this considered, it is in Abelard that the reader potentially finds a high-medieval example of an author who models his seemingly autobiographical text on the authority ('auctoritas') of both scripture and the writings of a Latin father. The three grammatical themes of *nature*, *vocation*, and *love*, begin (though not yet fully) to speak to the place of scripture and authority in the high-middle ages, and its influence over the exemplary intellectual contributions of particular authors.

It is important to observe that, in modern historiography, parallels have already been noted between Abelard's *Historia* and other forms of religious autobiographical literature in medieval Christendom, such as Guibert of Nogent's *De uita sua*, as well as Augustine's *Confessiones*.[86] Moreover, Abelard's *Historia* is seen to form part of an autobiographical genre which would include the later *Metalogicon* of John of Salisbury and the *De rebus a se gestis* of Gerald of Wales.[87] What is quite significant about this autobiographical genre is that, in similar fashion to Abelard, twelfth-century authors of autobiography employ language that figuratively reimagines scriptural scenes. Yet, most important, all of these twelfth-century autobiographies seem connected in at least one significant way: they are all modelled on Augustine's re-working of scripture within the narrative episodes of his *Confessiones*.[88]

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[85] Conf. Lib. ii, 2(3), pp.62-3; Lib. iv, 2(2), pp.134-5; HC, Par. xvi, pp.24-7; Par. xxiii-xxx, pp.32-47. In Abelard, a sizeable section of his *Historia* (par. 23-30) is taken up with him and Heloise resisting the idea of marriage, despite Fulbert's wishes. Abelard even cites Augustine's *City of God* to justify his thinking. Whilst he eventually marries Heloise, he does so only in secret after they produce a son before sending her away to a convent so he can continue his scholastic career. Moreover, Abelard's sexual relationship with Heloise outside of marriage is remarkably comparable to Augustine's as presented in Peter Brown's work. See: P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 387-95.

[86] Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 122-4.

[87] I. Wei, 'From Twelfth-Century Schools to Thirteenth-Century Universities: The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representations of Scholars', *Speculum*, 86:1, (2011), 42-3.

[88] See: P. Turner, 'Autobiography and Autobiographical Writing', in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine,* (eds.) Pollmann & Otten.

In Augustine, the reader discovers the evocative language of childhood or adolescence contending with its own nature. Specifically in Augustine's *Confessiones*, this is witnessed in an adolescent episode of stealing forbidden pears from an orchard with a group of good-for-nothing friends.[89] Beyond the immediate details of the narrative, this episode speaks to both the Edenic language of taking forbidden fruit in Genesis, as well as to the figurative exegesis of Ambrose that sees sense beyond the letter.[90] As Augustine explicitly states in book six of his *Confessiones*, it was Ambrose who 'took away the mystical veil and opened the spiritual sense of things which seemed, according to the letter, to inculcate what was unreasonable'.[91] It would make sense, therefore, that this lifting of the 'mystical veil' would also be an interpretative device for discovering the hidden meaning within Augustine's own crafted narrative episodes, as well as those of his high-medieval counterparts composed centuries later.

Throughout the text of Augustine's *Confessiones*, the reader is confronted with a number of Augustine's undesirable adolescent episodes.[92] Of these, however, the pear theft is especially emphasised with many of the malfeasant acts Augustine commits from thereon into early adulthood (signalled by his arrival at Carthage) appearing to stem from it.[93] At first, a reading

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[89] Conf. Lib. i, 4(9)-5(10), pp.72-5. Here, Hammond translates the phrase 'nequissimi adulescentuli' as 'good-for-nothing youths'. As a sidenote, it is understandable that Alexander Neckam became quite upset with his contemporaries in the twelfth century when they would refer to him as 'nequam'. See: R. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1217)*, (ed.) M. Gibson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 17-8.

[90] On Ambrose's influence on Augustine's reading of scripture, which is also touched upon in the first and fifth chapters of the thesis, see: Conf., Lib. vi, 4(6), pp.248-9. See also the *De doctrina* where Augustine refers to 'our Ambrose', 'noster Ambrosius'. Green renders this phrase as 'my good friend Ambrose'. DDC Lib. ii, 28(43), pp.106-7.

[91] Conf. Lib. vi, 4(6), pp.248-9. Here, Augustine suggests the exegesis of Ambrose enables him to move away from a sceptical, and rather literal, reading of scripture, and instead embrace the deeper figurative meaning at hand: '…cum ea quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoto mystico velamento, spiritaliter aperitet, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamvis ea diceret quae utrum vera essent adhuc ignorarem.'

[92] The undesirable adolescent episodes Augustine writes about include his dislike for learning (especially Greek): Conf. Lib. i, 12(19)-13(20), pp.34-5; his watching of 'frivolous entertainments', stealing of food at home, and cheating with friends: Lib i, 19(30), pp.34-35; being caught up in 'thorny growths of sexual immorality': Lib. ii, 3(6), pp.66-7; the theft of the pears: Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-3; attending stage shows and theatrical productions: Lib. iii, 2(2), pp.92-3; being in love with the feelings of distress: Lib. iii, 2(4), pp.96-7; his love of rhetoric: Lib. iii, 4(7), pp.100-1; his scrutiny of Holy Scripture in comparison with the writings of Cicero: Lib. iii, 5(9), pp.102-5; and so on.

[93] The pear theft dominates the discourse in the latter-half of book two, and becomes almost a premise from which his shady sexual liaisons (that occupy a significant amount of books two & three) follow. See the prolonged discussion of the theft, particularly from: Lib. ii, 6(14) to 10(18), which discussion on sin builds up to

of the pear-theft episode reveals a few basic elements. Here the reader confronts: 1) Augustine's mention of being with 'good-for-nothing' friends, 2) the theft itself, 3) the casting of the stolen fruit to pigs, 4) his admission of having a supply of better fruit, 5) the stealing for the sake of stealing, and 6) a prolonged discussion of love and evil.[94] Whilst this offers a basic understanding of the historical episode itself according to the literal/historical sense of its words, discovering the richness of meaning Augustine intended is achieved only by stepping back from the narrative, and contemplating the theological function of his selected language.

Given the extensive modern reception of Augustine's *Confessiones* amongst historians and theologians, numerous studies have appeared on the pear-theft episode over the past 50-years.[95] A study by Ferrari from this tradition emphasises the need to see beyond the obvious literal details Augustine provides in order to conceptualise its figurative function and notes striking

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Augustine's discourse on sexuality at the beginning of book three. See also how Augustine describes his illicit love for things in terms of feeding on them, again returning to the imagery of stealing edible food: Lib. iii, 6(10), pp.106-7.

[94] On these aspects of Augustine's pear theft, see book ii of the Confessiones, as well as the discussion below. Further, as indicated above, Augustine's prolonged discussion on sin follows his autobiographical episodes from book ii onwards, especially in relation to sexuality.

[95] Referring to just a few of these studies and their findings, popular interpretations can be identified, spanning: psychological analysis of wrong-doing; philological arguments for semi-Classical literary form and structure; philosophical considerations of Augustine's position on evil; rational arguments on the utility of 'the guise of the good' and 'the guise of the bad'; and parallels between the language Augustine employs and the figurative language of the Fall in the book of Genesis. For further reading on Augustine's use of arboreal language from the bible, see: W. Mann, 'The Theft of the Pears', *Apeiron*, 12:1, (1978), 51-59; L. Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft in Augustine's "Confessions", *Revue D'Etudes Augustiniennes Et Patristiques*, 16:3-4, (1970), 233-242; H. Schmid, 'The Guise of the Bad in Augustine's Pear Theft', *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 21:1, (2017), 71-89; B. Hopkins, 'St. Augustine's "Confessions": The Pear-Stealing Episode', *American Imago*, 38:1, (1981), 97-104; M. Stróżyński, 'The Fall of the Soul in Book Two of Augustine's Confessions', *Vigiliae Christianae*, 70:1, (2016), 77-100; D. Shanzer, 'Pears before swine: Augustine, Confessions 2.4.9', *Revue D'Etudes Augustiniennes Et Patristiques,* 42:1, (1996), 45-55; W. Harmless, *Augustine in his own words*, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University America Press, 2010), 7; W. Mallard, *Language and love: Introducing Augustine's religious thought through the Confessions story*, (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1994), 29-31; G. Evans, *Augustine on evil*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 3. It should be noted that Evans references Augustine's attitude to the pear theft in an introductory discussion on the nature of 'evil'. Whilst Evans does not expound on the episode further, she does demonstrate its centrality in Augustine's writings.

See specifically: Harmless, *Augustine in his own words,* 7. Harmless' text is designed to provide significant sections from Augustine's writings, each prefaced by only a very brief summary. It is perhaps significant that, given this context, Harmless summarises the pear-theft episode as Augustine's 'personal re-enacting the sin of Adam.' It also is significant that in her recent edition and translation of the *Confessiones*, Hammond cites Ferrari's article on the pear-theft episode. See: C. Hammond, *Confessions* (Loeb classical library; 26-27). (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2016), *Vol. I*, lvii.

parallels between Augustine's adolescent episode and the language of the Fall in Genesis.[96] For Ferrari, Augustine purposefully adopts the biblical language of trees and fruit to figuratively articulate his own wilful disobedience in connection with original sin.[97] According to Ferrari, the later conversion of Augustine near the fig tree indicates an 'arboreal polarisation' in the text, where trees and their fruit are contrasted with one another to convey his personal enactment of original sin (through the theft of pears), and personal redemption from sin (through conversion at the fig tree).[98] And as Ferrari demonstrates, references to fruit and trees are littered throughout the *Confessiones* which culminates in the fruit-rich language of the thirteenth and final book, attesting to a fruitful life.[99]

In many respects Augustine's figurative fruit mirrors the botanical polarisation of the New Testament, where figs and grapes are contrasted with thistles and thorns.[100] The significance of this figurative language in the New Testament is seen in its adoption of the language of the Old Testament's Garden of Eden and the Fallen World, where figs (present in the garden) stand in sharp contrast to thistles, thorns, and briars (consequentially introduced into the Fallen World as a result of Adam's sin).[101] Given this context, it is fitting that Augustine introduces his period of life dominated by sexual liaisons by figuratively using the language of thorns. This appears in book two, where Augustine describes his sixteenth year as one where the '*Thorn-bushes* of sexual immorality sprouted up higher than my head, and there was no hand to uproot them.'[102]

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[96] Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', 233-42.
[97] Ferrari notes the previous generations' reception of the episode through Eberhard Vischer, and even Bertrand Russell, before marking his departure from it. He then traces the significance of trees in the autobiography (including the Manichean significance of them, given Augustine's affiliation with them prior to his conversion), before arriving at its remarkable resemblance with Genesis. Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', Especially 237-242.
[98] Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', 238-41. Here, Ferrari retraces Courcelle's observation that Augustine's use of the phrase 'sub arbore fici' mirrors the phrase of Jesus to Nathanael in the New Testament.
[99] Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', 234-5.
[100] For comparison, see Matthew 7:16 where Jesus posits the rhetorical question: 'Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles?' See also Ferrari's discussion of fruit in the Scriptures: Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', 238-41.
[101] Compare Genesis 3.6-7 with 3.17-8.
[102] Conf. Lib. ii, 3(6), pp.66-7. '…excesserunt caput meum *vepres* libidinum, et nulla erat eradicans manus.' The translation of 'vepres' as 'thorn-bushes' is my own.

The significance of Augustine's terminology 'vepres libidinum' is found in two things. The first is that Augustine figuratively uses the biblical language of thorns to link human sexuality to human Fallenness. In this way, the 'thorns' of 'sexuality' can be read to describe the human condition, as both thorns and sexuality are inheritable features of the post-lapsarian world.[103] A second connected observation is that, by figuratively associating sexuality with the thorns, sexuality itself becomes a way of expressing the creaturely desire to love.[104] To Augustine, it is not sinful for humans to love when they are created for that purpose.[105] Rather, it is sinful to love that which is forbidden, when the object of human love ought to be God and neighbour.[106]

Within the botanical language in Augustine and the bible, it is only sinful for humans to direct their love to forbidden fruit and trees, when they ought to love and embrace sanctioned

[103] Genesis 3.18 sees the introduction of 'thorns and thistles' ('spina et tribulus') into the Fallen world. The terms used to refer to thorns and thistles are generally 'spina' and 'tribulus', which feature in Matthew 7.16 in the latter part of the Sermon on the Mount, and also in John 19.2 in the 'crown of thorns' ('coronam de spinis'). However, the contrast drawn between 'thorns and brambles' ('spinae et *vepres*') and 'the fruitful vineyard' ('super vinea fertili') in Isaiah 32.12-3, finds a biblical reference for Augustine's terminology; a reference that associates 'vepres' with the more commonly used 'spina' found elsewhere. On the connection between sexuality and the Fallen human condition, see: E. Pagels, 'Augustine on Nature and Human Nature', in *Saint Augustine the Bishop: A Book of Essays*, (eds.), F. Lemoine & C. Kleinhenz, (New York, 1994), 80-2. Specifically, this connection is seen in the way Pagels follows Augustine's thought on conception, sexual desire, the semen involved in conception, and the inheritability of original sin.

[104] The semiotic value of Augustine's sexual language is something he explicitly comments on. This is found in his *De catechizandis rudibus*, composed for catechumens at the turn of the fifth century: 'Don't we see even in shameful and degrading love affairs that those who are out to receive love in return have no concern other than to demonstrate by every proof in their power how great their love is? …There is quite obviously no stronger motive for love, either in its initial stages or in its growth, than for the person who does not yet love to discover that he is loved, and for the person who is first to love to hope that his love can be reciprocated or to have clear signs that it already is so [quodsi in ipsis flagitiosis et sordidis amoribus uidemus, nihil aliud eos agere qui amari uicissim uolunt, nisi ut documentis quibus ualent aperiant et ostendant quantum ament, eam que imaginem iustitiae praetendere affectant, ut uicem sibi reddi quodam modo flagitent ab eis animis, quos illecebrare moliuntur, ipsi que ardentius aestuant, cum iam moueri eodem igne etiam illas mentes quas appetunt sentiunt; si ergo et animus qui torpebat, cum se amari senserit excitatur, et qui iam feruebat, cum se redamari didicerit, magis accenditur: manifestum est nullam esse maiorem causam, qua uel inchoetur uel augeatur amor, quam cum amari se agnoscit qui nondum amat aut redamari se uel posse sperat, uel iam probat, qui prior amat. et si hoc etiam in turpibus amoribus, quanto purius in amicitia?]' DCR*,* Pars. iv (7). If this applies to dishonourable love affairs, it clearly applies to much greater degree in friendship. A positive reading of sexuality in Augustine's thought can also be found in the work of Hunter, who responds to the more pessimistic assumptions of Pagels. See: D. Hunter, 'Sexuality, Marriage and the Family', in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Constantine to c.600,* Vol. 2, (eds.), A. Casiday & F. Norris, (Cambridge, 2007), 596-8.

[105] See a recent article on the subject of concupiscence and the sacrament of marriage, which argues that Augustine's issue with concupiscence is that its sanctioned 'use' is often cast aside in the human 'will to power': J. Cavadini, 'Reconsidering Augustine on Marriage and Concupiscence', *Augustinian Studies,* Online First: October 11, 2017.

[106] DDC*,* Lib. i, 35(39)-36(41).

ones.[107] Likewise, Augustine's narratives containing sexual language convey the same sanctioned human capacity to love, albeit misdirected, or disordered, toward that which is forbidden rather than God; something which Abelard would both grasp and incorporate into his personal reflections centuries later.[108] In this light, both botanical and sexual language are used figuratively to mobilise one toward the love of God, summarised by Augustine at the very beginning of *Confessiones*, book two. Here he states: 'I wish to put on record the disgusting deeds in which I engaged, and the corrupting effect of sensual experience on my soul, not because I love them, but so that I may love you, my God.'[109] Put differently, the human desire to love God, is often misused and misdirected toward things it ought not to love. The evocative examples used, however illicit, become figurative expositions on what divine love truly means, and how humans ought to love God.

To return to Augustine's use of botanical language in his autobiography, it must be stressed that Augustine models his expositions on biblical examples: in using the unusual Latin term 'vepres' for the '*thorn-bush'* of sexual immorality, in contrast to the fruitful vineyard, Augustine borrows terminology from Isaiah 32.[110] In book eight of his *Confessiones*, Augustine describes his own conversion at the fig tree with the phrase 'sub arbore fici', the very same uttered by Jesus to Nathanael in the New Testament.[111] Both of these examples demonstrate

[107] Hence the sanctioned fig tree, versus the forbidden pears.
[108] It is not that Augustine rejects sexuality, but that he attributes a strong tendency for humans to love sexuality inordinately. In many respects, this point is reiterated by Rowan Williams: '[Augustine] is at least concerned to see sexual desire as problematic because it is especially liable to become a case of 'inhuman' love'. R. Williams, *On Augustine*, (London, 2016), 7-8.
[109] 'Recordari volo transactas foeditates meas et carnales corruptions animae meae, no quod eas amem, sed ut amem te, deus meus.' Conf. Lib. ii, 1(1).
[110] In the bible, the term 'vepres' is unique to Isaiah and it is likely Augustine is intentionally drawing upon this figurative language to create a larger contrast between the Fall and Redemption. See Isaiah 32.12-3, as well as the note above.
[111] Compare: Conf. Lib. viii, 12 (28), p.409; with St John 1.48. It is noteworthy that Augustine uses this phrase at least 33 times across various works. For instance, see: *Sermones ad populam*, Ser. lxix, Cap. iii, Par. iv, pp.463-4; Ser. lxxxix, Par. v, pp.39-40; Ser. cxxii (PL), Lin. viii, p.12 & 41; Ser. clxxiv, p.514; *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, Psalm xxxi, Expos. ii, Par. ix, Lin. 19, 20, 26-7, 38 & 54; Psalm xxxii, Expos. ii, Ser. ii, Par. xix, Lin. 4; Psalm xliv, Par. xx, Lin. 39, 43 & 47; *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus*, Tract. vii, Par. xx, Lin. 2, 7 & 15; Tract. vii, Par. xxi, Lin., 6; Tract. 7, par. xxii, Lin. 1, 6 & 11; *De diuersis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, Lin. i, Qu. ii, Cap. xiv, Lin. 384. The phrase also features in the medieval treatises of Bede and Gregory the Great, both of whom participate in the connected tradition of medieval exegetical practice initiated by Origen and

Augustine's consistent use of botanical language (from the bible) throughout the autobiographical episodes of his *Confessiones*. Thorns, briars, and forbidden fruit represent the illicit, carnal, and undesirable nature of Fallen humans; whereas figs and vineyards represent redemption offered by an ever-aware and omnipresent Creator. Such a reading of Augustine prompts a reconsideration of the significance of botanical language surrounding Augustine's pear-theft episode, particularly in relation to the pear and its contrasts. It further indicates the need to perceive the deeper figurative sense of the words and phrases Augustine uses to construct historical narratives, even those laden with sexual language.

Ferrari's 'arboreal polarisation' draws acute attention to Augustine's figurative use of pears and has prompted differing scholarly responses. Of these, two are especially relevant to this chapter's considerations. Courcelle, for instance, posits that unless the 'pear' can be said to be the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, then Ferrari's suggestion that Augustine is re-enacting the Fall is unconvincing.[112] Shanzer, on the other hand, constructs an impressive literary argument to demonstrate that Augustine's choice of the 'pear' reflects partly his familiarity with Horace's fable of the Calabrian host, as well as his awareness of Manichaean conceptions of 'pears' as being of little value.[113] From this, Shanzer argues that Augustine uses a combination of biblical and literary language to convey a sense of human Fallenness through a fruit thought of as 'valueless' in literary and religious culture, and (therefore) sees Augustine resisting the temptation to draw upon the obvious pun of malum and mala if he had simply used 'apples' rather than 'pears'.[114] Despite their differences, a common thread between

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championed by Ambrose and Augustine. See: Beda Venerabilis, *Homiliarum Evangelii*, Lib. ii, 1(17), pp.119-126; Gregory the Great, *Moral Reflections of the Book of Job,* Lib. xviii, 38(59), p.102: 'I saw you when you were under the fig tree'; 'cum esses sub ficu, uidi te'. See also: Ferrari, 'The Pear-Theft', 240-1. Here Ferrari notes Courcelle's observation that the phrase 'sub arbore fici' was lifted by Augustine from the New Testament.

[112] This point is made by Shanzer, who summarizes Courcelle: 'Courcelle pounced on his [Ferrari's] "arboreal polarisation", and denied its existence, unless it could be proved that the Tree of Knowledge was a pear, and that it had received exegesis as such at the hands of Christian commentators.' D. Shanzer, 'Pears before Swine: Augustine, *Confessions* 2.4.9', *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*, 42 (1996), 48.

[113] Shanzer, 'Pears before Swine', 45-55.

[114] Shanzer, 'Pears before Swine', 48.

Ferrari, Courcelle, and Shanzer is their consideration of the language of the 'pear', and how it either actually or potentially connects Augustine's theft to the figurative language of the Fall in the bible.

Whilst historiographical considerations on the 'pear' enable one to interpret Augustine's botanical language, an especially neglected aspect of the pear theft is not the 'pear' but the 'vineyard'. In fact, Augustine introduces the existence of the pear tree with specific reference to its proximity to 'our vineyard', although both Ferrari and Shanzer (the latter quoting this specific passage) concentrate exclusively on pears.[115] For clarity, it is worth quoting this part of the episode. In book two of his *Confessiones*, Augustine states: 'There was a pear tree *in the vicinity of* our vineyard, laden with fruit which had no attractive appearance or flavour.'[116] In addition to the description of the unattractive form of the pears, Augustine here states the pear tree existed 'in the vicinity of our vineyard'.[117] This establishes the place of a pear tree (which did not belong to Augustine), within a garden (which he refers to belonging to him) with the phrase 'nostrae vineae'.

The real significance of the 'vineyard' is found in two considerations. A first consideration provides a stronger parallel for Augustine's episode and the Fall of humans in Genesis. In the Genesis narrative, Adam is given the Garden of Eden to dress and keep, with the command to freely eat from every tree of paradise, except the tree of knowledge of good and evil which was located within the vicinity of the garden.[118] Likewise, in the *Confessiones*, the forbidden pear tree was in the vicinity of Augustine's own vineyard, with his later admission that 'I had plenty

[115] Ferrari introduces the subject with reference to Bertrand Russell's *A History of Western* Philosophy, and challenges Russell's literal hermeneutic of Augustine's pear theft by providing a deeper exposition into the pear and its significance. Likewise, after quoting Chadwick's translation, Shanzer's primary interest is the tree and species name (in adjectival form). In the case of Augustine, Shanzer's argument in centred on the phrase *arbor piri*. See: Ferrari, 'The Pear Theft', 233. Shanzer, 'Pears before Swine', 46-7.
[116] Conf. Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-3. 'Abor erat pirus in vicinia nostrae vineae pomis onusta nec forma nec sapore inlecebrosis.' Since the Latin employs 'in vicinia', I have altered Hammond's translation to 'in the vicinity of' rather 'near to'. This is indicated by italics.
[117] Conf. Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-3. '…in vicinia nostrae vineae'.
[118] Genesis 2.15-7.

of better fruit – [yet] I plucked these [pears] only for the sake of stealing.'[119] Both accounts, therefore, situate forbidden fruit within a garden or vineyard that belonged to Adam and Augustine respectively, amidst plenty of sanctioned fruit. Despite Courcelle's objections, Augustine's vineyard strengthens Ferrari's argument that he models his pear theft on the Fall of Adam, where both actors steal the forbidden fruit in relation to sanctioned fruit, and do so with like-natured companions.[120] Whilst Ferrari rightly looks to Augustine's conversion at the fig tree as a form of the Tree of Life, it appears that a subtle polarisation between pears and grapes is introduced much earlier.[121] This earlier polarisation between pears and the vineyard begins to indicate the idea that Augustine, and all humans, are inclined to love that which is forbidden, despite being in the reach and vicinity of that which ought to be loved.[122]

A second consideration is that, just as the 'pear tree' and its fruit adopts the language of the Fall, the idea of the 'vineyard' has its own figurative relevance. Given Augustine's constant use of biblical language, often forming part of 'his rhetorical armoury', it is probable that he intentionally placed the pear tree within 'nostrae vineae' to align his episode of theft with the mercy of God of scripture.[123] The 'vineyard' is a common allegorical feature of the New Testament, and is employed to signify both the natural world throughout the gospels, and God himself in the Johannine phrase 'Ego sum vitis vera'; a phrase which Augustine himself uses.[124]

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[119] Conf. Lib. ii, 6(12), pp.78-9. 'erat mihi enim meliorum copia, illa autem decerpsi tantum ut furarer.' This corresponds with Augustine's earlier admittance: 'For I stole what I already had in plenty, and of far better quality'; ''nam id furatus sum quod mihi abundabat et multo melius.' See: Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-3. It also parallels the Genesis account, where God commands Adam and Eve: '"Of every tree of paradise thou shalt eat, but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat…"'; '"Ex omni ligno paradisi comede, de ligno autem scientiae boni et mali ne comedas…".' Genesis 2.16-7.

[120] Conf. Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-3; with Genesis 3.6-8.

[121] The polarisation between pears and grapes (introduced in relation to each other with the phrase 'nostrae vineae') aligns with the biblical contrast between fruit freely available in the Garden of Eden, and the forbidden fruit.

[122] Conf. Lib. ii, 4(9), pp.72-5. Immediately following the recounting of the story, and initiating his long lament, Augustine speaks about the heart, mercy, and loving that which was forbidden.

[123] Hammond, *Confessiones, Vol. I*, 'Introduction', xxxv.

[124] On the phrase 'I am the true vine', see: John 15.1. This appears in Augustine's writings at least four times, twice in his *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus*, once in his *De doctrina Christiana*, and once in his *Sermones ad populum.* See: Augustinus Hipponensis, *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus*, Tract. lxxx, Par. i, Lin. 7 & 13; DDC, Lib. iv, 21(16); *Sermones ad populum*, Ser. ccxiii, Lin. 17, pp.449.

Since Augustine refers to God throughout his *Confessiones*, and indeed his wider corpus, through the superlative 'misericordissime' (meaning, 'most merciful'), it is striking that he later explains how the 'fruits of the earth' figuratively signify 'misericordia' (that is, 'mercy').[125] It is here that Augustine marks a shift away from his former Manichaean conceptions of fruit, and (by so doing) confirms the signifying character of the vineyard in relation to God.

Building upon the above observations, it is notable that Augustine goes on to state that, reflecting upon his former Manichaean beliefs in book three of his *Confessiones*, it was sinful to show mercy to fruit when fruit was given to humans to *use*:

> …in my pitiable state I believed that more mercy ought to be shown to the fruits of the earth than to the human beings for whose sake those fruits came into being.[126]

In other words, Augustine here maintains that fruits of the earth are not created to be shown mercy by humans but are to be *used* by humans. Whilst not stated explicitly here, the implication of this within Augustine's broader thought is that fruit has the potential to be used to apprehend mercy itself. Showing mercy to fruit (as the Manichaeans did), overlooked the notion that fruit, and all things in the natural world, signified the divine. In this, Augustine perceived fruit, and indeed all created things, as being potentially useful to signify the 'most merciful' God.[127]

Interpreting the botanical language of the vineyard in this way again strengthens the parallel between Augustine's pear theft and the Fall of Adam. With the taking of forbidden fruit signifying illicit, carnal, and undesirable loves, and the vineyard potentially signifying God's mercy, that which *ought* to be loved was shunned, whilst that which *ought not* to be loved was embraced. Further, this contrast between illicit love on one hand, and sanctioned

[125] Compare Conf. Lib. i, 4(4), pp.6-7; Lib. vi, 5(7), pp.250-1 & 8(13), pp.266-7; and Lib ix, 2(4), pp.4-9, with Lib. xiii, 25, pp.444-7. See also Hammond's note in *Confessiones, Vol. I*, 6.
[126] Conf. Lib. iii, 10(18), pp.124-7.
[127] Conf. Lib. xiii, 25, pp.444-7.

love on the other, is captured in Augustine's opening phrase of book three, where he describes his arrival at Carthage as a metaphorical 'melting pot of illicit passions'.[128] In the Latin, the phrase Augustine employs here is 'flagitiosorum amorum' which (despite Hammond's translation of 'amor' as passion) is better translated as 'illicit loves'.[129] Therefore, the idea that illicit love is expressed through the language of thorns and forbidden pears becomes integral to understanding the way in which Augustine crafted his autobiographical narratives.

Re-visiting Medieval Autobiography

Augustine's figurative allusions to scripture in his autobiographical *Confessiones* prompts the reader to re-evaluate how to read autobiography across the High Middle Ages, and to discover the deeper biblical sense intended by the authors. Using the themes of childhood and adolescence to evocatively convey the nature of fallen humans in the bible is present across the writings of Guibert, Abelard, and Gerald of Wales, who each seem to participate in an especially Augustinian mode of constructing autobiography. Whether directly or through the received writings of patristic and early-medieval exegetes, such narratives (like Augustine) draw parallels with the language of scripture and do so to convey a particular message to their respective readerships. However, most important in tracing the autobiographical parallels between Augustine and his twelfth-century counterparts, is that it speaks to a much larger and continued tradition of how high-medieval authors framed their writings with scripture in mind.

In Abelard, and as already noted, it appears to be his volatile nature, which he identifies in childhood, that leads to each of his calamities; mirroring post-lapsarian humans leaving Eden (for which the final remedy is Abelard's true conversion to God).[130] Again, like Augustine, this is expressed through a creative use of narrative, although Abelard trades the figurative nature

[128] Conf. Lib. iii, 1(1), pp.90-1. 'Veni Carthaginem, et circumstrepebat me undique sartago flagitiosorum amorum.'
[129] Conf. Lib. iii, 1(1), pp.90-1.
[130] HC, Par. ii, pp.2-5. It is also noteworthy that Abelard too draws upon the figurative language of Eden in his scholastic encounters, such as when he describes going to Anselm of Loan to learn, as detailed earlier in this chapter. See: HC, Par. x, pp.16-7.

of fruit and trees for the contemporaneous language of the knight, lover, and monk.[131] This is not to say that Abelard was averse to the figurative language of the fruit of Eden. As Abelard demonstrates in his *Hexameron*, combining both his own and Jewish exegetical thought, he willingly speculates the Tree of Knowledge of Genesis may in fact have been either a fig tree, or a grape vine.[132] However, Abelard's own creativity suggests that textual narratives produced across the high-middle ages (including the autobiographical), might essentially be viewed as creative innovations within a pre-established tradition of writing about the human self; ones that project moral readings of scripture into the very world medieval authors (and readers) inhabited.

Augustine's reception in twelfth-century autobiography can be further identified in a number of other prominent works. In the *De uita sua* of Guibert of Nogent, for instance, Guibert opens with a lamentation over his own wanderings since childhood, and evokes a God who, in spite of this, invites him back to biblical paths.[133] In fact, by comparing the respective opening books of both Guibert's *De uita sua* and Augustine's *Confessiones*, it is seen that both authors address God in the first person, both look to God as the only remedy for their own personal sinfulness, and both authors employ the Latin term '*confessiones*' when titling their self-dialogue with God.[134] Moreover, as noted by Evans, Guibert also follows Augustine's model of autobiography by speaking of his mother's influence on his personal religiosity.[135] And, as is clear from reading any of Guibert's exegetical treatises, he was especially keen to participate

[131] See above.
[132] Hex. PA. Expos. 399-405, pp.103-4.
[133] D.Vit., Lib. i, Cap, i, p.35. Guibert opens his autobiography by addressing God directly, in the same way that Augustine opens book one of his *Confessiones*. See: Conf. Lib. i, 1(1), pp.2-3.
[134] D.Vit., Lib. i, Cap. i, p.37. 'Quia igitur utrumque constat, ut per mei notitiam tuam petam et, fruens tua, ilico mea non caream, dignum ac singulariter salutare est, ut obscuritas rationis meae, per hujusmodi *confessiones*, crebra tui luminis inquisitione tergatur, quo stabiliter illustrata nunquam dehinceps a se nesciatur.'
[135] G. Evans, 'Guibert of Nogent and Gregory the Great on Preaching and Exegesis', *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review,* 49:4, (1985), 535.

in a tradition of exegetical practice where, in like manner to Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, the moral sense of scripture was drawn out for special emphasis.[136]

Whilst other examples from prominent medieval autobiographies can be selected,[137] in each of the above episodes the respective medieval authors employ the language of scripture in order to convey something about human *nature*. Whilst at least one modern commentator has noted the interconnectedness of this autobiographical genre of writing in the twelfth century, it is important to note that, regarding the study in question, the reception of Augustine's *Confessiones* has been somewhat overlooked.[138] Yet it is precisely the observation of Augustine's guiding influence across the high-medieval intellectual tradition that begins to look past the superficial political divides between new and emerging forms of medieval spirituality or religious identity, and instead looks to the continuity of exegetical practice. Put differently, just as Augustine transforms a modern reading of Abelard's *Historia* into a figurative retelling of human nature through the language of scripture and love, so too does this reading indicate the existence of an exegetical tradition that spans across several writing genres produced in the High Middle Ages, notwithstanding perceived or even actual political divides. It is this observation that begins to prompt the modern reader to reinterpret the scriptural language of Latin writings, exposing a deeper figurative intention of meaning at play – even beyond works more obviously exegetical in nature.

Why Abelard? Returning to Neckam's Horse

A question one may pose in response to the arguments of this chapter is why Abelard's *Historia* is considered a relevant source? First, Abelard was and should be taken as a serious exegete of the High Middle Ages, attested by his *Hexameron* and also his *Sic et non* which

[136] Evans, 'Guibert of Nogent and Gregory the Great', 534-5.
[137] In Gerald of Wales, a siege on a castle in which he lives as a child causes him to weep, and then prompts him to flee from a town protected by knights, to instead seek refuge in a church. Thus, the prophetic 'utterance of the child' brings Gerald protection, and in similar fashion to the young Jesus in the gospel of Luke, Gerald finds 'God inspiring him with the same zeal, and increasing His grace day by day'. DRSG, Lib. i, Cap. i, pp.35-6.
[138] Wei, 'The Disappearance of Biographical and Autobiographical Representations of Scholars', 42-78.

deals explicitly with the issues of scripture and authority. Second, Abelard's autobiographical text is remarkably comparable to Augustine's *Confessiones* which is unarguably shaped and informed by figurative readings of scripture embodied by Origen and Ambrose. But third, Abelard finds himself in a precarious situation within a culture of high-medieval authority having to prove, as it were, his orthodoxy in response to his detractors. And Abelard does this effectively by fashioning the very narratives structures of his autobiography after the uncontested authorities of Latin Christendom producing, in the process, a seemingly historical narrative as figurative exposition.

With this in mind, it is worth revisiting the moralisation of the horse in Alexander Neckam's *De visu*, explored in the previous chapter. At first, the relevance of this part of Neckam's treatise for better understanding high-medieval scriptural 'auctoritas' may not be clear. After all, Neckam spends much time writing about the effect of lunar rays on horse ulcers when concentrated through an aperture in a wall, compared to being exposed in an open space.[139] However, the way Neckam moralises this fabulous account of lunar rays and horse ulcers speaks to the established high-medieval culture of authority in interesting ways.

> Does it not now come to your mind, reader, that hidden detractions are sometimes more harmful than those set forward in public? The poison of hidden detractions spreads slowly and it is the more harmful because an audacious assertion, when it is clandestine, does not fear to be accused of falsehood. Published abuse is repelled, and mendacious iniquity is confounded.[140]

[139] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238.
[140] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. cliii, p.238. 'Nonne iam tibi in mentem venit, lector, quoniam nonnunquam occultae detractiones magis nocivae sunt quam in publicum prolatae? Serpit virus latitantium detractationum, et eo magis nocivae sunt, quod temeraria assertio, dum clandestina est, argui falsitatis non metuit. Repelluntur convitia publicata, et confunditur iniquitas sibi mentiens.' The translation here is my own.

Most remarkable about this moralisation is the way it reveals the function of figurative language. The explorations of an array of figurative language in both Augustine and Abelard that appear throughout this chapter, already reveal the way in which narratives constructed by medieval authors contain deeper meanings, often informed by scripture. In like manner, Neckam's more explicit moralisation reveals a deeper figurative intention at play, one that has much to do with human nature and authority, and much less to do with horses or lunar rays.

Furthermore, the moralisation Neckam provides conveys the extreme importance of writing not in secret, but openly, engaging in the established tradition of 'auctoritas scripturae' and 'auctoritas patrum', so that error may be more easily identified and repelled. In this, Neckam echoes the high-medieval scepticism with respect to the 'new' ('novum'), and directs the 'reader' ('lector') toward established ways of thinking and writing – of which even the more provocative theologians, such as Abelard, were acutely aware.[141] Not only was Neckam, like Abelard, an active participant in the developing exegetical practice of the schools, including the medieval gloss, but he too drew upon figurative language as a way of exposing new intentions of meaning to his readers and listeners.[142] In this way, the arboreal language of Augustine, the volatile and sexual language of Abelard, and the 'visual' and 'zoological' figurative expositions of Neckam, all work together to reveal something about human nature in relation to the ever-present Divine. Far from inhibiting medieval creativity, a proper understanding of the place of 'auctoritas' opens up greater interpretative possibilities for reading high-medieval texts, especially those not obviously exegetical in nature.[143]

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[141] Note how Neckam's use of the vocative here, 'lector', to stress the implicit importance of authority mirrors that of Alcuin when listing authorities. Compare this part of *De visu* with: VDP, Lin. 1558, pp.126-7.

[142] On Neckam and the medieval gloss, see: T. Hunt, *Teaching and Learning Latin in Thirteenth-Century England, Vol. 3,* (Woodbridge: D.S. Brewer, 1991), 177-259.

[143] Such an argument calls for further consideration on the medieval idea of 'auctoritas' as it developed across the twelfth century, not only regarding how it shaped high-medieval figurative expositions of an autobiographical, zoological, and didactic nature, but also how its incorporation into canon law and moral theology shaped the very fabric of medieval society and its associated culture of thought and practice. For further reading, see: J. Wei, 'Gratian and the School of Laon', *Traditio,* 64, (2009), 279-322; S. Kuttner, 'On "Auctoritas" in the Writing of Medieval Canonists: the Vocabulary of Gratian', in *La notion d'autorité au Moyen-Âge: Islam, Byzance, Occident,* (ed.) G. Makdisi, et al. (Presses Universitaires de France, 1982), 69-81;

G. Constable, et al. (eds.), *Auctoritas: Mélanges Offerts à Olivier Guillot,* (Paris: Presses De L'Université Paris-Sorbonne, 2006).

Chapter Three

Ichthyological Hermeneutics: The Oyster and the Cloister

Introductory Considerations

The focus of this chapter lies in two things: the semiotic value of fish in medieval society, according to its perceived moral nature, use, and place; and the ubiquity of fish in medieval society, according to its material nature, use, and place. Despite the seemingly bizarre and fabulous notions of fish in high-medieval chronicles, exempla, and bestiary-related literature, this chapter argues that when placed within cultural and material context, ideas about fish in medieval 'zoological' texts begin to make sense. In the discussion that follows the moral significance of fish in medieval society will be established in light of its material and cultural ubiquity. Medieval textual representations of 'fish' include questions on the inherited nature of medieval ideas about fish, and the common practices connected to these ideas, such as community, religious observance, and eating habits. The first part of this discussion reveals ways of writing about fish in the high-middle ages that are connected to, and have directly influenced, the ever-evolving medieval bestiary tradition wherein a creature, written about within the context of Creation, reflects the contemporaneous religious and cultural landscape.

Given the perpetuity of historiographical caricatures of the 'bizarre' and 'fabulous' nature of medieval zoological ideas, especially when such beliefs appear to influence habits and behaviour, arguments over cultural considerations that lie in the human world beyond exempla and bestiary texts require exploration, not least an adequate definition of 'pisces' across medieval texts. The focus here moves from the moral to the material, demonstrating that moral (or didactic) interests in fish were culturally connected to broader culinary interests, with prominent high-medieval authors actively participating across religious and culinary traditions. Since the scale and importance of the material fish trade is further attested to by medieval

perceptions of the fishmonger in society, these considerations must also extend (albeit briefly) to the iconography of the medieval 'fish-trade'. A final consideration, of the fishmonger as symbol, suggests that the material presence of 'fish' in high-medieval culture naturally connects to the moral 'semiotic' importance of fish in the medieval Christian tradition, prompting a reassessment of religious ideas and practices throughout the period.

Oysters, Cloisters, Plaice, and Place: Moralised fish in Alexander Neckam's De naturis rerum

Fish were ubiquitous in medieval culture. Viewing fish as symbol pervades high-medieval exempla and poses important questions about the moral place of fish in high-medieval culture. For instance, in the twelfth-century *De naturis rerum* of Alexander Neckam, the reader is confronted with several intriguing stories of fish embedded in religious and cultural habits and traditions, many of which have explicit moral implications.[1] One such story Neckam shares relates to a one-eyed fish and a polar bear, and has prompted modern encyclopaedic investigations into the nature of 'le poisson-cyclope'.[2] Another relates to the oyster and the crab, both considered 'fish' in medieval zoological taxonomy,[3] and offers a moralised lesson for those taking on the monastic habit.[4] Yet another relates to a story of an Emperor and a young scholar, drawing out the moral implications of courtly etiquette surrounding the consumption of 'plaice' ('pecten').[5] These exempla on the habits or characteristics of 'fish'

[1] As Hunt observes, Neckam's moralisations in his *De naturis rerum* were later included with later medieval collections of exempla. See: R. Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister: The Life and Writings of Alexander Nequam (1157-1217)*, (ed.) M. Gibson, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 121.
[2] See: O. Vassilieva-Codognet, 'Le poisson-cyclope d'Alexandre Neckam (De naturis rerum II, 24): entre vérité zoologique et réminiscences virgiliennes', *Anthropozoologica*, 53 (2018), 107-14. Vassilieva-Codognet's article is primarily interested in tracing the reception of Neckam's one-eyed fish. Despite the fact that Neckam prompted the inclusion of the polar bear in English bestiaries, it would seem that the one-eyed fish appears in neither Thomas de Cantimpré, Bartholomew Anglicus, nor the corresponding bestiary tradition.
[3] This is evident in the way Neckam refers to the crab as a fish 'piscis' in his *De naturis rerum*, and crab 'cancer' being categorised as a fish in the second-family and transitional bestiary traditions. See: DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xxxvi, p.149. For a medieval taxonomy of fish, including the crab, see: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. i – Lib. viii, Cap. ii, pp.222-262; *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-Family Bestiary,* (ed.), W. Clark, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2006), 205-20.
[4] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xxxvi, p.149. This is visited more fully below.
[5] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4.

and other creatures conform to a pre-established way of writing about animals that pervades the bestiary tradition.[6] In consequence of this and Neckam's intellectual prominence, these entries would be incorporated into the ever evolving second-family and transitional bestiary traditions, seen in the Northumberland Bestiary's rather Neckam-esque entry on the crab ('cancer'), as well as the Onocentaur and Elephant entries in the late twelfth-century Middle English Physiologus, MS Arundel 292.[7]

According to McDonough's reflections on the historiographical and manuscript tradition, the animal symbolism of the earliest eleventh-century Bestiaries is rooted in Isidore's theological treatises, as well as the Physiologus.[8] This means early bestiary texts can be seen as essentially theological in nature in at least two ways. In one way, these texts reconfigure the narrative descriptions of animals from late antiquity into an expanding Christian theological discourse.[9] In quite another, they contribute to an already existent moralising tradition found in patristic writings, including Ambrose and Augustine who each featured prominently in the writings of Isidore of Seville and Gregory the Great.[10]

As new bestiary manuscripts emerged across the High Middle Ages, with particular families of the genre represented by Aberdeen University 24, Ashmole 1511, Bodley 764, and Harley 4751 (among others), it has been argued that the bestiary tradition became increasingly 'moral and ethical'.[11] In other words, and to turn to the thought of Rowland, as the bestiary took shape in France and England across the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, especially the

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[6] B. Rowland, 'The Art of Memory and the Bestiary', in *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages: The Bestiary and its Legacy,* (eds.), M. McMunn & W. Clark, (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia Press, 2016), 12-25.
[7] NB*,* Lib. vii, Cap. xvii, pp.240-1 'Cancer'; 'The Middle English *Physiologus* and its Sources', in *The Middle English Physiologus,* (ed.) H. Wirtjes, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), lxxix-xci.
[8] C. McDonough, (ed.) *Alexander Neckam Suppletio Defectuum, Book I: Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* (Firenze: Sismel, 1999), 'Introduction', xxxv.
[9] F. McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 15-44.
[10] On this point, see: McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* 21-44; W. Clark, *The Medieval Book of Birds: Hugh of Fouilloy's Aviarium,* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992), 'Chapter One: The Author and the Text', 1-3.
[11] McDonough, *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* xxxv-xxxvi; F. McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 36.

second-family and transitional types, it increasingly incorporated the moral and ethical discussions emanating from the schools and monasteries (which themselves drew upon patristic literature including Ambrose's *Exameron* and Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*).[12] As they did so, the bestiary texts utilised animals symbolically as a didactic tool for teaching and learning.[13]

As 'a moralised account of fish, serpents, birds, and beasts' the bestiary, and its related literature, was therefore 'concerned with memory, with providing moral instruction in such a way that it could be remembered by reader or auditor'.[14] Far from being static or stagnant, the bestiary tradition evolved as a response to its intellectual surroundings. As it did so, it was closely tied to centres of moral teaching and learning associated with prominent intellectual figures including Neckam himself, as witnessed in the connections of the Morgan Bestiary with Augustinian houses, and even (though to a lesser extent) Hugh of Fouilloy's *Aviarium* with St Victor.[15] Most importantly, as the development of theological thinking in the high-medieval schools and monasteries became increasingly moral and ethical, so too a moral emphasis can be detected within associated bestiary manuscripts produced in the same centres of learning.

To visit Neckam's exposition on the oyster and the crab more closely, and in line with the above context, the reader sees that he is primarily interested in using the symbol of fish to draw out a moralisation for those cloistered religious in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.[16] In his discussion, the crab ('cancer') represents the Devil, and the oyster ('ostreum') represents those who have taken on the monastic habit and reside within the walls of the monastery. To quote Neckam in full:

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[12] The Ambrose and Augustine connection is explored in greater depth in chapter five of the thesis: 'A Sacrament of Fish and Birds'.
[13] Rowland, 'Art of Memory', 12-25.
[14] Rowland, 'Art of Memory', 12.
[15] McDonough, *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* xxxv-xxxvi; Clark, *Medieval Book of Birds,* 'The Manuscripts and Illustrations', 60-1.
[16] As the Morgan Bestiary was 'specifically composed for the brothers' enlightenment', so too was Neckam's treatise composed for the enlightenment of his fellow Canon regulars: McDonough, *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* xxxv.

> Whenever an oyster opens its shell, to bask in a gentle and pleasant breeze, the crab presents a sudden trap for him, and throws a stone between its shell, so that the intercepted fish ('piscis') cannot join its shell back together. Thus, in this manner, we see another little fish is made prey, being exposed in plain sight, when it might have otherwise escaped notice. In this way, a cloistered man within the enclosure of the [monastery] walls ('murorum')[17] will be safe. But in as far as he holds in little regard the tranquillity of his paradise – by which I speak of the cloister – he will discover many traps.[18]

Despite the somewhat humorous translation of this story into English, which is found within this chapter's titular phrase 'the oyster and the cloister', Neckam's account might prompt questions on his understanding of crabs and oysters as natural organisms. However, any supposed need to gravitate toward the issue of whether or not medieval intellectuals believed the expositions they wrote (which can be legitimately found in medieval historiography) implies a sort of scientific positivism that misrepresents the texts in which these expositions appear, and which in fact distracts from the central, and theological, issues at hand.[19]

On the historiographical tendency to interpret medieval animal expositions as a sub-set of animal studies, White presents the second-family bestiary tradition, which would include Neckam's own moralised expositions on animals, as 'a serious work of natural history… upon which our [presumably modern] knowledge of biology is founded'.[20] However, as Baxter

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[17] On the Latin term 'claustrum' referring to 'the wall surrounding the entire monastery complex' see: M. Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400-1200,* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008), 272.

[18] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xxxvi, p.149. 'Ostreum quandoque testam aperit, ut clementioris aurae deliciis glorietur. Sed cancer ei praetendit insidias repentinas, et lapidem inter testas ostrei proiicit, ne eas coniungere piscis interceptus possit. Sicque fit praeda alterius pisciculus qui in lare recluso tutius latuisset. Sic et vir claustralis intra septa murorum tutus erit, qui multas reperit insidias, dum paradisi sui, claustrum loquor, tranquillitatem parvipendit.' The translation here is my own. I must, however, thank *Sigbjørn Sønnesyn who kindly reminded me that 'loquor' is a deponent verb.*

[19] On scientific positivism, see, 'A Mode of Categorisation' in chapter four of the thesis: 'Vultures, Emperors, Traditions, and the Historiography of Science'.

[20] T. White, 'Descriptions of Animals from a Twelfth-Century Bestiary', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science,* (ed.) E. Grant, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 644.

argues in his work on the evolution of the medieval bestiary, such an approach to these texts is deeply flawed and anchronistic.[21] However medieval bestiary literature is categorised, its mode of production, intended audience, and how it incorporates moralised expositions from theological and scholastic sources, means it is anything but 'natural history'.[22] To be clear, there should be no credence given to statements found, for example, in Wright's interpretation, which set up Neckam's expositions as 'scientific facts' in order to ridicule them for being 'often extremely far-fetched, and their truth by no means very apparent.'[23] In its core aims, the current discussion seeks to further distance itself from historiographical approaches that continue to emerge in the modern scholarly discourse, such as can be found in Brewer, that posit the assumption that Gerald of Wales' figurative expositions on fish (expositions connected to Neckam's own writings) were composed, and even modified, according to their so-called 'believability'.[24] Rather than adopt these approaches, the main consideration of this chapter is realised in reflecting on how moral expositions are intimately connected to the material and cultural ubiquity of fish as they existed in medieval human society. Put differently, of fundamental importance is how the actual material presence of fish becomes absorbed into the cultural fabric of the High Middle Ages to such an extent that it holds moral and religious significance as food and symbol, but not at all as empirically 'believable' in the modern scientific sense (whatever that is taken to mean).

Revisiting the essential elements of Neckam's oyster and the crab, or rather his oyster and the cloister, suggests a number of areas for consideration. The first is that Neckam's intended audience, at least in this instance, is almost certainly of regular rather than secular

[21] R. Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users in the Middle Ages,* (Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing Limited, 1998), 183-4.
[22] Baxter's discussion, which covers the reception of the bestiary as 'natural history' in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in the works of Allen, Bond, Druce, George, and White, is extremely helpful here: Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 183-209.
[23] T. Wright, *Alexandri Neckam De naturis rerum libri duo*, (London: Longman, 1863), 'Preface', xv.
[24] K. Brewer, 'Talking Wolves, Golden Fish, and Lion Sex: The Alterations to Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica* as Evidence of Audience Disbelief?', *Parergon,* 37 (2020), 27-53. On the overlap between Gerald and Neckam see p. 48 of Brewer's article.

clergy.[25] Neckam himself had, by the time of writing his *De naturis rerum,* become an Augustinian Canon at the abbey at Cirencester, an order known for its tranquillity and security (according to Peter Comestor).[26] It is also noteworthy that during Neckam's education in Paris, he may have shared lodgings with an unnamed monk in the refuge of the property of an elderly proprietress.[27] The very idea that an oyster's shells ought to protect the creature from the claws of the crab, just as the protective walls of the monastery (or those of safe lodgings) ought to protect those cloistered religious from the snares of the adversary, suggests the exposition is intended for either the monk or canon regular seeking refuge from the world. In this, Neckam is presenting a contrast between the place of the monastery (and its architectural features) and the crab-like figure of the devil discoverable in the world beyond the monastery walls.[28]

Furthermore, by symbolically using the 'fish' to explore the relationship between place and sanctity, Neckam is speaking to high-medieval conceptions of the monastery both physically/materially and spiritually/figuratively. Comparable to allegorical understandings of the castle as a defensive structure in the twelfth century, the physical existence of monastery too formed a type of spiritual defence for its occupants.[29] As Lilley demonstrates, the idea of enclosed physical spaces offering protection from the devil, such as the 'monastic city' of Armagh, was enough to inform architectural-city design.[30] That this extended from monastery

[25] Rowland, 'Art of Memory', 12; McDonough, *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* xxxv-xxxvi.
[26] See Hunt, who quotes the Comestor directly: Hunt, *The Schools and the Cloister,* 10-1.
[27] U. Tigner Holmes, *Daily Living in the Twelfth Century: Based on the Observations of Alexander Neckam in London and Paris,* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 108-9.
[28] It is commonplace for medieval authors to use animal imagery when writing about the devil. This can be found throughout the bestiary tradition, and related literature. A classic example is found in the dragon or snake ('draco') which represents the devil in bestiary entries on the panther ('panthera') and the dove ('columba'). In commenting on the process of expounding animal expositions in scripture in his *Didascalicon*, Hugh of St Victor reveals how the lion ('leo') can represent either Christ or the devil according to context. See: NB, Lib. v. Cap. xviii, pp.96-7 'Panthera'; Lib. vi. Cap. xxxi, pp.208-9 'Columba'. See also: Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.122; Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97, Lin. 13.
[29] A. Wheatley, *The Idea of the Castle in Medieval England,* (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2004), 79-80.
[30] K. Lilley, *City and Cosmos: the Medieval World in Urban Form,* (London: Reaktion Books, 2009), 53-6.

to city, is also seen across prominent cities in England with the medieval city of Bristol being fashioned after the biblical city of Jerusalem, complete with its protective walls.[31]

Further still, the very idea of a holy city, discussed at length by William of Conches, Bernardus Silvestris, and Allan of Lille (all associated, however loosely, with Chartres) was the identification of a micro-cosmic space that reflected the wider universe, in which the human body (residing within the monastery, city, world, and cosmos) was itself expressed as a form of Tripartite moral topography.[32] Indeed, in medieval medical terms, the human body was conceived of as a microcosm of the macrocosm of Creation, and therefore was located within a topographical landscape rich with symbolism.[33] To this end, it is fitting that the Rule of St Benedict refers (though not explicitly) to the monastery as a physical space (set as it is in the topographical landscape), and calls too upon the figure of the devil as a warning to those contemplating leaving its protective walls, implying that the devil inspires a monastic brother to leave the community and place of the monastery in order to live in the outside world.[34] To Neckam and his near contemporaries, therefore, the physical and material existence of monastery walls, as well as the human-bodily existence of the monks who resided there, had a deeper spiritual and figurative significance.

Another element put forward by Neckam's exposition on the oyster and the cloister is that the symbolic nature of 'fish' provides a model for moral behaviour, to which the perceiving monk can turn for moral instruction. This sort of moralising of things, of course, was

[31] K. Lilley, 'Cities of God? Medieval Urban Forms and Their Christian Symbolism', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers,* 29 (2004), 296-313; 301.
[32] Lilley, *City and Cosmos,* 9-12. On the so-called School of Chartres see R. Southern, *Scholastic Humanism and the Unification of Europe*, I. *Foundations* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1995), 58-101, chapter 2, 'Chartrian Humanism: A Romantic Misconception'.
[33] R. Gilchrist, *Medieval Life: Archaeology and the Life Course,* (Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2012), 32.
[34] See: RB 1.3-5; 29.1-3. Given that Neckam was first entered the monastic life as a Benedictine at St Albans, before later becoming an Augustinian Canon at Cirencester, comparing his figurative exposition with Benedictine Rule becomes all the more relevant. See: Wright, *Alexandri Neckam De naturis rerum*, 'Preface', xi.

commonplace among both Neckam and his contemporaries. The idea, though, that 'fish' are somehow connected to moral behaviour becomes a prominent theme across Neckam's treatise.

In addition to Neckam's oyster and the cloister, the issue of the moral significance of fish appears in the *De naturis rerum* in the form of a human fable and draws explicitly upon human moral behaviour in relation to 'plaice' ('pecten').[35] This sort of entry is rather unusual among Neckam's moralisations in that it focuses explicitly on moral human behaviour in connection to 'fish', rather than moralised animal behaviour composed for human instruction. To summarise this part of the treatise, Neckam tells a story of a young scholar who volunteers to be punished in the place of his father when it transpires that his father had transgressed the strictest dinner etiquette when eating 'plaice' ('pecten') with an Emperor.[36]

Instead of eating only the lighter side of the fish as was custom, the father (who had become impoverished after spending all his money on educating his scholarly son) turns the served fish and instead eats the darker side of the meat, and thereby faces punishment.[37] Before enacting punishment upon the scholar, who becomes proxy for his aging father, the Emperor allows the young scholar to act as Emperor for three days and issue a number of commands. One command sees the young scholar give half of the Emperor's wealth to the poor, and another sees the young scholar summon the Emperor's daughter to his bed. When the day of punishment arrives, both the poor of the city and the daughter of the Emperor (who now hold a certain affection for the scholar) plead on the young scholar's behalf. Finding favour also with the Emperor, the story ends with the Emperor vindicating the young scholar of his father's

[35] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4.
[36] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4. In'De pectine' ('On the Plaice') Neckam gives details of the etiquette of only eating the lighter side of the fish when it is served.
[37] Intriguingly, it would seem that the darker side of 'plaice' yields a thicker fillet, and therefore the impoverished status of the father would explain his want to break custom (despite the consequences) and consume the more nutritious part of the fish.

transgression, and willingly imploring his daughter to marry the young scholar.[38] The very last sentence of this episode sees Neckam step out of the narrative, and reassure the reader that:

> Hence the custom, that the fish mentioned should hold a particular dignity developed.[39]

In the above account, to Neckam at least, the story of the 'fish' illustrates a continual significance of an otherwise arbitrary etiquette surrounding the consumption of 'plaice', and thus prompts significant questions about why 'fish' came to hold such a prominent place in the moralising tradition. Indeed, in similar fashion to Neckam's oyster and the cloister, the reader sees that medieval understandings of 'fish' begin to offer a model of moral behaviour for human living. Not only does the 'crab' suggest how the monk should live, but the 'plaice' suggests how the nobleman should eat. Both fish, and the consumption of 'fish', become an important signifier for moral human behaviour.

The figurative expositions on fish found in Neckam convey, visually and audibly, a deeper sense of place and identity, and speak to the medieval mindset quite remarkably. In addition to the work of Lilley and Gilchrist, Carruthers also writes of the importance of place for monastic identity (which would extend to medieval religious identity more broadly), and does so in terms of memory. What Carruthers proposes is that the very architecture of monasteries and their gardens orders the architecture of the human mind; architectural form and shape can visually signify spiritual realities beyond the reach of the physical human senses, conjuring within the mind's eye the mental image of the Heavenly City.[40] Most relevant in Carruthers, is the connection between architecture and liturgy; that the symbolism of

[38] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4. In the story, the young scholar is one of the father's three sons; his other two pursue secular wealth. The line referring to the Emperor rejoicing, refers to the young scholar as 'juvenis'. Quite literally, this translates as: 'The mind of the Emperor rejoiced and, happy and willingly, he implored his daughter to be married to the son'. 'Exultat animus imperatoris, et filiam libens et laetus nubere jussit juveni'.
[39] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4. It is difficult to convey the literal sense of Neckam's sentence in English. The more idiomatic translation I provide here is one I arrived at in consultation with *Sigbjørn Sønnesyn.* 'Hinc consuetudo inolevit, ut piscis dictus dignitatem singularem obtineat.'
[40] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 269-70.

architectural features 'become the markers of [a] liturgical journey'.[41] Or that the figures contained in stone, glass, wood, and ink that pervade the textual and architectural productions of religious communities across the High Middle Ages evoke mental images, and inform human praxis.

Drawing upon Augustine and John Cassian for support, Carruthers asserts the following of the figures present in, and used by, high-medieval monastic communities: 'There is nothing inherent in the physical shapes themselves – even in the cross shape – that has meaning wholly independent of the communities which produced them.'[42] In other words, Carruthers argues that when the modern reader approaches medieval religious culture, they ought to do so by observing the symbiotic relationship between its material and moral/spiritual dimensions. Such an approach leads to the recognition that only when placed in proper moral/spiritual context does the material truly take shape, and thus when read or taken out of context, the material altogether loses sense and place.

Strikingly, what Carruthers' thesis on medieval memory proposes is that the textual and architectural imageries of the High Middle Ages, relevant to both Neckam's oyster and plaice, should not be compartmentalised. To see material architecture simply as physical buildings, and not as 'the Bible or scholasticism in stone' is a historiographical tendency which Carruthers resists.[43] Further, to rigidly compartmentalise aspects of religious praxis in high-medieval monastic or scholastic communities is to view the period according to modern disciplinary distinctions. In Carruthers's hands, anachronistic assumptions cause the modern reader to miss medieval architecture as a memory tool: quite literally the recreated 'templum' of Ezekiel in medieval architectural form relocating the 'templum Dei' in humans as part of contemplative practice.[44] Similarly in Baxter, anachronistic readings of medieval animal expositions as

[41] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 266-8.
[42] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 270.
[43] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 269.
[44] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 270.

'natural history', whether in the bestiary or in its connected traditions, miss the core function of these texts for medieval human living.[45] Just as the monastic cloister and its gardens within the peristyle become a 'memory machine' in encyclopaedic arrangement, as with Richard of Fournival's imaginary book-garden;[46] and just as liturgical processions through medieval churches provide the laity with mental images;[47] so too does high-medieval figurative animal expositions, as a memory tool, contribute to an essentially theological moral-didactic culture.[48]

Looking back to Neckam's oyster and the cloister and the plaice of the Emperor, medieval uses of 'fish' appear in a new light. The figurative expositions he employs in these instances in his *De naturis rerum* becomes part of the cultural 'res' spoken of by Carruthers.[49] What Neckam introduces is the figure of both place and plaice, as a result of which the reader is directed to reflect on architectural form and eating habits as connected material and moral aspects of the same overarching religious culture. It is, as articulated in the gospel of Mark, congruent with idea of 'fishers' ('piscatores') as a multi-dimensional cultural vocation, becoming 'fishers of men' ('piscatores hominum'). In this vein, 'fish' ('pisces') too are culturally multi-dimensional as high-medieval food and symbol.[50] Not only does this prompt further exploration into high-medieval writings and practices relating to fish-habits and the fish-trade, the direction this chapter now takes, but it also sees the 'oyster and the cloister' in terms of what Carruthers describes as 'associational punning' invited by the very structures of medieval text, stone, and glass.[51] More than a humorous titular phrase, Neckam's 'oyster and the cloister' becomes woven into high-medieval culture as a signifier of human living, belief, and praxis. When seen in context, the English punning found within the loosely-translated

[45] Baxter, *Bestiaries and Their Users,* 183-4.
[46] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 272.
[47] Rowland, 'Art of Memory', 14-5.
[48] Rowland, 'Art of Memory', 16-8.
[49] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 270-1.
[50] St Mark 1.16-8.
[51] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 271.

phrase ‘oyster and the cloister’ actually participates in, and is sympathetic to, the tradition to which Neckam belonged far more than the flurry of modern scholarship that categories his moral expositions as an early form of ‘natural history’.

The Lanercost Chronicle: Moralised Consumption from Neckam to Grosseteste

The concluding line to Neckam’s story of the young scholar and the plaice is intriguing. In particular, the notion that a particular dignity surrounding fish should be held customarily is something found in other medieval exempla. In fact, Neckam’s story is comparable to a later exemplum written as a retrospective on the life of Robert Grosseteste. To be clear, Neckam and Grosseteste belong to different generations of scholars. Active in the late-twelfth century, the former represents a generation of English scholars who preceded Grosseteste, possibly taught him, and who (along with Neckam’s contemporaries such as Gerald of Wales) certainly informed the scholastic and theological landscape that Grosseteste would inhabit throughout his own career.[52] Therefore, the chronological gap between Neckam and Grosseteste becomes less significant when one considers the intellectual continuity between them. In fact, in response to Hunt’s pre-published manuscript on Neckam’s corpus, Smalley acknowledges the continuation of the Victorine tradition of teaching and learning in Neckam, presenting him as a singular example of the old methods of the early twelfth-century schools.[53] Unsurprisingly, an exception Smalley notes to this ‘Victorine’ school of teaching and learning is none other than Grosseteste.[54] This suggests the continuity between Neckam and Grosseteste, including their near-contemporary medieval reception, allows for a fruitful comparison.

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[52] For the connection between Neckam and Gerald (both scholars who may have taught Grosseteste, with Gerald writing a letter of recommendation for a young Grosseteste at Hereford) is seen in G. Gasper et al, *Knowing and Speaking: Robert Grosseteste’s De artibus liberalibus (‘On the Liberal Arts’) and De generatione sonorum (‘On the Generation of Sounds’)* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 18-21. On the connection between Gerald and Neckam as generationally representing the scholastic landscape that preceded Grosseteste, see: Gasper et al, *Knowing and Speaking*, 26-31, and R. Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 149; 217.

[53] A. Dunning, ‘Beryl Smalley to R. W. Hunt on the Significance of Alexander Neckam’, *Notes and Queries,* (2017), 176-8.

[54] Dunning, ‘Smalley to Hunt’, 177.

Further to the above, it is in a chronicle on Grosseteste that another story about fish etiquette and consumption appears. Sometime after the election of Robert Grosseteste as Bishop of Lincoln in 1235, a Franciscan chronicler made an entry in the Lanercost Chronicle reflecting back on the event.[55] Dedicated to Grosseteste as a 'praiseworthy man', the entry offers a brief account of Grosseteste's biography, focusing on the most respectable aspects of his life.[56] As McEvoy notes, the Lanercost Chronicle wonderfully preserves in text a Franciscan oral tradition surrounding Grosseteste's life and works, and offers the reader with the early reception of Grosseteste's legacy, as well as an insight into his 'human qualities'.[57] Moreover, to the chronicler, the attribute of courtliness was one of many qualities which attested to Grosseteste's suitability to the bishopric, despite his poor and lowly upbringing.[58] However, it was not enough to simply assert this was the case. Like all good medieval chronicles, its assertions were best told through a story of the person in question. In this case, the selected story casts Grosseteste as the protagonist, alongside the Earl of Gloucester, and fish.

To recount the episode, the Lanercost fish story commences with Grosseteste making preparations for the Earl of Gloucester's visit. Grosseteste's awareness of his guest's 'love and standing' was shown through the provisions he made for a lavish meal, ensuring the Earl be sat on his right as his guest of honour. It being 'dies piscum' (a fish day) pike were selected for the meal, and the servers approached the table.

> The servers, being well-disposed to their lord, put a magnificent fish of this kind in front of the bishop, but one of lesser size in front of the Earl. The prudent man looked at him [the server], with no calm countenance, 'either',

[55] LC. The chosen edition and translation of the Lanercost Chronicle is one produced by Giles Gasper and *Sigbjørn Sønnesyn.* At the time of writing, it was used with permission prior to publication. It should be noted here that the chronicle was most probably written as a 50-year retrospective, rather than a contemporaneous account. See note below.
[56] 'Vir laudabilis'.
[57] McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste*, 60-1.
[58] LC, In the chronicle, the Earl mentions Grosseteste's birth to a 'simple family' ('simplici progenie'). This passage is quoted and referenced below.

> he said, 'you must take this fish from me, or you must serve one of equal size to the Earl.' When all said that a similar fish [to the magnificent one] could not be served, he said, 'then give this whole fish as alms, and give me a smaller one, of equal size to the others'.[59]

Following Grosseteste's insistence that the Earl be served the larger fish, the chronicler tells how after the meal (in accordance with courtly manners) the Earl took Grosseteste aside and asked him how he came to possess such courtliness, given his poor upbringing: '"For we hear that you were born from a simple family, and yet you act out your deeds so gracefully that we often speak of you in the lay world."'[60]

Grosseteste's response to the Earl came in two parts. Firstly, he confirmed his lowly parentage and poor upbringing, which meant that he must have learned courtly manners from another source.[61] Secondly, and to the surprise of the Earl, Grosseteste attested that, '"I was nourished from youth among distinguished men of virtuous life and the rulers of the world."' Naturally, the Earl questioned Grosseteste further, asking what he meant. To this, Grosseteste replied:

> From the first moment that I started contemplating and reading Sacred Scripture… I have found [therein] trustworthy men who, from the beginning of the world until now, have been able to inform me by their deeds and habits as much as their words and countenances, as wise, modest, generous, chaste

[59] LC. '*Ventum est vero ut erat dies piscum, quando lupi aquatici electi apponerentur in cibum*. Dapiferi vero, domino suo propitii, egregium huius generis natatile ponunt ante episcopum, minoris quantitatis ante comitem. Quem non placido vultu intuens vir prudens, "aut," inquit, "istum piscem abstrahite mihi, aut aequalem apponite comiti." Inficiantibus omnibus quod consimilem non possunt apponere, "et hunc," inquit, "integrum eleemosiae assignate, et mihi minorem, caeteris coaequalem, date."

[60] LC. "Nam te simplici progenie accepimus ortum, et tamen ita facete facta tua exequentem ut saepe de te in seculo sermonem conseramus."

[61] LC. Grosseteste's admission of his lowly upbringing, yet his professed knowledge or courtly morals (in the Lanercost episode), is something Southern notes in his biography – though Southern misses out entirely on a discussion of fish. It would seem that other peers of Grosseteste noted his humble upbringing, such as Matthew Paris: Southern, *Robert Grosseteste,* 63n.

men and strong in all the other virtues; and I have striven to conform myself to their acts.[62]

Here, the chronicler stresses Grosseteste's dedication to a study of the bible; the source from which he learned all his moral and courtly obligations. According to the chronicler's account, the Earl was pleased by Grosseteste's response, and felt all the more affection for the wise and courtly bishop of Lincoln.

The Lanercost fish story is significant for a number of reasons. Apart from its obvious bias toward Grosseteste (which stems from its Franciscan origin, the chronicler's knowledge of Oxford, and his penchant for the north),[63] the story is positioned around fish, and human moral behaviour in relation to them. Its mention of 'dies piscum', reflects the importance of the consumption of fish in the medieval liturgical calendar.[64] The type and size of the fish, according to the status of the guests at dinner, reflects much about the place and symbolism of fish; for even in courtly circles, as confirmed in Neckam's 'plaice' story of the *De naturis rerum,* type and size directly impacted how one should act.[65]

Perhaps the most remarkable part of the chronicle, however, and the conclusion at which the entry arrives, is the question of where Grosseteste had learned such behavior. Of course, in the narrative of the chronicle Grosseteste's purported response reveals he had learned the general attribute of 'courtliness' not from the royal court, but from the bible. But it is

[62] LC. "A principo… quo facram Scripturam cepi revolvere et legere, virorum fide dignorum, qui ab inchoato mundo nunc usque, homines prudentes, modesti, liberales, et cafti, coeterifque virtutibus pollentes, in suis gestis et moribus velut in suis verbis et vultibus, me informare possent, reperi; et eorum actibus me conformare studui."

[63] A. Little, 'The Authorship of the Lanercost Chronicle', *The English Historical Review,* 31:122 (1916), 269-79. If Little's assessments are accurate, it is probable that the 1235 entry was written in the 1280s or later. This is based on the chronicler's mention of the release of Thomas Galloway in 1285 in his entry of 1233 (and no evidence of him returning to insert the additional information in the manuscript at a later date). The chronicler also demonstrates a close familiarity with the Oxford Franciscans, (where Grosseteste spent time studying and teaching up until he was elected as Bishop of Lincoln) particularly in the 1280s and 1290s; as well as the chronicler demonstrating his fondness of the North. See especially pages: 172-5. See also: McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste,* 60-1.

[64] This is noted by Freedman in his discussion of medieval fish consumption on fast days. See: P. Freedman, 'Luxury Dining in the Middle Ages', *Ex-position,* 45 (2021), 90-1.

[65] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xl, pp.152-4.

important to realise the chronicler's choice of example: the bible had taught Grosseteste the 'deeds and habits' ('gestis et moribus') of holy men in relation to fish. Here lay the connection between knowledge of the bible, and knowledge of the created world. Put differently, it is this part of the chronicle that specifically connects the biblical tradition, rich as it is with the symbolism of fish, with moral customs surrounding the existence and consumption of fish in medieval material culture as told through medieval chronicles and exempla.

Doubtless that the first chronicler of Lanercost[66] portrayed Grosseteste according to his readings of existent letters and works, and possibly even the bishop's oral legacy.[67] Although it is impossible to identify the origin of the fish story with any degree of certainty, its conclusion stresses the correlation between Grosseteste's devotion to learning of the created world (in his knowledge of fish) and human behaviour, through a study of the bible. As Southern notes, Grosseteste's legacy was such that even late depictions of his life and legacy portray him having vast knowledge and interest in the natures of animals, with Richard of Bardney stating in 1501, in rather biblical terms: 'He [Grosseteste] knew all the natures of beasts and of every reptile and every creeping thing.'[68] In this sense, it is natural that the Lanercost Chronicle should make an explicit connection between fish and the bible. Beyond the gospel account of Jesus feeding the four and five thousand with loaves and fishes,[69] the New Testament provides textual examples of Jesus converting fishers,[70] sailing on fishing boats,[71] suggesting how one

[66] Little suggests two Latin chroniclers of Lanercost, the second one taking up the duty of writing at the very end of the thirteenth century: Little, 'The Authorship of the Lanercost Chronicle', 269-79.
[67] M. T. Clancy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 40-1. Clancy argues that 'symbolic objects' were an important element of oral testimonies, citing the legend surrounding the 'Trinity College knife'. Parallels exist between this and the legend of Grosseteste and the Brazen head, which Southern mentions. This confirms that 'symbolic objects' performed a central function in legends about Grosseteste and his life. That a 'symbolic object' (whether it exists extra-textually or not) was an integral part of stories in the oral tradition, and helped perpetuate the legend, prompts questions about the Lanercost fish story. Given that a 'fish' lay at the heart of this story (as a 'symbolic object'), it is plausible that the 'fish story' circulated in oral tradition, until the chronicler wrote in down. Again, see also McEvoy on the oral tradition of the Lanercost Chronicle in relation to Grosseteste: McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste,* 60-1.
[68] This appears in: Southern, *Robert Grosseteste*, 78. 'Omnes naturas pecudum cognovit, et omnis Reptilis, et vermis omnis'.
[69] St Mark 8.1-9; St Matthew 14.13-21.
[70] St Matthew 4.18-20.
[71] St Mark 4.36-40.

ought to cast fishing nets,[72] demonstrating how his resurrected self can consume fish,[73] advising St Peter to find money inside a fish,[74] offering a spiritual reading of Jonah and the Whale,[75] and inviting his disciples to dine (on fish), with the imperative: 'Venite; prandete'.[76] Building upon Neckam's oyster and the cloister, then, one finds in the Lanercost on Grosseteste the curious importance of the fish as both food and symbol, ultimately pointing readers to the supreme symbol of the Word of God.

Reading the fish story of the Lanercost chronicle as a particular reception of Grosseteste, and doing so in light of Neckam's story of the plaice, speaks again to Carruthers's work on medieval memory. In both stories about the pike and plaice, the moralisation of fish functions as tool for human memory in that fish are not only located in the human world, but will inevitably be encountered by humans in daily living, even beyond the liturgical or ceremonial.[77] Whilst Carruthers mainly constructs her argument for monastic communities, it is striking that the religious symbolism of place and creature is ubiquitous in medieval material culture, even in the cultural 'res' of the High Middle Ages, and that, therefore, the fish stories of Neckam and Grosseteste must also transcend the perimeters of life for the cloistered religious, and extend into the very fabric of medieval society.

Consuming fish: Fast days, Beavers, and Castration

As demonstrated, that the consumption of fish held religious significance in the High Middle Ages is evident in the way both Neckam and the Lanercost on Grosseteste incorporate fish into their respective exempla. It is also fitting that, in the Lanercost account, Grosseteste is seen to connect the consumption of fish with the biblical text, in which fish are either

[72] St John 21.6-8.
[73] St Luke 24.42-3; St John 21.9-10.
[74] St Matthew 17.26.
[75] St Matthew 12.40.
[76] On the phrase 'come and dine', see: St John 21.12-13. Here Jesus says: 'Come and dine', before giving fish and bread to his disciples. 'Et venit Iesus et accipit panem et dat eis, et piscem similiter.'
[77] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 269-76.

consumed by humans or, in the instance of Jonah and the whale, themselves consume humans.[78] Moreover, when encountering instances of fish consumption in the New Testament, very often the textual presence of fish accompanies either the Person of Jesus or some sort of moralization. As Thomas of Chobham writes in his *Summa de conmendatione et extirpatione uirtutum*, summarising the narrative of the eighth chapter of Mark on the feeding of the four thousand, fish feature as important sustenance for human living with moral and religious implications:

> Whence the Lord, in the eighth chapter of Mark, has compassion for the crowd because they carried [with them] nothing that could be eaten, and not permitting them to be endangered by hunger for nearly a day, [the Lord] nevertheless on the first day satisfied them on a dish of bread and fish, so they did not faint in the way.[79]

The presence of medieval commentaries on biblical fish episodes, including Thomas of Chobham's presented above, in many ways reflects the importance of fish in medieval society. Indeed, the very fact that fish consumption appears throughout the biblical text is something that medieval commentators would have seen as mirroring fish consumption in the towns and cities in which they lived, to which they travelled, and of which they wrote. Not only does Lanercost reveal this in its assertion that Grosseteste learned 'deeds and habits' about fish in

[78] St Matthew 12.40. Note that the term for 'huge fish' in the Vulgate is 'cetus', which correlates with 'whale' in the second-family and transitional bestiary tradition. In the Northumberland Bestiary, 'cetus' appears to be used synonymously with the 'aspido-testudo', with explicit links to Jonah: 'They are also called cetacean (*cete*) because of the immensity of their bodies, for it is just like that one that swallowed (*excepit*) Jonah, whose belly was of such magnitude that it was thought to be hell.' 'Cete eciam dicta ob inmanitatem corporis, est enim sicut ille qui excepit Ionam cuius alvus tante magnitudinis fuit ut putaretur infernus.' NB, Lib. vii, Cap. iii, Par. 1, pp.222-4. For a medieval illustrated depiction of Jonah being consumed by a whale, or a large fish, see: New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS. M.494, f.298ᵛ.

[79] Thomas de Chobham, *Summa de conmendatione et extirpatione uirtutum,* Cap. v, Lin. 210. 'Unde Dominus in Marco capitulo VIII-o misertus est super turbas quia non habuerunt quid manducarent, et licet non periclitarentur fame propter unum diem, tamen in prima die saturauit eos de panibus et piscibus, ne deficerent in uia.' The translation here is my own.

society from the bible, but it is further revealing that fish as *religious* food and symbol is virtually ubiquitous in medieval society.[80]

A striking example of seeing fish as *religious* food and symbol is found in Gerald of Wales' *Topographia Hibernica.* Here, Gerald suggests from Ireland that religious men in other parts of medieval Europe ate the beaver's tail as a substitute for fish during fast seasons. To quote Gerald:

> During fast seasons in Germany and the artic regions, where beavers are abundant, great and religious men were fed on the beavers' tails in place of fish, as it resembled fish in both flavour and colour.[81]

This passage from Gerald provides an example of the importance of fish for the medieval monastic diet according to both place and the liturgical calendar.[82] To the modern reader, seeing the beaver's tail as fish may seem bizarre. However, given that the taxonomy of creatures in the medieval bestiary tradition is connected to the biblical days of creation and their associated elements, with the aquatic and the waters, avian and the skies, and quadrupeds and the land, the categorical assignment of either all or part of a beaver's anatomy to 'pisces', along with other aquatic creatures such as the crocodile and the hippopotamus, is entirely logical.[83]

In addition to seeing beavers' tails categorised as 'pisces', in that beavers are at least party aquatic, when read through a religious lens Gerald's passage reveals the pious status of fish as food. Not only does Gerald speak of 'fish' consumption by great and religious men ('viri… magni et religiosi'), but he emphasises the consumption of 'fish' during religious

[80] C. Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England 1200-1500,* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016), 5-11.
[81] TH*,* Lib. i, Cap. v, p.175. 'Unde et Germania, artoisque regionibus, ubi abundant beveres, caudis huiusmodi, piscium ut aiunt naturam tam sapore quam colore sortitis, viri etiam magni et religiosi Ieiuniorum tempore pro pisce vescuntur.' The translation here is my own.
[82] For further reading on this, see: Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England,* 6-7.
[83] NB, Lib. vii, Cap. v-vi, pp.226-31.

fasting seasons ('Ieiuniorum tempore'), much like Lanercost's emphasis on 'dies piscum'.[84] These are points of no small significance. That religious men consumed fish is a basic tenet of monastic rule, as the flesh of quadrupeds was proscribed except in times of recovery from sickness.[85] In fact, abstinence from the meat of quadrupeds, except in times of recovery such as during the monastic practice of bloodletting, was widely practiced in monastic communities.[86] And the reason for the proscription of quadruped flesh for monastic brothers is moral. Since quadrupeds procreate through copulation, it was thought that consuming their meat would make the consumer more liable to the lusts of the flesh.[87]

Another important consideration is the universal nature of eating habits, especially for monastic communities, across high-medieval Europe. In large measure, this is due to the uniformity of Benedictine Rule as the basic tenet of religious life. Nicholas of Clairvaux (1145-1178), for example, mentions the eating habits of Clairvaux following the practice of bloodletting.[88] And Peter Abelard, in his *Hexameron,* also writes of the importance of monastic eating habits in relation to the fifth day of creation, explicitly citing Benedictine Rule as his source.[89] In so doing, however, Abelard makes the connection between fish and birds as worthy of the monastic diet, whilst stating the reason the flesh of quadrupeds is proscribed:

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[84] TH*,* Lib. i, Cap. v, p.175; Lanercost Chronicle (cited above). Also, Woolgar's monograph provides clarity on the issue of abstinence in relation to fast days: 'In all, however, a higher degree of abstinence was expected from the clergy, both secular and monastic, with longer periods of food avoidance at Lent and Advent. On days of abstinence those who could afford it might eat fish, although that was only one of the possibilities for abstinence… The expectation was that some food and drink would be consumed on all days: abstinence – regularly spoken of in medieval sources as 'fasting' ('ieiunium', whence 'jejune') – did not mean that no food and drink were to be taken.' See: Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England,* 7.

[85] BR 36.1-7. On the consumption of fish in medieval monasteries, see: Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England,* especially chapters one and eight.

[86] A first-hand record of bloodletting is found in the letters of Nicholas of Clairvaux, in the epistolary exchange he had with Peter of Celle written whilst he was a Cistercian. See: *The Letter Collections of Nicholas of Clairvaux,* (ed.) L. Wahlgren-Smith, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), Letter 49.

[87] J. Kerr, 'Health and Safety in Medieval Monasteries', *History*, 93 (2008), 17-9. Here, Kerr cites the critiques of Gerald of Wales and Bernard of Clairvaux toward monks who had consumed too much meat, with Bernard suggesting this would cause an increase in fleshly desires.

[88] *Letter Collections of Nicholas of Clairvaux*, Letter 49.

[89] Hex. PA, Expo. 213, p.71.

> From which it is clear that fish as well as birds created from water have bodies of the same nature, and their meat does not administer as much energy for lechery to human bodies as the meats of terrestrial animals, which are of the same nature as our bodies. Hence the *Rule* of blessed Benedict does not prohibit the former meats to monks in the same way as the latter, namely when it requires abstinence only from the flesh of four-footed animals, not [from that] of birds.[90]

As already indicated by Abelard, then, in contrast to meat consumption the monastic practice of consuming fish had positive moral connotations. By their association with the fifth day of Creation, fish were thought to be somehow elevated in their status above the flesh of quadrupeds and, as argued by Woolgar, Christian eating habits were informed by such thought as a sort of modification of biblical dietary laws.[91] For this reason, fish, whether fresh, slated or dried, became a staple for monastic and surrounding communities across the middle ages and was subsequently absorbed into Christian practice.[92] In the eleventh-century monasteries of Cluny, Hirsau, and Fleury, fish consumption was so prevalent that a form of sign language was developed to refer to different species of fish for meal times, so that the brothers could keep their communal silence.[93] Monastic fish consumption meant that monasteries led the way across northern Europe in 'technological and agricultural innovation… through the diversion of watercourses to create mill complexes and fishponds' for monastic use.[94] For this reason, it

[90] Hex. PA, Expo. 213, p.71. 'Ex quo liquidum est tam pisces quam uolucres ex aquis procreatos habere corpora eiusdem nature+, nec tantam uim humanis corporibus ad lasciuiendum carnes eorum ministrare, quantam carnes terrestrium animantium, que cum nostris corporibus eiusdem sunt nature. Vnde nec monachis beati Benedicti Regula ita carnes illas sicut has interdicit, cum uidelicet a carnibus tantum quadrupedum, non aliarum, abstinere precipit.'
[91] Woolgar, *The Culture of Food in England,* 5-6.
[92] General fish consumption features frequently in contemporary texts. For instance, when commenting on the presence of fish in the rivers Usk and Wye, Gerald of Wales produces quite a list of edible species citing Ambrose of Milan on the Salmon IK, Lib. i, Cap. ii, p.93.
[93] C. Jacquemard & M. Lucas-Avenel, (eds.), *Les signes monastiques des noms de poisons au xi^e siècle*, dans *Annales de Normandie*, 2012/2 (62e année), 139-74.
[94] R. Gilchrist, 'Monastic and Church Archaeology', *Annual Review of Anthropology,* 43 (2014), 235-50. See especially the section: 'Monastic Landscapes'.

is unsurprising that Guibert of Nogent naturally refers to an account of a knight being severely punished by the Blessed Virgin for driving away a monk fishing on the river.[95] Indeed, the image of a monk fishing strongly correlates with archaeological findings across high-medieval monasteries in both France and England where fish remains are found in abundance.[96]

In order to explore adequately the moral dimension of fish, having already established their import in the medieval monastery, it is necessary to comment further on the beaver. Not only was the beaver's tail thought to be fish, in that the beaver was at least partly aquatic, but the beaver itself became a symbol of chastity in the moralising tradition, and thus held a similar place to fish. For instance, in his *Suppletio Defectuum,* Neckam comments on the tradition of the beaver castrating itself in order to spare its life when hunted: 'The beaver is said to cut off Castor with his twin Pollux in order to escape the weapons of his pursuer. You will be a beaver ['Castor'], if you are chaste ['castus'].'[97] Here, Neckam is doing at least three things. First of all, as McDonough observes, using the beaver ('castor') to speak about being chaste ('castus'), Neckam is employing a type of etymological wordplay to emphasise the importance of chastity.[98] Second, given this etymological connection, Neckam is probably drawing upon on the narrative of the beaver found in Isidore's *Etymologies*, whereby the beaver is hunted for the medicinal qualities of its testicles, and performs castration in order to escape death.[99] And third, by using the terms 'Castor' and 'Pollux', Neckam is drawing upon the classical tale of the Dioscuri, whereby Castor is killed only to be restored to life by his twin, Pollux.[100] However, in this instance Neckam is clearly adapting the classical tale for Christian purposes. Further to the wordplay between beaver ('castor'), Castor ('castor'), and chaste ('castus'), and

[95] D.Vit., Lib. iii, Cap. xviii, p.216.
[96] R. Gilchrist, *Sacred Heritage: Monastic Archaeology, Identities, Beliefs,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 81-2.
[97] SD, Lib. i, Lin. 1067-9, pp.68-71. 'Castora cum Polluce suo succidere castor. Fertur ut euadat tela sequentis eum. Castor eris, si sis castus.'
[98] McDonough, *Alexander Neckam on plants, birds and animals,* 'Introduction', xxxiv.
[99] Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. ii, Lin. 21. On the use of the beaver's testicles for medicinal purposes, see also: Pliny the Elder, *Natural History,* Lib. xxxii, Cap. xiii, pp.480-3.
[100] For allusions to the story, see: Plutarch, *Moralia,* 'Brotherly Love', pp.282-3.

although he uses the verb to cut ('succidere'), Neckam's pairing of 'succidere' with 'castor' implicitly invokes the notion of emasculation through castration ('castrare'). Indeed, in second-family bestiary manuscripts, such as MS Latin 11207 of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the beaver's name is directly connected with the verb to castrate: 'The beaver ('castor') is named from castrating ('castrando').[101]

In addition to the beaver's castration featuring in Isidore and Neckam, the tale also holds a prominent place in second and transitional bestiary manuscripts.[102] From one perspective, this seems an aside from discussions on fish, not least because the beaver entry in the Northumberland Bestiary (despite Gerald's suggestions) appears with quadrupeds between the entries on the 'unicornis' and 'hiena',[103] and in other second-family bestiaries between 'elephante' and 'hyaena',[104] and 'elephante' and 'ibex'.[105] From another perspective, however, the beaver's act of self-castration redeems the creature from its former lascivious nature (which, as Abelard suggests, quadrupeds share with humans),[106] and into something more akin to the asexual piety of certain fish,[107] or even the nature of the barnacle goose which is said to regenerate asexually.[108] With this in mind, it is fitting that the accompanying moralisation of the beaver in the Northumberland Bestiary asserts the following:

> When the hunter sees that it [the beaver] does not have testicles, he leaves it alone. So also should everyone who is preserved according to the

[101] *Medieval Book of Beasts,* Cap. x, p.130. 'Castor dicitur a castrando'. This sentence appears in, MS Latin 11207.
[102] NB, Lib. v. Cap. ix, pp.82-5; *Medieval Book of Beasts,* Cap. x, p.130. See also: Albertus Magnus, *De animalibus Libri XXVI,* Lib. xxii.
[103] NB, Lib. v, Cap. viii-x, pp.80-6.
[104] *Medieval Book of Beasts,* Cap. ix-xi, pp.127-32.
[105] MS. Bodley 764.
[106] Hex. PA, Expo. 213, p.71.
[107] NB. Lib. vii, Cap. vii, Par. 1, pp.232-3. Note the contrast between the description here, where fish eggs are animated by the water, and the earlier point that suggests a variety of reproductive habits including the directly and indirectly sexual. For comparison, see: Lib. vii, Cap. v, Par. 1, pp.226-7.
[108] MS. Bodley 764 contains a discussion on the barnacle goose, which is taken from Gerald of Wales' *Topographia hibernica*. Gerald criticism of the 'Jew' for dismissing nature's ability to produce offspring without copulation (as with the creation Adam and Eve) is found repeated in the second-family MS. Bodley 764. See: TH, Pars. i, Cap. xi. This asexual regeneration of the barnacle goose is also mentioned in chapter four of this thesis.

> commandment of God and wishes to live chastely cut himself off from all vices, and he should throw all immodest acts behind him in the face of the devil.[109]

Most significantly from the above, is the fabulous telling of new life offered to the beaver through a quite-literal (though entirely figurative) turning away from the vices of the flesh. Castration, it would seem, is employed to figuratively express the importance of human chastity, with the beaver, again whose name Isidore etymologically connects to castrating ('castrando'), becoming a symbol of a chaste life.

In interesting ways, the figurative nature of the beaver's self-castration in Isidore, Neckam, and the Northumberland bestiary is comparable to Abelard's castration as presented in his *Historia calamitatum.* Despite Clanchy's rather literal assessment of Abelard's castration in consequence of his love affair with his student Heloise, this argument has already been made in part.[110] In particular, Clanchy draws attention to the idea that a castrated Abelard appeals to the holy eunuchs of scripture to redeem his undesirable new identity.[111] More significantly, however, is the sequences of events Abelard communicates to his readers. In the narrative of Abelard's *Historia*, it is only after Heloise gives birth to Astralabe that Fulbert sends men to castrate Abelard.[112] From this perspective, the act ('actum') that Abelard is caught in is not simply sexual intercourse (although that is, of course, forbidden for Masters of the Cathedral School at Notre Dame), but sexual intercourse as part of the disordered nature of procreation outside of the sacrament of marriage.[113] The fact that Abelard and Heloise produced a son is what triggers such drastic punitive response.

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[109] NB, Lib. v, Cap. ix, Par. 1-2, pp.82-3. 'Venator autem cum viderit eum non habere testiculos discedit ab eo. Sic et omnis qui secundum mandatum Dei conservatur et caste vult vivere abscidat a se omnia vicia et omnes inpudicos actus proiciat post se in faciem diaboli.'
[110] Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 223-7.
[111] Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 223-4.
[112] HC, Par. xxviii-xxix, pp.42-7.
[113] HC, Par. xxi, pp.32-3. Here, Abelard speaks about being caught the in 'act': 'And so we were caught in the act…' 'Actum itaque in nobis est…'

Relevant to the symbol of the beaver and the fish, and helpful in deciphering their meaning in medieval texts, is the language that surrounds Abelard's castration. Viewing the 'act' of unsanctioned procreation as one of disorderly love is evident enough in the surrounding rhetoric of Abelard's episode.[114] The news that Heloise is pregnant is described in the sentence immediately after the description of the 'act',[115] and the following paragraphs (leading up to Abelard's castration) are full of lamentations over the conflict between his identity as a philosopher on one hand, and marriage and children on the other, which sees Abelard drawing upon Augustine to emphasise how the philosopher ought to be a 'lover of wisdom' ('amatorem sapientie'), rather than a lover in a secular sense.[116] When the castration occurs, therefore, it does so only after Abelard's lengthy discourse on the implications of marriage and children for a philosopher who has taken religious vows, and ought really to be a philosopher for God.[117]

With the above context in mind, Abelard's unsuccessful rejection of marriage and children for one who should live a monastic life can only find a rhetorical remedy (preceding his actual entry into the monastery) in castration. When Fulbert's men castrate Abelard, it is described in the following manner: '…they cut off the parts of my body whereby I had committed the wrong of which they complained.'[118] This then provokes Abelard's complaints, but intriguingly (though unsurprisingly given the surrounding rhetoric he employs) Abelard is more concerned with shame and humiliation than he is with his wounded body.[119] It is this,

[114] HC, Par. xxiii, pp.32-5 On this, see especially Abelard's defence of the episode to Fulbert by appealing to 'love' ('amor'). Though, of course, this type of 'love' is strongly contrasted with the love of God Abelard details later in his *Historia* (and argument referred to in chapter two of the thesis).
[115] HC, Par. xxi, pp.32-3.
[116] HC, Par. xxvi, pp.40-1. The phrase Abelard attributes to the blessed Augustine 'beati Augustini' is the 'lover of wisdom' ('amatorem sapientie'). Furthermore, the 'wisdom' Augustine speaks of in relation to 'love' is something he clarifies in his *De doctrina christiana* (and notably something Hugh of St Victor will repeat in his *Didascalicon*) as being the Second Person of the Trinity. See: DDC, Lib. i, Par. x-xiii, pp.12-4; Didas. Lib. ii, Cap. i, Par. i-ii, pp.61-2. This is also discussed in chapter one and two of this thesis.
[117] HC, Par. xxiii-xxvi, pp.32-43.
[118] HC, Par. xxix, pp.44-5. '…eis uidelicet corporis mei partibus amputatis quibus id quod plangebant commiseram.'
[119] HC, Par. xxx, pp.44-7.

then, that gives rise to Abelard's appeal to the holy eunuchs of scripture,[120] which irreversibly sees Abelard transition from lover to philosopher-monk so that he might love wisdom. This narrative transition with its emphasis on removing body members to save the whole body, it must be stated, is one that parallels Jesus' exposition on adultery in St Matthew 5, and is worthy of comparison:

St Matthew 5.27-30:

You have heard that it was said to them of old, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery'. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath already committed adultery in his heart. And if thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out, and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish than that thy whole body be cast into hell. And if they right hand cause thee to offend, cut it off, and cast it from thee, for it is better for thee that one of thy members should perish than that thy whole body should go into hell.[121]

Historia calamitatum:

I had still scarcely recovered from my wound when clerics came thronging round to pester the abbot and myself with repeated demands that I should now, for love of God, continue the studies which hitherto I had pursued only in desire for wealth and fame. They urged me to consider that the talent entrusted to me by God would be required of me with interest; that instead of addressing myself to the rich as before I should devote myself to educating the poor, and recognise that the hand of the Lord had touched me for the express purpose of freeing me from the temptations of the flesh and the distractions of the world so that I could devote myself to learning and thereby

[120] Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 223-4.

[121] St Matthew 5.27-30. 'Audistis quia dictum est antiquis, 'Non moechaberis.' Ego autem dico vobis quoniam omnis qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendum eam iam moechatus est eam in corde suo. Quod si oculus tuus dexter scandalizat te, erue eum, et proice abs te, expedit enim tibi ut pereat unum membrorum tuorum quam totum corpus tuum mittatur in gehennam. Et si dextera manus tua scandalizat te, abscide eam, et proice abs te, expedit enim tibi ut pereat unum membrorum tuorum quam totum corpus tuum eat in gehennam.' Note the similarity between 'unum membrorum tuorum quam totum corpus tuum' of St Matthew 5.29, and 'corporis mei partibus' from Abelard's *Historia* (quoted above).

> prove myself a true philosopher [‘lover of wisdom’] not of the world but of God.[122]

With the New Testament comparison in mind, Abelard’s exposition on castration remedies a disorderly relationship with the world, whereby nature is first manipulated through forbidden bodily acts, before offending bodily members (whether literally or figuratively) are cut off and cast away.

Strikingly, a little earlier in Abelard’s *Historia*, this contrasting of the love of the world[123] with the love of God (‘amore Dei’) is again found, this time with Abelard using the language of rejecting the world in order to truly embrace the pursuit of philosophy and scripture:

> But philosophers, I say, lead a very different life from rich men, and those who are concerned with wealth or are involved in mundane matters will not have time for the claims of Scripture or philosophy.
>
> Consequently, the great philosophers of the past have despised the world, not renouncing it so much as escaping from it, and have denied themselves every pleasure so as to find peace in the arms of philosophy alone. ‘…We must resist all other occupations, not merely finish them off but reject them.’[124]
>
> This is the practice today through love of God (‘amore Dei’) of those among

[122] HC, Par. xxxii, pp.50-1. ‘Vix autem de uulnere adhuc conualueram, cum ad me confluentes clerici, tam ab abbate nostro quam a me ipso continuis supplicationibus, efflagitabant quantinus quod hucusque pecunie uel laudis cupiditate egeram nunc amore Dei operam studio darem, attendens quod mihi fuerat a Domino talentum commissum, ab ipso esse cum usuris exigendum, et qui diuitibus maxime hucusque intenderam, pauperibus erudiendis amodo studerem; et ob hoc maxime dominica manu me nunc tactum esse cognoscerem, quo liberius a carnalibus illecebris et tumultuosa uita seculi abstractus studio litterarum uaccarem, nec tam mundi quam Dei uere philosophus fierem.’

[123] Abelard expresses this in many ways. But does so in relation to his pre-castration as a ‘desire for wealth and fame’ (‘pecunie uel laudis cupiditate’). See note above.

[124] This quote (partially presented here) Abelard attributes to Seneca. See the footnotes accompanying Luscombe’s edition and translation. HC, Par. xxvi, pp.38-9.

> us who truly deserve the name of monks,[125] as it was of distinguished philosophers amongst the pagans in their pursuit of philosophy.[126]

Read in light of his broader narrative, the rejection of other occupations, through the language of despising and escaping from the world, rhetorically foreshadows Abelard's own account of his castration (a castration that perfectly coincides with his new monastic vocation beginning at St Denis). What is more, it is here that Abelard's *Historia* becomes especially relevant to the figurative expositions on beavers and fish. Whilst the beaver's self-castration has already been mentioned and located in the works of Isidore, Neckam, and surrounding second-family and transitional bestiary texts, Gerald offers a lengthier exposition (repeating some of the the claims of his *Topographia Hibernica*) in his *Itinerarium Kambriae* in which he also discusses the beaver's castration.[127] Here, however, Gerald cites a range of authors including Isidore, Cicero, Juvenal, and Bernardus Silvestris (not, following Thorpe's erroneous suggestion 'Saint Bernard [of Clairvaux]').[128] Fittingly, all those whom Gerald quotes present castration as a remedy for preserving the beaver's life, with Juvenal suggesting the beaver makes itself into a eunuch ('Eunuchum'), and Bernardus suggesting it saves the life of its body.[129]

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[125] Note, Abelard's assertion here that there are those '…who are truly called monks' (my own translation from '…qui uere monachi dicuntur'), and the implication that he should be named among them, would certainly not have been shared unanimously by his monastic counterparts.

[126] HC, Par. xxvi, pp.38-9. 'Sed non est, inquam, hec conditio philosophorum que diuitum, nec qui opibus student uel secularibus implicantur curis diuinis seu philosophicis uacabunt officiis. Vnde et insignes olim philosophorum, mundum maxime contempnentes, nec tam relinquentes seculum quam fugientes, omnes sibi uoluptates interdixerunt ut in unius philosophie requiescerent amplexibus. '…Resistendum est occupationibus, nec explicande sunt sed submouende.' Quod nunc igitur apud nos amore Dei sustinent qui uere monachi dicuntur, hoc desiderio philosophie qui nobiles in gentibus extiterunt philosophi.'

[127] IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, 176. Note, on the overlap between Gerald's *Topographia Hibernica* and his *Itinerarium Kambriae*, see: IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, p.176; & TH, Lib. i, Cap. v, p.175.

[128] The quotation that Thorpe admitted he was unable to trace is to be found in Bernardus Silvestris, *Cosmographia*, 'Megacosmos', p.80.

[129] IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, pp.175-6. The term Gerald uses, when citing Juvenal, is 'Eunuchum'. See: IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, pp.116-7.

Intriguingly, the phrase Gerald cites from Juvenal can be located in sources other than Juvenal, including Servius' commentary on Virgil, and Isidore.[130] For clarity, Gerald quotes: '[The beaver] who makes himself a eunuch, is saved by injury of its testicles.'[131] Moreover, that Gerald immediately follows this up by drawing upon Bernardus Silvestris, whose mention of the beaver's castration is well known and would go on to feature in none other than the Northumberland Bestiary,[132] is in keeping with the nature of his broader figurative expositions on animals. As stated in a recent chapter by Faletra:

> …as someone whose earliest extant work betrays the heavily Platonising influence of the Paris schools (Gerald's early poem *Mundi Cosmographia* is practically an epitome of Bernardus Silvestris' *Cosmographia*) and who also seems to have been immersed in the moralising *Physiologus* tradition, Gerald's rejection of stable, unitary meanings seems almost revolutionary… Beavers enabled Gerald… to allow meaning to percolate from the world as he encountered it…[133]

Whilst Faletra's assertions are not without fault, reflected in both how Gerald's moralisations are framed, as well as the supposed distinction between him and Neckam (on the grounds that Neckam's expositions are somehow more 'naturalistically inclined and more rigorously Aristotelian'), the invaluable observation that Gerald's writings are intertwined with a complex

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[130] The phrase, 'Qui se eunuchum ipse facit, cupiens evadere damno testiculi', appears in: Iuvenalis, *Saturae,* Carmen. xii, Versus. xxx, p.163 (LLT); Servius, *Commentarius in Vergilii Georgicon libros,* Lib. i, Com. Ad versum. lviii, p.148; Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. ii, Par. xxi.

[131] The translation here is my own. 'Qui se Eunuchum ipse facit, cupiens evadere damno Testiculi.' IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, pp.116-7.

[132] See also: Congrégation De Saint-Maur. Auteur Du Texte, *Histoire Littéraire De La France: Où L'on Traite De L'origine Et Du Progrès, De La Décadence Et Du Rétablissement Des Sciences Parmi Les Gaulois Et Parmi Les François, Tome 12,* (Paris: Par Des Religieux Bénédictins De La Congrégation De S. Maur, 1865), 172. Here, the Benedictine authors trace this quote to several manuscript versions of the *Cosmosgraphia* of Bernardus Silvestris in both France and elsewhere (including four manuscripts in the Vatican). On the inclusion of this part of the *Cosmographia* of Bernardus Silvestris in the Northumberland bestiary, see: NB, Lib. v, Cap. xxvi, Par. i, pp.118-21. Note how this chapter section is titled <Bernardus Silvestris, *Megacosmos* 3.217-32>.

[133] M. Faleta, 'Giraldian Beavers: Revision and the Making of Meaning in Gerald's Early Works', in *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives on a Medieval Writer and Cleric,* (eds.) G. Henley & A. McMullen, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018), 122-3.

and evolving moralising tradition is nonetheless made.[134] Such an observation views Gerald's exposition on the beaver all the more as a symbol of chastity, and most importantly as a contribution to a pre-established moralising tradition where the consumption of beavers and fish have figurative significance. In this sense, it matters very little that the 'castration' of the beaver (whether self-performed or committed by the hunter) may not be a castration at all, but actually a removal of castor sacs (rather than testicles) which mature beavers of both sexes possess.[135] What matters, therefore, is the way in which the symbol of the beaver is taken from authoritative sources, and reimagined for the sake of human morality, turning, as Kay observes, the Castor into the Pastor.[136]

In precisely the same manner as its expositions on the beaver, the Northumberland bestiary's expositions on fish are reflective of the views of the authors that inform them. This may seem an obvious point to make, but it is critical that the bestiary is not reduced to a static or stagnant tradition that is somehow divorced from the broader writings of those who both compose it and (subsequently) guide its continual high-medieval evolution. For instance, on the subject of fish, the Northumberland bestiary contains expositions that distinguish the nature of fish from humans and use their behaviours to communicate natural piety. For instance, commenting on the reproduction and piety of fish, the Northumberland bestiary puts forward

[134] Faletra, 'Giraldian Beavers', 117-23. It should be noted that Faletra ultimately arrives at this reading of Neckam through Bartlett. See: 117n.
[135] F. Rosell & B. Schulte, 'Sexual Dimorphism in the Development of Scent Structures for the Obligate Monogamous Eurasian Beaver (*Castor fiber*)', *Journal of Mammalogy*, 85 (2004), 1138–1144. A similar point about the probable confusion over castor sacs, and the production of castoreum (which several ancient and medieval authors allude to by noting the use of the beaver's 'testicles' in creating perfumes), is also made by Smith is his notes on Rouse's translation of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, in which the beaver's castration is mentioned. See: M. Smith, footnote 'c' in *Lucretius De rerum natura,* (tran.) W. Rouse, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), 553. Here, Smith notes of the term 'castor': 'A strong-smelling, reddish-brown liquid obtained from two small pyriform sacs (sometimes wrongly thought to be testicles) in the groin of the beaver. It was used as both a medicine and in the preparation of perfumes.'
[136] S. Kay, *Animals Skins and the Reading Self in Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 74-5. Here, Kay draws attention to the very humanised illustrations of the beaver in bestiary manuscripts, which pair effectively with the textual moralisations.

the idea that certain fish, in contrast to human nature, receive their young back into their body for protection from danger, before stating:

> Who would not be amazed and stupefied that nature preserves in fish what she does not preserve in men? For very many men, driven to distrust by jealous hatred, have killed their own babies. Some women out of hunger, as we have read, have eaten their own young; a human mother has become a tomb for her dear children. [Conversely] for the offspring of fish, the womb of the parent is like a wall ('murus'); by a kind fortification of the inner organs it preserves the dear creatures unharmed.[137]

Here, by using the term 'wall' ('murus') in relation to the protective qualities of fish, the Northumberland bestiary is using comparable language to Neckam's *De naturis rerum* which also uses the term as a figurative interpretation of the oyster's shells being the protective cloister walls.[138] Not only does this term 'murus' appear again in the Northumberland bestiary's own entry on the crab, which adopts the same moralisation as Neckam's *De naturis rerum* (though not verbatim),[139] but it also uses the natural piety of fish to communicate the piety of walls to humans.

Further to the above, the Northumberland bestiary contains a number of expositions that neatly correlate with the ideas of chastity expressed in both the beaver's and Abelard's castrations. One example appears in a section on the procreation of fish, where the nature of fish is such that they do not contravene natural laws of procreation as humans and quadrupeds do:

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[137] 'Quis non miretur et stupeat ut servet natura in piscibus quod non servat in hominibus? Plerique in suspicione novercalibus odiis appetiti suos occiderunt filios. Alie in fame ut legimus partus proprios comederunt. Humanis pignoribus mater sepulcrum facta est. Piscium proli uterus parentis sicut murus. Vallo quodam intimorum viscerum pignora inoffensa conservat.' NB, Lib. vii, Cap. vii, Par. ii – Cap. viii, Par. i, pp.232-3.
[138] DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xxxvi, 149-50.
[139] Compare: NB, Cap. vii, Lib, xvii, Par. i-ii, pp.240-3; DNR, Lib. ii, Cap. xxxvi, 149-50.

> You yourself confound different species and mix diverse seeds, and you all too often force unwilling partners to a forbidden intercourse, and you call this business. Since you are not able to do this among men with the assurance that the commingling of a different species could preclude offspring, you take from a man what he has been born as, and strip away the manliness from the man. By cutting off that part of his body, you destroy his sex. You make a eunuch ('spodonem'), so that what nature has denied to men, audacity has supplied.[140]

Using the term 'eunuch' ('spodo' rather than 'eunuchum'), and describing the removal of body parts in comparable fashion to Abelard's *Historia*,[141] the exposition above uses the pious procreation of fish in water to communicate the moral order and disorder of human sexuality.[142] Compellingly, the implications of castration in both Abelard and the Northumberland bestiary, though positively employed elsewhere in relation to the beaver, are presented as a mutilation of nature. In this instance, and in contrast to the narrative of the beaver, the castration presented here in the Northumberland bestiary is described as a consequence of immorality, and pairs with Abelard's description of producing a son outside of the sacrament of marriage, before directing the reader to scriptural passages on the abominable castrations of quadrupeds and humans in Numbers and Deuteronomy.[143] Whichever way these expositions are read, however, the overarching moralisation presents castration (whether positively or otherwise) as a remedy

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[140] 'Ispe genera aliena confundis diversaque misces semina et ad vetitos coitus plerumque cogis invitos, et hoc industriam vocas. Hoc quia de hominibus facere non potes ut diversi generis commixtio fetum possit excludere, tollis homini quod natus est et virum de viro exuis. Abscisaque corporis parte sexum necas. Spadonem efficis ut quod negavit natura in hominibus impleret audacia.' NB, Lib. vii, Cap. ix, Par. ii, pp.234-5.

[141] Compare: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. ix, Par. ii, pp.234-5; HC, Par. xxix, pp.44-5. Here, the Northumberland bestiary uses the language 'Abscisaque corporis parte sexum necas', comparable to Abelard's '…corporis mei partibus amputatis…' With Abelard opting for the verb 'amputo' and the Northumberland bestiary opting for 'abscido'.

[142] It is in relation to fish using the element of water to procreate that the above exposition appears. See: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. ix, Par. i-ii, pp.232-5.

[143] HC, Par. xxx, pp.46-7. As Clanchy notes, this reading of Abelard suggests that he sought consolation in response to his castration. As argued above, the consolation may, in part, be found in the way Abelard presents his narrative of castration as a new identity that remedies his disorderly love for worldly things. See: Clanchy, *Abelard: A Medieval Life,* 223-4.

for a perverse or disordered nature of being; a symbol of piety and chastity communicated through beavers and fish.

Moreover, contained here is a sense of natural order intended for the creation, whereby all species ought only to reproduce with their own species, and avoid the perceptual sin of committing adultery through cross-species copulation.[144] The importance of this sort of order for creation is found across high-medieval texts, including Gerald's warnings of humans copulating with quadrupeds in his *Topographia*.[145] It is also found, however, in Neckam's *Suppletio Defectuum* which moralises a story of a mouse in search for a wife.[146] Deciding to journey to the sun, the moral story follows the mouse as he considers a variety of potential cross-species mates. After an exhausting journey, the mouse finally realises the established order of creation morally limits the mouse to another mouse.[147] Speaking in dialogue through Cybele (the goddess representing nature), Neckam asserts: 'Love unites creatures that are alike'.[148] In other words, noting the importance of order and love in creation, he (as his contemporaries) draws upon the power of moralised fish, birds, and animals in order to offer moral instruction to humans.[149] In fact, before the moralised account of the mouse, Neckam explicitly states: 'A moral fable has power to shape morals.'[150] From this, it is clear the intended message of expositions like these relate to human rather than animal sexuality, and reveal the intention for a moralised 'zoology' of fish, theologically defined, to provide human moral instruction.

[144] NB, Lib. vii, Cap. ix, Par. i-ii, pp.232-5.
[145] TH, Pars. ii, Cap. liv-lvii, pp.73-6.
[146] SD, Par. 1327, pp.84-5.
[147] 'societur Mus muri'. McDonough translates this phrase as: 'Let a mouse be joined to a mouse'. SD, Lin. 1408, pp.88-9.
[148] 'Iungit amor similes'. SD, Lin. 1401, pp.88-9.
[149] For context, including Neckam's warnings against a disordered relation with creation, and its dire consequences, see: SD, Lin. 1405-55, pp.88-93.
[150] 'Informare potest moralis fabula mores'. SD, Lin. 1325, pp.84-5. The translation here is my own, as it is closer to the Latin than McDonough's.

From exploring the beaver of the bestiary in light of expositions on fish, therefore, the beaver's piety, through the religious symbolism of self-castration, is a compelling reason for why Gerald asserts it was consumed by religious men. In this sense, it was not that medieval monks thought the tale of the beaver correlated with the tail of the beaver, or that the beaver's self-castration was to be carried out literally by either the beaver or the monk.[151] Rather, the beaver as a symbol for monastic chastity, comparable to the way Abelard presents his own castration to his readers, means the flesh of the beaver's tail, and the figurative tale of castration, were each desirable for human consumption in precisely the same way as the symbolic consumption of fish. To this end, it is clear that the centrality of chastity in intellectual life in the High Middle Ages, which extends to the life of clerics, monks, schoolmen, mendicants, and other religious vocations, meant that consumption habits, whether dietary, sexual, or liturgical were connected. As the Northumberland Bestiary suggests, the piety of humans could in no way imitate the piety of fish.[152] However, the consumption of fish was seen as universally religiously significant, in that fish could symbolically communicate a sense of moral piety to humans through both custom and observance, found strikingly in both Neckam and the Lanercost *Chronicle*. Given the observance of eating fish on fast days, and given the universal relevance of Benedictine dietary requirements, what fish consumption signifies for humans transcends the protective walls of the cloister, and views fish as a culturally important food and symbol in medieval society more broadly.

[151] Gerald himself implicitly questions whether the beaver's tail can actually be considered different in nature from the rest of the creature and notes the consumption of its tail outside of Germanic regions is not widely known. This makes a compelling case for the language of his *Topographia* being figurative, with the symbolic nature of the beaver being most important rather than accurate descriptions of the creature. IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, pp.116-9.

[152] NB, Lib. vii, Cap. vii-viii, pp.232-3. 'What human affection can imitate this piety of fish?' 'Quis humanus affectus hanc piscium pietatem possit imitari?'

Devouring Fish: The Material Reality of the Ubiquitous Fish Trade

Having established the moral significance of fish in medieval society, this chapter will now turn its focus to the ubiquity of fish in medieval material culture. Paying attention to the ubiquitous material presence of fish across the High Middle Ages is hugely significant, as this suggests a direct correlation between material and religious culture: that what was widely consumed as food, was also widely consumed as a religious symbol, not too dissimilar to the way Carruthers conceives of liturgical processions as a memory tool.[153] This argument emphasises the significant religious dimension of medieval life that underlies the daily experience of human living; detailing in very real terms a turning toward and engaging in the world, or, as Faletra posits, allowing 'meaning to percolate from the world' as it is experienced.[154]

To grasp the material ubiquity of fish in the High Middle Ages, it is first necessary to make some distinctions. The fact that species such as herring, trout, pike, and lamprey (along with many others) were categorised as 'pisces' in the middle ages is obvious and unsurprising. In addition to the appearance of their remains in modern archaeological excavations,[155] such species pervade the Latin name lists and Middle English recipe books of high-medieval France and England.[156] However, in terms of diversity of species, medieval zoological sources

[153] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 266-8.
[154] Faletra, 'Giraldian Beavers', 122-3.
[155] Twelfth- and thirteenth-century fish remains discovered in the Belgian village, Ename, reveal a variety of species consumed by monks, including herring and pike. Other fish listed are: thornback ray, cod, whiting, haddock, gadida, gurnards, turbot, plaice, flounder, sole, sturgeon, houting, salmon, eel, bream, barbel, orfe, roach, rudd, carp, burbot, ruffe, perch, and percid. It is important to state here that these species of fish have been identified by modern archaeologists and, therefore, may not have correlated with species understood by medieval monks themselves. See: W. Neer, & A. Ervynck, 'Food rules and status: Patterns of fish consumption in a monastic community (Ename, Belgium)', *Archaeofauna*, 5 (1996), 159. For English archaeological discoveries, see the discussion below in: 'The Ubiquity of Fish in the Middle Ages: Trade and Consumption'.
[156] Again, in the French study of signs for fish names in 11th-century monasteries of Cluny, Hirsau, and Fleury (which signs were developed among monks for use during periods of communal silence), a long list of fish is found, including: herring, eel, barbel, bream, crab, carp, lamprey, pike, chub, mullet, monkfish, salmon, cuttlefish, sturgeon, and trout. This list is my own translation from both the Latin and French found in the edition and French translation: Jacquemard & Lucas-Avenel, *Les signes monastiques des noms de poisons au xie siècle*, 143-8: 'Allec, le hereng', 'Anguilla, l'anguille', 'Barbo, le barbeau', 'Brashima, la brème', 'Cancer, le crabe', 'Carpho, la carpe', 'Lampreda, la lamproie', 'Lucius, Le brochet', 'Minuua, la chevesne', 'Muletus, le mulet', 'Ruppa, la lote', 'Salmo, le saumon', 'Sepia, la seiche', 'Sturio, l'esturgeon', 'Truta, la truite'. On

proposed much broader definitions of fish than word lists and recipe books.[157] In part, this is due to differences between culinary and intellectual interests in fish (though, at times, these interests do overlap).[158] Nonetheless, whilst trout, bream, cuttlefish, mullet, eel, carp, and crab are designated as 'pisces' in both bestiary texts (second-family and transitional) and monastic culinary lists, only the former extend definitions to include aquatic creatures such as the crocodile and the hippopotamus.[159]

As noted earlier, designating large aquatic mammals as 'pisces' in second-family and transitional bestiary texts and related literature is perplexing to the modern reader. But this distinction was also made by medieval authors, according to context. Indeed, in terms of shared culinary interests and human diet, there is a basic consistency between modern and medieval readers, despite there being no such consistency in zoological categorisation.[160] There are a number of reasons for this. On medieval zoological taxonomy, it is important to recognise that

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medieval culinary recipes which include various types of fish, Constance Hieatt is the main authority. A typical example of a recipe manuscript is the Middle English recipe book of Trinity College, Cambridge. Here appears medieval recipes for pike, lamprey, salmon, oysters, and others. This short list is my own translation from the Middle English of Trinity College, Cambridge MS.0.1.13: 'Salmon', 'pike in sauce', 'osters in grave', 'osters in Cive', 'pike in browet', 'fresh lampray bakyn'. For further lists and recipes, see: C. Hieatt, (ed.), *A Gathering of Medieval English Recipes,* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008); C. Hieatt, T. Nutter, & J. Holloway, (eds.), *Concordance of English Recipes: Thirteenth through Fifteenth Centuries*, (Tempe: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2006); C. Hieatt, (ed.), *The Culinary Recipes of Medieval England: An Epitome of Recipes from Extant Medieval English Culinary Manuscripts*, (Totnes: Prospect, 2013). See also the list of fish mentioned by Gerald of Wales in his *Itinerarium kambriae*: IK, Lib. i, Cap. ii, p.93.

[157] The list of signs for fish used by the monks at Cluny, Hirsau, and Fleury is only a little more detailed than fish lists in some bestiary sources. Furthermore, as indicated above, what is understood as 'piscis' in bestiary sources includes a much broader range of creatures.

[158] It is important to distinguish 'culinary recipes' from 'medical recipes', which were also popular throughout the middle ages. For the purposes of this chapter, 'fish' will be explored according to their appearance in the culinary (and related studies on the fish trade) and the bestiary (and related) traditions. On the distinction between culinary and medical, see a recent study: M. Bator, & M. Sylwanowicz, 'Measures in Medieval English Recipes – Culinary vs. Medical', *Studia Anglica Posnaniensia*, 51 (2017), 21-52. The overlap of interests between the culinary and the intellectual is witnessed in both the *De naturis rerum* of Alexander Neckam where he tells the tale of the scholar and the plaice; and also in the Lanercost Chronicle which offers and account of Robert Grosseteste's knowledge of dining etiquette and pike. Both of these stories are discussed in greater detail above. A considerable list of fish is also found in Alexander Neckam's description of the kitchen in the twelfth century, and meals that might be prepared there, including (among others): mullet, sole, eel, lamprey, mackerel, turbot, bream, cod, plaice, herring, lobster, and oyster. See: Holmes, *Daily Living in the Twelfth Century,* 93.

[159] An example of this is found in the transitional Northumberland Bestiary, which shares its fish section with many earlier second-family bestiaries. See: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. v-vi, pp.226-31. For the appearance of these fish in French monasteries, see: Jacquemard, *Les signes monastiques des noms de poissons*, 144-8.

[160] See, for instance: B. Santich, *The Original Mediterranean Cuisine: Medieval Recipes for Today,* (Totnes: Prospect Books, 1995).

natural history was not, in and of itself, an academic discipline available to medieval intellectuals. Unlike the patristic programme of learning which found use in secular natural histories, the academic curriculum of the twelfth-century schools gravitated around the Trivium and the Quadrivium.[161] Moreover, when interest in Aristotle's philosophical works later began to take hold in Paris and England in the early-thirteenth century, it is noteworthy that the public reading, and therefore teaching, of Aristotle's works on natural philosophy were banned by statute and papal decree.[162] It was not until the mid-thirteenth century that limited parts of these works were eventually approved for general use (after being carefully studied and purged from error).[163] A gradual acceptance of the public use of Aristotelian natural philosophy comprises neither a discipline, nor a completely new way of conceptualising the world. Even the much-later work of Albertus Magnus on Aristotle's *De animalibus* was essentially a scholastic exercise in compilation (responding to student requests), and by no means should be considered a dominant force in his overall thought, nor his conception of the created world.[164] On a basic level, medieval zoology was its own enterprise.

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[161] This point is made by Jerome Taylor in the introduction to his edition of Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon*, where he compares Hugh's text with the subjects respectively broached by Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*. A closer look at Augustine's text reveals that Augustine does indeed state the necessity of knowledge of the natural world, whereas Hugh mostly emphasises the Liberal Arts in preparation for a study of the bible. See: J. Taylor, (ed.), *The Didascalicon of Hugh of St Victor: A Medieval Guide to the Arts*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 'Introduction', 31-2. See also book two of Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* where Augustine states (concerning the category of natural history): 'In this category are various studies of topography and zoology, and of trees, plants, stones, and other such things.' 'In quo genere sunt quaecumque de locorum situ naturisque animalium lignorum herbarum lapidum aliorumve corporum scripta sunt.' DDC, Lib. ii, Cap. xxix, Par. 45, pp.106-8.

[162] A mistrust of Aristotelian natural philosophy (and their respective medieval commentaries) is seen in the Condemnation of 1210 where these works were considered as heretical as David of Dinant. This was reiterated by Robert of Courson's Rules for the University of Paris of 1215. See: *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis*, I, 70-79 in L. Thorndyke, (tran.), *University Records and Life in the Middle Ages*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1975), 26-30.

[163] This is found in Gregory IX's 1231 letter stating that Aristotle's books on nature be expurgated. The letter, dated 23rd April, came just ten days after Gregory's Papal regulations for the University of Paris. See: *Chartularium universitatis Parisiensis,* I, 136-44.

[164] Leff demonstrates caution in associating Albertus Magnus with the later outlook of his former student, Thomas Aquinas. Leff argues, Albertus' philosophical system still heavily relies on Neoplatonism, which 'made Aristotle an additional ingredient in an already prepared mixture.' His works on Aristotle's texts (including *De animalibus Libri XXVI*) are little more than vast glosses prepared for his students, which did not feature significantly in his overall thought. Despite the claims of Edward Grant and Peter Dendle (with Dendle commending Albertus for not relying on the bible when writing about animals), Albertus was not a scientist, and his commentaries on Aristotle were simply commentaries, and not an intentional departure from the bible. See:

As established above, outside of culinary lists, medieval authors categorised 'fish' according to their unique conception of the created world.[165] Intertwined with the hexaemeronic tradition, the medieval bestiary and related traditions contain categorisations of 'fish' in accordance with the scriptural account of Adam naming creatures.[166] Forming part of the biblical creation narrative, therefore, 'pisces' were categorised according to both a day and an element of creation. For instance, in the Northumberland Bestiary, it is thought that because humans are land-dwellers, they first found familiarity with land-dwelling quadrupeds (which they/Adam named), before venturing to discover (and name) varieties of 'pisces'.[167] The naming of 'fish' in this way primarily sees the categorisation of creatures according to their association with water. Granted, there do exist sub-genera within the broader medieval bestiary category 'pisces'.[168] However, for the most part, 'fish' appear across the bestiary tradition as creatures (and even parts of other creatures) that were created with the water, and named accordingly.[169] Such a broad categorisation of fish therefore results in expansive bestiary lists under 'pisces', especially in second-family and transitional manuscripts.[170]

E. Grant, (ed.), *A Sourcebook in Medieval Science*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1974), 654-5. See also: P. Dendle, 'Cryptozoology in the Medieval and Modern Worlds', *Folklore,* 117 (2006), 193-4.

[165] The bestiary tradition was, itself, influenced considerably by the hexameric tradition. A typical example of a second-family bestiary text is MS. Ashmole 1511, which begins with an account of creation. The British Library's twelfth-century Royal MS. 6A.i contains a copy of the Hexameron by Ambrose of Milan.

[166] White, *From the Ark to the Pulpit*, 'Introduction', 6-7. Here White comments on the conception of zoological categories across the bestiary, hexameron, and physiologus: 'Adam's naming of the beasts, which is a gloss on the creation material, sets the reader on a trail through the animal world, to learn, first from their names, the meaning that God intended man to gather from their habits'. This can also be demonstrated in hexamoronic literature, for example, of Ableard. See: Hex. PA, Expos. 474-9, pp.116-7.

[167] NB, Lib. vii. Cap. vi, Par. 2, pp.226-7. 'Nomina Piscium'.

[168] NB, Lib. vii. Cap. vi, Par. 1, pp.226-7. 'Nomina Piscium'. Amphibians are identified as an example, including the crocodile and the hippopotamus. 'Amphibians are certain kinds of fish…' 'Amphibia sunt quedam genera piscium.'

[169] In the *Itinerarium Cambriae* of Gerald of Wales, the tail of the beaver is described as being equivalent to fish. To quote Gerald: 'During fast seasons in Germanic and arctic regions, where they [the beavers] abound, great and religious men were fed upon tails of beavers instead of fish, since [these tails] resembled fish in both flavour and colour.' 'Unde et Germania, artoisque regionibus, ubi abundant beveres, caudis huiusmodi, piscium ut aiunt naturam tam sapore quam colore sortitis, viri etiam magni et religiosi Ieiuniorum tempore pro pisce vescuntur.' The translation here is my own, in an effort to render Gerald's passage into readable English. See: IK, Lib. ii, Cap. iii, p.118.

[170] For lists of fish taken from second-family and transitional-bestiary manuscripts, see the Appendix.

Conversely, when considering human consumption of fish in the High Middle Ages, the taxonomy of 'pisces' in accordance with 'dies piscium' and 'ieiunium' is not the same. To this end, it is noteworthy that twelfth-century sources appear to include types of edible fish not listed in second-family and transitional bestiary texts such as the sturgeon ('sturio') which, despite its popularity as a medieval food (being mentioned as food by Bernard of Clairvaux and John of Salisbury), is notably absent from bestiary lists.[171] This means that, whilst the second-family and transitional bestiary lists project a much broader definition of fish (in terms of variety species), these texts were not fundamentally a listing of *all known* species.[172] Again, despite attempts to designate or categorise the bestiary as a legitimate effort in scientific zoology or natural history, modern commentators misinterpret both the nature and aims of this tradition.

To sufficiently understand the nuanced distinctions between the moral and the culinary, one must confront the material reality of the ubiquitous fish trade, the scale and prominence of which spanned across northern Europe. In terms of archaeological evidence, a number of extensive studies have been conducted on the medieval fish trade in both northern and continental Europe.[173] For the most part, this has been achieved through excavations of fishbones in areas surrounding fishing ports, monasteries, urban centres, and noble residences.[174] As a collective body, these excavations reveal that fish were obtained from

[171] 'Sturio', for instance, is found as a food in: Jacquemard & Lucas-Avenel, *Les signes monastiques des noms de poisons au xi^e siècle*, 10; and further found in D.Con. Lib iv, Par. xiv, p.459; Policrat. Lib. v, Cap. xv, p.349. On its presence in archaeological discoveries and medieval English recipe lists, see also: Neer, & Ervynck, 'Food rules and status: Patterns of fish consumption', 159; & Hieatt, *The Culinary Recipes of Medieval England,* 59, 134, & 167.

[172] This is often claimed by modern commentators of the bestiary tradition who see the genre as encyclopaedic, or a compilation of all known knowledge on animals. See: White, *The Ark to the Pulpit,* 'Introduction', 1-2.

[173] In the case of Britain and the northern-most parts of Europe, the most notable contributions in the archaeology of fish remains have appeared in Barrett and Orton's 2016 edited volume: J. Barrett & D. Orton, (eds.), *Cod and Herring: The Archaeology and History of Medieval Sea Fishing* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2016). As for Continental Europe, the most comprehensive work appears to be: S. O'Day, W. Van Neer, & A. Ervynck, (eds.), *Behaviour behind Bones : The Zooarchaeology of Ritual, Religion, Status and Identity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

[174] Barrett, *Cod and Herring*; O'Day, *Behaviour behind Bones*.

various sources, but were mainly traded from river catches, fish farms, and the sea, with a greater emphasis on the latter over time.[175] Whilst it is difficult to recreate the medieval fish trade with complete accuracy, recent archaeological excavations attest to significant trends common across European datasets just prior to, and during, the High Middle Ages.[176] An analysis of the most prominent archaeological trends supports the argument that fish consumption increased prior to the twelfth century, and that fish trading underwent significant developmental changes during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, becoming an integral part of the medieval diet. It is worth considering briefly these trends, and their implications.

Archaeological excavations of medieval fish-remains point to significant trends in northern and continental Europe, particularly in Germany, Belgium, France and England. Indeed, such studies extend to medieval Scandinavia, one of the main regions for the production of stockfish (dried cod or herring).[177] In the case of England and France, the earliest decades of the high middle ages witnessed a decisive shift towards popular European fish consumption, labelled by some as the 'fish event horizon'.[178] Whereas, prior to the tenth

[175] Orton, 'Fish for London' in *Cod and* Herring, 205–13.
[176] S. Colley, 'The Analysis and Interpretation of Archaeological Fish Remains', *Archaeological Method and Theory* 2 (1990): 207–53. Generally, the archaeological method relies upon analysing medieval fish remains retrieved from cesspits, sewers, wells and ditches in various sites across Europe. Through an analysis of fish remains, it is possible to reconstruct the likely geographical sourcing of fish for various towns and cities, as well as develop a further understanding of the proportional quantities of fish types traded. Further, the vast majority of recent archaeological data corresponds precisely with consumption, which allows archaeologists to trace the fish remains back from consumers to traders, producers and fishers. However, it should be noted that the data drawn from archaeological sites can only ever be created from very limited samples. At best, datasets only ever offer an indication of wider consumption in the general period relative to the respective geographic area of the site, but in and of itself no data is conclusive. At times, sporadic datasets have been stretched by archaeologists seeking to understand the entire medieval period. This is most visible in Hoffmann's account of medieval archaeological discoveries of fish remains. In chapters dedicated to fishing and consumption, he often jumps around from one city and country to another, drawing upon data separated by as much as 500 years. Whilst many of his insights are useful, a more concise collation of archaeological data is desired in order to accurately recreate the trade of fish in the medieval past. For it is unreasonable to project findings and conclusions of, to take one example, fifteenth-century Parisian nobility, onto twelfth-century monastic communities in southern England. See: R. Hoffmann, 'Carp, Cods, Connections: New Fisheries in the Medieval European Economy and Environment', in *Animals in Human Histories: The Mirror of Nature and Culture*, (ed.), M. Henninger-Voss (New York: University of Rochester Press, 2002), 3–55.
[177] Orton, 'Fish for London', 205–13. With an ever-increasing demand for marine taxa, late thirteenth-century London witnessed a shift in the production of fish from fresh North Sea catches, to dried fish-stock most probably sourced from Norwegian waters.
[178] A. Frantzen, *Food, Eating and Identity in Early Medieval England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2014), 233–38.

century, it appears that agriculture fueled the vast majority of the medieval diet, supplemented by consumption of meat and poultry.[179] The increase of fish consumption, especially documented in the archaeological record around English and French monastic sites, commenced in the tenth century in line with religious reforms, and continued well into the proceeding centuries.[180] Whilst this is not true of every find, it certainly is a striking feature of a number of finds, with scholars agreeing with this general trajectory.[181]

Another important archaeological trend points to a general shift from local to distant fish supply, particularly from the eleventh to thirteenth centuries. Rather than source fish from rivers and fish farms, twelfth- and thirteenth-century urban towns and cities gradually relied more heavily on the produce of North Sea fish suppliers.[182] There are competing theories as to why this happened, ranging from urban demand and its impact on the population of local fresh-

[179] N. Sykes, 'From *Cu* and *Sceap* to *Beffe* and *Motton*: The Management, Distribution, and Consumption of Cattle and Sheep in Medieval England', in *Food in Medieval England: Diet and Nutrition*, (eds.), C. Woolgar, D. Serjeantson, & T. Waldron, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 57-60.

[180] R. Reynolds, 'The Social Complexities of Early Marine Fish Consumption: New Evidence from Southeast England', in *Cod and Herring*, 216–18. In the South East of England, excavations at Bishopstone and Lyminge reveal an impressive variety of fish were available for popular consumption, including Eel, Herring, Gadid, Cod, Whiting, Seabass, Horse mackerel, Atlantic mackerel, Red sea bream and Plaice. At least for homogenous religious communities, consumption of fish may have been connected to religious devotion, and increased accordingly, a point which is developed below, especially in the discussion of fish and conceptions of *natura*. But certainly, in terms of range and quantity, fish remains increased significantly on monastic sites following the introduction tenth-century reforms (which included stricter eating habits).

[181] See the historiographical discussion in the above footnotes.

[182] J. Harland, 'Fishing and the Fish Trade in Medieval York: The Zooarchaeological Evidence', in *Cod and Herring*, 172; 182-6; 204-8. The data from York is comprised of six excavations in the city, located at: Tanner Row, Coppergate, Walmgate, Picadilly, Fishergate, and Blue Bridge Lane. The study incorporates a number of graphs and tables, but the finds from Coppergate and Fishergate are, perhaps, the most comprehensive, revealing that a large variety of fish were traded and consumed, both from fresh- and salt-water catches. These finds indicate that common consumption of Eel, Atlantic Herring, Pike, Smelt, Atlantic Salmon, Trout, Grayling, Cod, Haddock and Plaice occurred from the tenth to the thirteenth centuries. Considered collectively, the fish remains of York also indicate a general shift from freshwater to marine taxa consumption from the turn of the eleventh century onwards. Probably sourced from North Sea catches, it appears that the general shift toward marine taxa steadily increased in York throughout the entire Middle Ages. See also: Orton, 'Fish for London', 205. The same can be said of medieval finds in London. As popular consumption of fish increased, fish trading developed significantly, witnessing a diachronic dependency on distant sea fishing. As Barrett argues, this is likely due to the greater capacity of marine-fishers (compared with local inland fishers) to accommodate the demand of more densely-populated towns and cities. See also: J. Barrett, A. Locker, & C. Roberts, 'The Origins of Intensive Marine Fishing in Medieval Europe: The English Evidence', *The Royal Society* 271, no. 23 Nov (2004): 2417–21.Whilst Barrett makes this point at the very beginning of his study on fish supply in medieval London, it is best read in his *Royal Society* article on the origins of intense marine fishing in the middle ages. His overarching thesis is that, from the eleventh century onwards, marine fishing increasingly supplied the fish demands of medieval urban towns and cities, observable in the archaeological record.

water fish,[183] to a warmer climate pushing fishers into northern waters where a higher recruitment of certain species were found,[184] to even the role and activity of the Church with its emphasis on fasting and fish consumption.[185] However, none of these theories are necessarily mutually exclusive. There is room for each of these theories in various finds, and often for a number of them in a single find. More importantly, each of these theories seeks to explain the same, recognised phenomenon: that marine catches increasingly met the demand for fish in England and France as the high middle ages progressed.

A third consideration is seen in the continued development of fish production throughout the period. This is illustrated by the further outsourcing of fish from North Sea marine catches to Norwegian stockfish.[186] This trend, identified across a number of archaeological finds, is dated more towards the end of the High Middle Ages, beginning in the late-thirteenth century.[187] However, it is important to realise that this later trend reflects a broader development in trade that traces its origins back to the twelfth- and early-thirteenth centuries. Urban growth, cultural exchange, and the sophistication of growing and interconnected medieval European trade, developed considerably in the High Middle Ages.[188] Collectively, therefore, a synthesis of recent studies on the growth and development of the medieval fish trade demonstrates its ubiquity in the High Middle Ages, especially in popular trade and consumption habits in England and France.

That fish consumption became a significant part of the medieval diet across the High Middle Ages follows the trends of monastic communities where, in some locations, marine

[183] O'Day, Van Neer, & Ervynck, *Behaviour behind Bones: The Zooarchaeology of Ritual, Religion, Status and Identity*, 160. In this instance, Van Neer makes this argument in relation to the situation in Flanders.
[184] Barrett, 'The Origins of Intensive Marine Fishing', 2419-20.
[185] Frantzen, *Food, Eating and Identity in Early Medieval England*, 237.
[186] Orton, 'Fish for London', 205–13.
[187] Orton, 'Fish for London', 205–13.
[188] A recent study on medieval trade, and the significance of its development throughout the high middle ages, can be found here: F. Wahl, 'Does medieval trade still matter? Historical trade centers, agglomeration and contemporary economic development', *Regional Science and Urban Economics,* 60, (2016), 50-60.

food accounts for as much as 30% of a monk's diet.[189] Given that monastic, as well as urban, communities consumed fish in large quantities is significant in that it not only acknowledges the material ubiquity of fish across high-medieval Europe, but it further demonstrates how fish for material/dietary consumption were taxonomically distinct from fish for moral consumption in medieval monasteries; the very centres that produced moral expositions on fish. Such a taxonomical distinction enables the modern reader to not only understand that fish in high-medieval Europe were both materially and morally significant, but how despite taxonomical differences according to what can and cannot be eaten, the moral and material work together to present the fish as a universally-recognizable symbol for Christian living.

Bringing together the Moral and Material: Fishmonger and Creation

Considering the undeniable increase in fish consumption in the High Middle Ages, indicated by the trends of archaeological discoveries, and referred to as the 'fish event horizon',[190] the textual expositions of Neckam, Grosseteste, and Gerald on fish and fish consumption, appear in a new light. To this end, understanding how a theological taxonomy of fish in bestiary and related manuscripts was distinct from what may be named 'culinary' interests in fish (in terms of diet and consumption habits),[191] identifies the need for accurate understanding and translation of Latin terms for fish. Again, as detailed above, the conception of fish in manuscript and literary traditions that may be termed 'theological' but have often been termed 'zoological' is connected to the creative element of water, with which they are associated in the medieval hexaemeronic tradition.[192] Since 'water' ('aqua') yields creatures that are water dwellers, 'fish' ('pisces') expands to creatures that are neither traditionally (in a

[189] R. Gilchrist & B. Sloane, (eds.), *Requiem: The Medieval Monastic Cemetery in Britain,* (London: Museum of London Archaeology Service, 2005), 210.
[190] Frantzen, *Food, Eating and Identity in Early Medieval England*, 233–38.
[191] This argument has been made above, in the chapter section titled: *Devouring Fish: The Material Reality of the Ubiquitous Fish Trade.*
[192] For reference, see the Northumberland bestiary and Abelard's *Hexameron*: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. v-vi, pp.226-31; Hex, PA, Expos. 279, p.81; Expos. 209-11, p.70.

modern sense) nor taxonomically (in a culinary sense) considered fish. However, the general rule for determining whether or not a creature can be considered fish is remarkably consistent, in that water dwellers, such as the crocodile, hippopotamus, or even parts of the beaver's anatomy, are included, whereas the 'lizard' and the 'locust' found in Clark's mistranslations of 'lacertus' and 'locusta' are, in large measure, difficult to justify.[193]

The problem identified in Clark's lizards and locusts is therefore one the runs much deeper than a simple mistranslation and potentially indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of the broader bestiary tradition. In this way, the errors confronted are reflective of the tendency of a certain school of scholars to term bestiary texts and related literature as essentially encyclopaedic or concerned with modern notions of natural history, whereby the expositions these texts contain are somehow divorced from their moral grounding in an established and evolving intellectual and religious tradition.[194]

The renewed interest in this period of engagement with ancient texts about animals goes alongside increased urbanisation, and intellectual and religious development.[195] It is significant that patristically-informed figurative expositions on fish coincided with the 'fish event horizon' which saw a shift in the general medieval diet from meat to stockfish across northern Europe. It is this observation, one that encompasses Emperors and Earls emphasising fish consumption

[193] Clark mistranslates 'lacertus' as 'lizard' rather than 'sea-fish', and 'locusta' as 'locust', when it should read 'lobster'. The same passage on 'locusta' appears in White's edition of the Northumberland Bestiary, though her translation properly renders 'locusta' as 'lobster'. See: NB, Lib. vii. Cap.xxvii, p.249; Clark, *Medieval Book of Beasts,* 214. For the inclusion of these creatures in a taxonomy of fish, see: NB, Lib. vii, Cap. v-vi, pp.226-31; NB, Lib. vii. Cap. vi, Par. 1, pp.226-7; Hex, PA, Expos. 209-11, p.70. Note how both the Northumberland bestiary, and Abelard's *Hexameron* group amphibians with 'fish' in that they are at least semi-aquatic.

[194] On this, see the historiographical discussion in this chapter, in the section titled: *Oysters, Cloisters, Plaice, and Place: Moralised Fish in Neckam.* See also I. Draelants & E. Franzeanu, 'Creation, Generation, Force, Motion and Habit: Medieval Theoretical Definitions of Nature', in *Making Sense of Health, Disease, and the Environment in Cross-Cultural History: The Arabic-Islamic World, China, Europe, and North America,* (eds.) F. Bretelle-Establet, M. Gaille, & M. Katouzian-Safadi, (Paris: Springer, 2019), 31-3. Here, Neckam's *De naturis rerum,* as well as works that are perceived to be connected such as the *De proprietatibus* of Bartholomeus Anglicus, are described as works of 'cultural transition, of widening of knowledge and of emergence of medieval scientific discourse on nature… These definitions refer in a way to all valid theorectical concepts of nature at the time…'

[195] For an overview of what has since been termed the 'twelfth-century renaissance' of the period, see: D. Knowles, *The Evolution of Medieval Thought,* (New York: Vintage Books, 1962), 71-149.

etiquette in Neckam and Lanercost, that demonstrates how the relevance of monastic dietary laws and eating habits extend out into the lived realities of medieval townspeople through the widespread observance of fish consumption during fast days.[196] Drawing again upon the monastery, cathedral, city, and even (though perhaps especially) the human as a microcosm of the macrocosm of Creation, the arguments of Lilley and Carruthers find renewed relevance, since the meaning of a symbol is inextricably tied to the human communities that create it.[197] Indeed, the theological significance of fish as high-medieval symbol is such that its core moral function was replicated textually (in high-medieval expositions, including the related narrative of Abelard's castration), as well as physically whereby the fish and the fishmonger would appear in metal, glass, and stone; markers, as Carruthers would put it, of a type of religious journey.[198]

Given an increase of fish consumption in the High Middle Ages, it should be unsurprising to discover that the fishmonger came to hold a prominent place in twelfth- and thirteenth-century France and England, and brings together the various aspects of this chapter. A consideration here can only be brief, however, surviving fishmonger iconography throughout European towns and cities indicates both the societal place of fishmongers amongst high-medieval tradespeople, the power they wielded in society, as well as the religious positioning of their seals and symbols. For example, in Chartres Cathedral, there are two thirteenth-century depictions of fish-trading in beautiful stained glass from scenes of the lives of St Anthony and St Paul.[199] Displaying the trade in a hagiographical scene, the windows themselves were

[196] A. Davidson, 'Special Attributes of Fish as Food', in *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture, Vol. I,* (eds.) S. Katz & W. Weaver, (New York: Thomas Gale, 2003), 614
[197] Lilley, *City and Cosmos,* 9-12; Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 270.
[198] Carruthers, *Craft of Thought,* 266-8.
[199] Chartres Cathedral, w.30b (Delaport 13), St Anthony and St Paul, panel 1, donors: The Fishmongers. Given the discussion in the current context of fish and sexual piety, it is intriguing that the asceticism of St Anthony would be crucial to Augustine living a life of continence, and that the image of fishmongers accompanies a portrait of St Anthony's life in stained glass in Chartres. On Augustine being influenced in this regard by St Anthony, see: P. Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity,* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 395.

donated by local the fishmongers.[200] From this it is evident that the fishmongers wielded enough fiscal power to fund the entire window, their scenes being the signature pieces. It also suggests that the iconography of fish-trading grants the fishmonger a quasi-religious status.

When fish feature in medieval iconography, it is important to recognise that they do so as one of a limited range of types.[201] The most obvious merchant iconography featuring fish were the seals of fishmonger guilds themselves. Among others, including seals produced in France,[202] the thirteenth-century guild of fishmongers in Bruges had their very own seal depicting their trade.[203] That seals demonstrated the power of the merchant guild has been argued effectively in recent scholarship, but the choice of Bruges's iconography and the way it is used (in a similar way to the windows of the fishmongers of Chartres), suggests far more than secular power and status, and is comparable to the use of seals by high-medieval monastic orders.[204] For instance, the seal of Bruges features three fish, one of which has been placed on a table with a human preparing it for consumption. Beyond the obvious, literal depiction of the scene (in that it portrays fish preparation as a trade), there is much religious symbolism.[205] For instance, it is striking that in the seal of Bruges fish are represented by a numerical trinity, and that man's work with fish is performed at a table or an altar, in preparation for mass consumption.[206] Beyond the obviousness of fish as a recognisable icon, the seal conjures the

[200] See note above. This demonstrates the fishmongers were well established by the thirteenth century, and wealthy enough to donate a cathedral window depicting the life of a saint.
[201] E. New, 'Seals and Status in Medieval English Towns: A Case-Study of London, Newcastle and Durham', in *Good Impressions: Image and Authority in Medieval Seals* (London: British Museum Research Publication 168, 2008), 35. Here New argues that 'the image of the seal, particularly a corporate seal, was designed to be understood by a wide audience through the employment of a limited range of iconographic types.'
[202] In thirteenth-century Paris, *des marchands de l'eau de Paris* had their very own seal featuring a single large fishing boat. See: P. Émile, *Les marchands de l'eau: Hanse Parisienne et Compagnie française,* (Paris: É. Bouillon, 1901).
[203] 'Sceau des poissonniers de la ville de Bruges', Seal of the fishmongers of Bruges, 13th Century, Image no. TAD1760113, (Tallandier, Bridgeman Images).
[204] J. Luxford, *The Art and Architecture of English Benedictine Monasteries, 1300-1540: A Patronage History,* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2005), 51-2; 143-50.
[205] Seal of the fishmongers of Bruges, 13th Century, Image no. TAD1760113.
[206] Seal of the fishmongers of Bruges, 13th Century, Image no. TAD1760113.

idea of a priest performing mass within his parish, by representing a fishmonger supplying fish for his community. Both priest and fishmonger perform their work at tables, and both their activities require preparation for consumption in order to have, either actually or symbolically, a transformative effect on the consumer/receiver. Therefore, the symbol of thirteenth-century fishmongers, eternalised by their seal, both depicts the material presence of fish in medieval society at the same time as being a moralised symbol, comparable to the sacrament of the Eucharist.



'Sceau des poissonniers de la ville de Bruges',
Seal of the fishmongers of Bruges, 13th Century.
Image no. TAD1760113.

Perhaps a fitting way to draw together the current discussion is to return to Abelard's *Hexameron*. Commenting on the place of dominion held by humans in the created world, Abelard posits that neither the 'fowl of the heavens' ('volantibus celi') nor the 'fish of the sea' ('piscibus maris') are given in the biblical account to distinguish one bird from another, or one fish from another, 'but rather to express their proper place'.[207] Namely, that birds belong to the element of air, and fish to the element of water, extending to the seal, the crocodile, and the hippopotamus.[208] In addition to identifying the place of creatures, including humans, in the created order, Abelard further asserts how together, 'fish' (pisces') and 'water' ('aqua') as a 'living and moving thing' ('animam viventem atque motabilem') figuratively expresses the sacrament of baptism. It is through this, Abelard declares, that being changed from our disordered human natures inherited from Adam, 'we are transformed into members of Christ', ('in membra Christi transformamur').[209]

[207] Hex, PA, Expos. 279, p.81. The phrase Abelard uses here, is: 'sed magis ad eorum exprimendam proprietatem ubi esse habeant.'
[208] Hex, PA, Expos. 209-11, p.70.
[209] Hex, PA, Expos. 238-9, p.74.

With this in mind, Abelard's use of 'fish' in his exegetical writings underscores the function of 'fish' in the bestiary and connected literature as one that morally communicates the nature of humans in the created order, so that their disordered fallen natures may be reordered in God. Understood properly, this provides a basic model understanding the moralised accounts of fish, beavers, castration, and eating habits, produced across the High Middle Ages and found in the writings of Neckam, Gerald, Bernardus Silvestris, Abelard, and Grosseteste, as well as accounting for the development of trade, material representations of the fishmonger, and monastic and urban design. Far from being bizarre or irrelevant, 'fish' are essential to understanding the evolution of high-medieval thought and life, and give reason to theological representations of fish and the fisher even in popular literature, such as Percival's 'fisher king' found in Chrétien de Troyes.[210] Finally, viewing 'fish' in proper medieval context, also compels the reader to consider the influence that Augustine, rather than Aristotle, had on the subject of medieval 'zoology', since it is Augustine's acrostic phrase found in his *De civitate Dei* that sees semiotic value in 'Ichthus' as the ultimate symbol of the Person of Jesus, pairing neatly with the expositions explored above:

> Now if you connect the initial letters of those five Greek words, Iesous CHreistos THeou Uios Soter you have the Greek word *Ichthus*, which means 'fish', and the allegorical meaning of this noun is Christ, because he was able to remain alive – that is, without sin – in the abyss of our mortal condition, in the depths, as it were, of the sea.[211]

[210] Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances,* 'Perceval', Lin. 2976-3-612, especially 3494. The fact the Perceval sees the Grail in the castle of the fisher king, who is wounded, strongly connects the symbol of fish and fishing with the Eucharist.

[211] 'horum autem graecorum quinque uerborum, quae sunt Ἰησοῦς Χρειστὸς Θεοῦ υἱὸς σωτήρ, quod est latine iesus christus dei filius saluator, si primas litteras iungas, erit ἰχθύς, id est piscis, in quo nomine mystice intellegitur christus, eo quod in huius mortalitatis abysso uelut in aquarum profunditate uiuus, hoc est sine peccato, esse potuerit.' DCD, Lib. xviii, Cap. xxiii, Lin. lviii, pp.788-91.

Chapter Four

Vultures, Emperors, Traditions, and the Historiography of Science

Frederick and Haskins

A striking example of observational conflict in medieval writings on birds is found in Frederick II of Hohenstaufen's thirteenth-century *De arte uenandi cum auibus*, where he challenges near-contemporary (medieval) accounts of vultures.[1] This occurs in book one of the text, where Frederick categorises different species of bird according to their respective habitats, migration patterns, and feeding habits.[2] However, when writing about the vulture in this context, Frederick subtly introduces and refutes a claim relating to the bird's sense of smell in feeding. The implications of this are significant and reach far beyond the text in question. For clarity, it is worth consulting the relevant passage and its historiographical reception in some detail:

> When one vulture suddenly descends from the others toward a carrion, the rest, understanding the motion made in descending, quickly follow until many of the vultures descend and swarm[3] themselves around the carrion.[4] It is not to be held, however, that vultures discern a carrion by a sense of smell, as certain people say,[5] but by able sight which is proven to us often. Truly, when seeled[6] vultures were selected from the rest, [we have seen that] they were not able to discern flesh thrown before them, despite not having their

[1] DAV, Lib. I, Cap. x, pp.21-2. Specifically, see: Biblioteca Apostolica Latina, MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, f. 11^{r}. See also, Frederick II, *De arte uenandi cum avibus* (ed.), C. Willemsen, (Lipsiae: In aedibus Insulae, 1942), Vol. i, p.24.
[2] For a broader perusal of Frederick's section in English, see: Frederick II, *The Art of Falconry: being the De arte venandi cum avibus,* (trans.), C. Wood & F. Fyfe (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), 3-104, esp. 22.
[3] Willemsen's Latin edition reads 'congregant', however, the Vatican's MS. Pal. Lat. 1071 clearly reads 'congregantes'. This changes the sense of the word from 'congregate' to 'flock' or 'swarm'; though given the nature of the vultures scavenging, 'swarm' seems most appropriate.
[4] Willemsen's Latin edition reads 'corpus' here, yet MS. Pal. Lat. 1071 repeats 'cadauer' from above. Since the passage refers to multiple vultures swarming around the same carrion identified by the first vulture, it seems sensible to repeat the same word and translation as the Vatican manuscript.
[5] In both Willemsen's Latin edition, and MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, the word 'quidam dicunt' is best rendered 'certain people say'.
[6] The term 'seel' is translated from the Latin 'ciliare', which originally referred to closing the eyelids (cilium). The practice of seeling is mentioned later in Frederick's manuscript, where he describes with detail the act of stitching closed a falcon's eyes for the purposes of taming and training. It is presumed that the 'seeling' mentioned in relation to the vultures is the same practice. The Vatican manuscript also contains a wonderful illumination of the 'seeling' taking place: MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, f. 61^{v}. See image and description in text and notes, below.

sense of smell stopped.[7]

What Frederick is demonstrating here is an invested interest in the actual behaviours of vultures when seeking out carrion. This is conducted in two parts. The first relates to the way vultures move; the second to how they sense. Respectively, these observations are presented to the reader as the result of Frederick's careful attentiveness to vultures, their movements, and their behaviours. This connects to Frederick's methodology established at the beginning of his text, one based on years of preparation, close and careful observation, and (as is strikingly the case with the vulture) human intervention and experimentation.[8]

As might be expected, the organisation and character of Frederick's *De arte uenandi cum auibus* has attracted the interest of historians of science. Haskins and Grant, for instance, have each expressed optimism towards Frederick's proto-scientific impact with direct reference to *De arte uenandi cum auibus.* According to Haskins, Frederick was a scientist and a 'modern man' to whom Renaissance scholars should look rather than Petrarch.[9] Influenced by Haskins' assertions, Grant too maintains that Frederick was a scientist, zoologist, and an author 'extraordinary in any age'.[10] Whilst these views have been perpetuated in subsequent inductivist historiography,[11] for the purposes of this chapter the most important feature of the

[7] DAV, Lib. I, Cap. x. The translation here is my own, from Willemsen's Latin edition, and MS. Pal. Lat. 1071. It is both clearer, and truer to the original Latin than Wood and Fyfe's translation. 'et si unus de ipsis subito descenderit ad cadauer, ceteri, motus illius cognoscentes, quos facit ad descendendum subito insequuntur illum. et descendunt congregantes se multa ubi erit cadauer. non est ergo tenendum quod odoratu sentiant cadauer, ut quidam dicunt, sed potius visu quod expertum est per nos pluries. et enim quando uultures errant ex toto ciliate, non sentiebant carnes proiectas ante ipsas, quamuis odoratum non haberent oppilatum.'

[8] In his preface, Frederick states that the present work was procrastinated for thirty years, whilst continued preparations and enough experience were gained. Following this is the confident expression that the work is based on successful practice, in contrast to other works based on little more than hearsay: DAV, 'Praef.', pp.3-4.

[9] C. Haskins, 'The 'De Arte Venandi cum Avibus' of the Emperor Frederick II,' *The English Historical Review*, 36 (1921): 334-5. Haskins draws upon, and expands, the earlier scholarship of Burckhardt and Hampe: J. Burckhardt, *Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien* (Basel: Schweighauser, 1860), 3; K. Hampe, *Deutsche Kaisergeschichte im Zeitalter der Salier und Staufer* (Leipzig: Quelle & Meyer, 1912), 219. In Burckhardt's work, Frederick is described as 'the first modern man on the throne [der erste moderne Mensch auf dem Throne]'. Haskins' approach to Frederick is also found in: C. Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 299-326.

[10] E. Grant, 'On the Structure and Habits of Birds', in *A Source Book in Medieval Science*, (ed.) E. Grant, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1974), 657-8. Like Haskins, Grant also draws upon earlier German scholarship by quoting the 'apt' thought of Kantorowicz.

[11] For works that have perpetuated this image of Frederick, see: H. Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men: A Humanist History of Zoology* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1973), 47-50; Thomas van Cleve, *The Emperor Frederick*

prevalence of Haskin's thought is that it has been followed with specific reference to Frederick's passage on the vulture in the *De arte uenandi cum auibus*.[12]

The superficial parallels Haskins and Grant draw between Frederick's *De arte uenandi cum auibus* and the modern scientific method, are much to the neglect of the broader context in which Frederick operated. This can be gleaned indirectly from Yapp's ornithological study of the illuminations in MS. Pal. Lat. 1071 (a remarkable manuscript version of the *De arte uenandi cum auibus*). The purpose of Yapp's study is not to take issue with the text, only the drawings that accompany it.[13] When scrutinising the medieval illuminations of *De arte uenandi cum auibus*, Yapp confronts the overly-optimistic interpretations of Haskins and Willemsen. Haskins and Willemsen were so confident about the scientific accuracy of drawings contained in MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, that they likened the quality of the illustartions that accompany Frederick's manuscript to modern photographs of birds in flight.[14] Yapp dismisses these

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II of Hohenstaufen: Immutator mundi (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 13-7. See also the earlier biography by Georgina Masson. Masson is particularly revealing of scholarship that re-uses Haskins' work in relation to Frederick's *De arte uenandi cum auibus*. In an article written in 1950, Masson draws upon Frederick's work with reference to Haskins, and states that it is unique from other scientific works in so far as it would appeal to more than the 'curiosity' of the modern reader. G. Masson, 'An Emperor's Views on Falconry,' *Country Life*, 108 (1950), 1890-92.

For writings critical of the non 'scientific' nature of the related bestiary tradition, see also: S. Epstein, *The Medieval Discovery of Nature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 58-64; H. Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men: A Humanist History of Zoology* (London: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1973), 38-53; C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 146-7; W. Yapp, 'A New Look at English Bestiaries,' *Medium Aevum*, 54 (1985): 1-2.

[12] This scholarly tradition can be traced from a statement made in Haskins' *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science* through to Grant's edited volume, as well as the monographs of Hays and van Cleve. All (except Haskins) were published in the 1970s. First, see Grant's re-quoting of Haskins: 'Whether vultures find their food by sight or by smell he ascertained by sealing their eyes while their nostrils remained open… [and] the minute accuracy of his descriptions attests the fidelity with which his observations were made.' Second, see Hays' introductory remarks on Frederick before using the passage on the vulture for confirmation, where Hays suggests that Frederick's methodology was a 'rejection of the whole medieval scholarly apparatus' in favour of 'experience' and 'carefully verified report[s]'. Grant, 'The Structure and Habits of Birds,' 658; Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men*, 47-50.

[13] W. Yapp, 'The illustrations of birds in the Vatican manuscript of *De arte venandi cum avibus* of Frederick II,' *Annals of Science*, 40 (1983), 597-634; 632. Yapp defends the so-called scientific nature of the text, if not the drawings. In so doing he *rather oddly* distances his approach from the manner in which Lytton Strachey had 'devalued' the life and work of Frederick II. A major issue with this approach is that Lytton Strachey wrote extensively about the 18th-century Frederick II of Prussia, but not at all (it would appear) about the thirteenth-century Frederick II of Hohenstaufen. See: Lytton Strachey, *Books and Characters: French & English* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1922).

[14] Yapp, 'Illustrations of birds,' 617-8. Gertrude Slaughter makes a similar claim, celebrating the accuracy of the illustrations in Frederick's text. See: Gertrude Slaughter, *The amazing Frederic: By Gertrude Slaughter; with pen-and-ink sketches by Robert Hill Taylor* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), 291.

claims, and instead suggests that only about ten per cent of the illuminations bear actual (scientific) resemblance to the birds they depict.[15] Moreover, it must be stressed that the production of illuminations that accompany Frederick's text were not produced by Frederick himself, since he died before MS. Pal. Lat. 1071 was produced.[16] Therefore, any attempt to assess the scientific accuracy of the illuminations becomes even more problematic.

To turn to the case-study of the vulture, Frederick's description must be considered within the context of medieval courtly life, and the significance of his engagement with other textual traditions in the process. Despite its historiographical assignment to natural history, the *De arte uenandi cum auibus* properly belongs to a literary tradition that establishes the prestige of the court through its association to birds of prey. [17] This is evident in Frederick's disinterest in falconry beyond the royal sport itself. In the words of Oggins, who has demonstrated a rare familiarity with the courtly nature of medieval falconry in his recent monograph, Frederick's obsession with falconry was 'expensive, time-consuming, and useless.'[18] Although Frederick drew upon an expansive range of source material in natural philosophy, he did so only to legitimise the prestige of falconry as a royal pursuit. This is not to diminish Frederick's use of knowledge from the Arabic speaking world, but to suggest that Frederick's primary concern extended little beyond the noble art of hunting with birds. [19]

[15] Yapp, 'Illustrations of birds,' 617. Here Yapp states: 'Similar views have been expressed by others. I have now seen some thousands of medieval drawings of birds, and, applying this experience, necessarily subjectively, to the illustrations of Pal. Lat. 1071, I should rate as good, by medieval standards, only those of the coot, purple gallinule, lapwing, barn owl and hoody crow, and some of those of the white and black storks; seven species out of a total of nearly seventy.'

[16] This observation is found in Wood and Fyfe's section 'Manuscripts and Editions of the *"De Arte Venandi"*', where they critique Slaughter for assuming that Frederick had produced the drawings, and further observe that certain drawings were left colourless, and other manuscript folios (presumably reserved for further illuminations) were left completely blank. See: Wood & Fyfe, 'Manuscripts and Editions of the *"De Arte Venandi"*', in *The Art of Falconry*, lxix-lxx.

[17] Grant, 'On the Structure and Habits of Birds,' 657.

[18] R. Oggins, *The Kings and their Hawks: Falconry in Medieval England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 111.

[19] For a discussion on the diffusion of Greek and Arabic ideas from Oriental to European courts, see: M. Schramm, 'Frederick II of Hohenstaufen and Arabic Science,' *Science in Context*, 14 (2001): 289-312.

Frederick's approach to falconry in his *De arte uenandi cum auibus* is typical of near-contemporary medieval treatises, with all serious authors of falconry having connections with the royal court.[20] The importance of this observation is found in contemporary attitudes to falconry in relation to 'questions' of the natural world. To take an earlier example for comparison, the *De auibus tractatus* of Adelard of Bath begins by continuing a dialogue between nephew and uncle found in Adelard's earlier work *Questiones naturales*. However, when he turns his attention to the nature of falconry, Adelard signals a significant change in subject and tone:

> Since our mind has become quite sated with discussing the causes of things, something of delight rather than gravity should be interposed, to give joy to the mind and relieve its weariness. For the intellect which does not pause is just like a bow: if you never cease to stretch it, it will become slack… I think the right action is if you reveal whatever you feel is more finely expressed concerning the nature and handling of hawks, especially since we belong to the race of Englishmen and their judgement is approved beyond that of all other people.[21]

Of interest here is that Adelard consciously distinguishes his *De auibus tractatus* from his *Questiones naturales*. For Adelard, falconry was far more recreational than it was theoretical, and more-closely aligned with characteristics of Englishness and nobility, than concerned with posing questions about the natural world. All this despite his extensive travels and deep interest

[20] Oggins, *Kings and their Hawks* 1. As Oggins demonstrates here, Dancus Rex, Guillelmus Falconarius, and Geraldus Falconarius all composed works on falconry in the twelfth century and were closely connected to the Norman court. This is additionally seen in Adelard of Bath's earlier treatise, who attempts to connect falconry to King Harold and Anglo nobility (see below). Other studies worthy of consultation include: D. Scott-Macnab, 'Of Hawks, Tabors, and Tabards,' *Notes and Queries*, 64:3, (2017), 381-5; R. Hands, ''Dancus Rex' in English', *Mediaeval Studies*, 35 (1973), 354-69.

[21] DAT, Cap. i, pp.238-9: 'Quoniam in rerum causis disserendis animus noster admodum est fastiditus, ad eiusdem dilatationem et fastidii revelationem aliquid magis delectabile quam graue interponendum est. Intellectus enim non pausans sicut et arcus: si numquam cassas tendere, lentus erit. Quare meo iudicio tale aliquid quod et iocundum et utile sit, eligendum est. Id autem recte fieri puto si de accipitrum natura et usu quicquam elegantius sentis aperias, precipue cum nos Angli simus genere et eorum sententia pre ceteris gentibus sit probata, et eiusdem sententie constet qualitas ut quanto pluribus dividitur, tanto magnis efflorescat.'

in developments in the eastern Mediterranean.[22] For Adelard, falconry had more to do with the care, treatment, and recovery of sick birds than it did with any sort of scientific novelty.[23]

In light of Adelard's distinction, the courtly nature of *De arte uenandi cum auibus* is evident in Frederick's strong critique of Aristotle's books on natural history in the introduction to his text. Whilst other commentators have suggested Frederick's challenge of Aristotle indicates an innovation in the same field of enquiry, given the courtly context of Adelard's earlier text, it seems more plausible to consider Frederick's challenge as a categorical departure.[24] Indeed, Frederick's dismissiveness of Aristotelian natural history demonstrates his desire not to embrace new ideas in natural history, but to completely distance his own writings on Falconry from a contemporaneously popular and significant textual corpus. To quote from Frederick's preface:

> In our scribblings, we followed Aristotle when necessary. However, just as we have learned many things through experience ('experientia'), [we have found that] on the natures of certain birds the great man [Aristotle] departs from the truth ('discrepare a ueritate'). On account of this, we shall not follow the Prince of Philosophers in all things, [since he] either rarely or never practiced the art of hunting with birds ('uenationes auium'), whereas we have always loved ('dileximus') and practiced it.[25]

Here is seen Frederick's conscious distinction between Aristotle, the prince of natural philosophy, and those who know the art through both *love* and *practice*. It is the idea that learning is through experience ('experientia') and practice ('exerceo') that is central to

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[22] At the beginning of his *Quaestiones naturales*, Adelard voices his desire to readjust to English customs after his extensive travels in Salerno and Syria – yet offers his disdain for English customs in the political and intellectual sphere. As seen above, his text on falconry does quite the opposite. See: L. Cochrane, *Adelard of Bath: The First English Scientist* (London: British Museum Press, 1994), 41-52.

[23] In the dialogue, the Nephew indicates a shift that occupies a great deal of the text: 'Having talked about these things in this way, let us turn to dealing with their illnesses and medications…'; 'His ita dictis, ad egritudines eorum et medicinas tractandas accedamus…' DAT, Cap. vii-xxvii, pp.248-65.

[24] On commentators who have suggested that Frederick was innovating within the same field of natural philosophy. See: Haskins, 'The 'De Arte Venandi cum Avibus' of the Emperor Frederick II,' 334-5; Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men,* 47-50. See also Fritz's use and assumption on this as background to his work on seventeenth-century grammar: G. Fritz, "First person singular in 17th-cenutry controversies", in *Controversies and Subjectivity*, (eds.), P. Barrotta & M. Dascal (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2005), 241.

[25] The above translation is my own: DAV, Prol. i. 'In scribendo etiam Aristotilem, ubi oportuit, secuti sumus. In pluribus enim, sicut experientia didicimus, maxime in naturis quarundam auium, discrepare a ueritate uidetur. Propter hoc non sequimur principem philosophorum in omnibus, raro namque aut nunquam uenationes auium exercuit, sed nos semper dileximus et exercuimus.'

Frederick's entire text.[26] As he maintains in the sentences that follow, few writers have written on the subject of falconry, and fewer of them in an adequate fashion. To Frederick, it is therefore necessary to encourage any noblemen ('aliqui nobiles') who might have enough time to dedicate to the practice of falconry, to join the cause.[27] In this sense, Frederick's prologue parallels that of Adelard's: both authors demarcated the boundaries of falconry as a courtly, yet recreational, pursuit in its own right; one to be practiced by the medieval nobility.[28]

Far from being a paradigm shift in natural history, Frederick's text is a complete and dismissive departure from traditional philosophical ideas about birds and animals, in favour of a courtly obsession with social rank and status. It is an obsession confirmed in his utterance when, comparing falconry with other forms of hunting, Frederick states: 'There are many reasons why [falconry] is nobler than the rest'.[29] Or, as Rudolf Jansen puts it: 'the falcon invariably represents the symbol of machismo in the medieval man's world.'[30]

In light of the context above, it is fitting that the literary tradition to which Frederick's text contributed would later evolve in line with his views on the courtly nature of bird ownership. It has already been shown that Frederick consciously emphasised the noble status of the sport, and that only those of courtly rank could truly learn it.[31] This, however, would give rise to later manuscripts on *Terms of Association*,[32] and the affirmation of bird ownership

[26] DAV, Prol., i-ii. Frederick lays out the context of this well when, in his prologue, he contrasts the lack of *practice* of Aristotle '…nunquam uenationes auium *exercuit*, with the nobility's constant *love* and *practice* of the art 'sed nos semper *dileximus* et *exercuimus*'.
[27] DAV, Prol., i-ii.
[28] This is seen throughout Frederick's text, especially when he later discusses different types of falconers, of which the nobleman emerges as the only true and proper falconer. See especially DAV, Lib. i, Cap. i; and Lib. ii, Cap. 47.
[29] The above translation is my own: DAV, Lib. i, Cap. i, iv. 'Cause autem, quod nobilior sit cereris, sunt plures.'
[30] R. Jansen, 'De Arte Venandi cum Avibus,' *The German Quarterly*, 48 (1975), 187.
[31] This case is explicitly made in: DAV, Lib. i, Cap, i.
[32] What is now known as Terms of Association is the grammatical grouping of birds according to names of their respective species. In the fifteenth-century Middle-English Boke of St Albans, for instance, there appears a number of familiar collective nouns used to describe groups of aviary species. These terms, many of which are still in use, include: a 'gaggle of geese', a 'brood of hens', a 'watch of nightingales', a 'flight of doves', and an 'unkindness of ravens'. Given the unstandardized nature of the Middle-English word forms and spellings, the Modern-English translations above are my own. 'a Gagle of gees', 'a Brode of hennys', 'a Wache of nyghtingalis', 'a fflight of Doues', 'an unkyndenes of Rauenes'. J. Berners, 'The Companynys of Beestys and fowlys', in *The Boke of St Albans: Treatises on Hawking, Hunting, and Cote Armour: Printed at Saint Albans*

accordingly to courtly rank and status.[33] In fact, the late-medieval fascination with social rank and proper terms, is neatly contained in the *Boke of St Albans* and has attracted considerable scholarly attention.[34] Yet the *Boke of St Albans'*s fascination with courtly rules was firmly rooted in an older literary tradition on falconry composed by Kings and Emperors.[35] Indeed, the late-medieval literary tradition, especially with regards to lists of bird ownership, owe a considerable debt to twelfth- and thirteenth-century manuals on falconry.[36] It would seem,

by the Schoolmaster-Printer in 1486, Reproduced in Facsimile, ed. William Blades (London: Elliot Stock, 1901), 89-91.

[33] Again, in the Boke of St Albans, Blades' facsimile edition of Juliana Berners' 1486 manuscript lists sections on bird ownership according to rank: 'Theys haukes belong to an Emproure,' 'Theis hawkes belong to a King,' 'for a prynce,' 'For a duke', 'For an Erle,' 'for a Baron,' 'hawkes for a knyght,' 'hawkis for a Squyer', 'For a lady,' 'An hawke for a yong man,' 'And yit ther be moo kyndis of hawkes'. The wide use and enjoyment of collective nouns in the later Middle Ages is further witnessed in a continued interest in the literary designation of companies, associations, conventions, and parliaments to describe human interests, activities, and social stations. See: E. Jacob, 'The Boke of St. Albans,' *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, 28, (1944), 18-21. Here, Jacob demonstrates the flourishing of the tradition in Wynkyn de Worde's later 1496 edition of the Boke of St Albans, which includes a story of an Angler going to meet a Hawker and a Hunter, and each disagreeing on the superiority of their respective crafts, and the terms appropriate to describe them.

[34] Two important studies on 'Proper Terms' or 'Terms of Association' were conducted in the early twentieth century, first by Hodgkin, and then by Allen. See: J. Hodgkin, 'Proper Terms: An attempt at a rational explanation of the meanings of the Collection of Phrases in 'The Book of St. Alban', 1486, entitled 'The Compaynys of beestys and fowlys', and similar lists,' *Transactions of the Philological Society,* 3 (1908): 1-187; H. Allen, ''Associations of Beasts, of Birds, and of Men': The Earliest Text with 'Language for Carvers',' *PMLA*, 51 (1936): 602-6. It is also noteworthy that Corner has further explored the implications of these studies: R. Corner, 'More Fifteenth-Century 'Terms of Association',' *The Review of English Studies*, 13 (1962): 229-44. Essentially, these studies identify important manuscripts in the tradition of listing collective nouns. Hodgkin's is the most comprehensive of the three, which takes three main manuscripts as its basis of exploration: The British Museum's Egerton MS. 1995 (f55b); Lord Harlech's Porkington MS. 10 (since acquired by the National Library of Wales in the Brogyntyn manuscript collections, arranged in two volumes); and the Bodleian Library's Ashmole MS. 189. Of these, Egerton MS. 1995 is the strongest example drawn upon in Hodgkin's study. Following Hodgkin, Allen is mainly interested in a brief analysis of the tradition in order to discuss terminology. In this sense, Corner's study builds most upon Hodgkin, and identifies new manuscripts in the tradition, such as MS. Pepys 1074 ff. 2r – 5v in Magdalen College, Cambridge, which ends 'explicit Iulyan Barne', (an obvious acknowledgment of the importance of Juliana Berners' 1486 Boke of St Albans). It is Allen and Hodgkin, however, that indicate the broader tradition in the earlier work of Walter de Bibbesworth, and later work of Wynkyn de Worde, respectively. 'Company Terms' comes from the section title of The Boke of St Albans, 'The Companysys of Beestys and Fowlys'. This was acknowledged by Hodgkin in his 1909 study, where he proposed that it was appropriate to replace it with 'Proper Terms'. Allen's study of the 1930s sought to revise it again by referring to them as 'Associations of Beasts, of Birds, and of Men'. In agreement with both Hodgkin and Allen on the need for a name-change when referring to manuscript lists on collective nouns, Corner revised Allen's terminology to 'Terms of Association'. It must be noted, however, that all of these studies recognise the centrality of the Boke of St Albans in this tradition (and thus the continued significance of Hodgkin's study), and that the quest for accuracy in terminology is perhaps homage to the manuscript tradition of designating collective nouns. See: Hodgkin, 'Proper Terms'; Allen, 'Associations of Beasts, of Birds, and of Men'; and Corner, 'Terms of Association'.

[35] A. Swaen, '*The Booke of Hawkyng after prince Edwarde Kyng of Englande* and its relation to the *book of St Albans*,' *Studia Neophilologica*, 16 (YEAR): 1-31.

[36] R. Ivens, 'De Arte Uenandi cum Auibus', *Banbury Historical Society*, 9 (1984): 131-3. According to Ivens, the Boke of St Albans had clear connections to earlier falconry manuscripts such as Frederick II's *De arte uenandi cum auibus*, and its bird ownership list 'is almost certainly based on twelfth century manuscripts'.

then, that the shared characteristics of falconry manuals from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries place Frederick's text within a 'recreational' category of writing about birds, where questions of sport and nobility, rather than natural history, guided the creation of the text.

When examined closely, even discrepancies between Frederick's text and those belonging to earlier and later periods in the literary tradition on falconry are less disharmonious than some scholars have presumed. Take, for instance, the strong parallels between medical remedies advised for falconers in the Boke of St Albans, and the earlier treatises which informed it including Adelard's *De auibus tractatus*.[37] Initially, this finding appears to contradict Frederick's *De arte uenandi cum auibus* on the treatment of sick birds; for whilst Frederick repeatedly refers the reader to a section he has written (or intends to have written) on the treatment of sick and diseased birds, the promised section does not survive in any of the extant manuscripts.[38] The traditional explanation for this omission is that Frederick had intended to write a section on treatment, but was entirely dissatisfied with 'doubtful drug medication' that 'usually did more harm than good' in earlier and contemporaneous treatises.[39] However, this speculation is doubtful, and reflective of little more than the scientific anachronisms that plague inductivist historiography of science.[40] It presumes that Frederick's supposed intellectual novelty was conscious of the inferiority of medieval medical remedies practiced in relation to both humans and animals across an entire period, despite Frederick's own connection to, and support of, medical schools in Naples and Salerno.[41]

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[37] Rachel Hands, '*'Dancus' Rex in English*,' *Mediaeval Studies*, 35 (1973), 363. As Hands has demonstrated, the remedy for 'lowse' (or 'lice) in the Boke of St Albans mirrors earlier twelfth-century falconry treatises. In addition to Hand's observations, however, it would seem that Adelard's cure for 'lice' ('pediculos') presents undeniable similarities, especially regarding hanging the remedy around the bird's neck until it is cured.

[38] Wood & Fyfe, 'Manuscripts and Editions of the *De arte uenandi cum* auibus,' lxxxvi-lxxxvii.

[39] Wood & Fyfe, 'Diseases of and Accidents to Hawks, and their Treatment,' 425.

[40] It should be unsurprising that the authors of the above section on Frederick's omitted text state that Haskin's infamous article on *De arte uenandi cum auibus*: 'is undoubtedly the best review of our present topic; it should be consulted by all students of Frederick II'. See: Wood & Fyfe, 'Manuscripts and Editions of the *De arte uenandi cum* auibus,' lxxxvi-lxxxvii; Wood & Fyfe, 'Diseases of and Accidents to Hawks, and their Treatment,' 425.

[41] There is little evidence to suggest Frederick was sceptical of medieval medicine, especially given his support of the medieval university in Europe: P. Oldfield, 'The Kingdom of Sicily and the Early University Movement,'

From another angle, it is clear that Frederick readily challenged various opinions and views of his contemporaries throughout his treatise.[42] The fact that he does not challenge contemporary medical remedies directly, but instead supports the teaching and practice of medicine at the university (granting the 'studium' at Naples),[43] and promises the reader the provision of a section addressing these matters, means his omission was perhaps more likely to have been a product of time and space constraints, rather than dissatisfaction.[44] Whatever the reason for the omission, Wood and Fyfe's inclusion of the mid nineteenth-century remedies of Salvin and Brodrick in their modern appendix to Frederick's text is misleading.[45]

Before Frederick's passage on the vulture is re-examined, a final historiographical consideration must be briefly considered. It is no small matter that, despite claims to the contrary, Frederick's vulture 'experiment' has been inflated by its modern readership.[46] To return to his description of vultures sensing their food, Frederick writes only a sentence on the 'experiment':

> Truly, when seeled vultures were selected from the rest, [we have seen that] they were not able to discern flesh thrown before them, despite not having their sense of smell stopped.[47]

Viator, 40, (2009), 143-9. Oldfield demonstrates that Frederick, despite possible political and economic motivations, was keen to appoint masters in all sciences at Naples, as well as in theology and the arts. He also circulated letters encouraging masters at Bologna to transfer to Naples. It was not uncommon for masters to make this move as is seen with Roffred of Benevento. Additionally, it is important to consider that Adelard of Bath had studied at the medical school of Salerno yet had no issue with repeating traditional medical remedies to treat sick birds in his *De auibus tractatus*. See again: Oldfield, 'The Kingdom of Sicily and the Early University Movement,' 136-7.

[42] This is seen in Frederick's challenge of Aristotle, as well as his challenge of authors who wrote about various species of bird such as the barnacle goose, and the vulture.

[43] Oldfield, 'The Kingdom of Sicily and the Early University Movement,' 143-9.

[44] The work was somewhat unfinished by Frederick, and the Vatican's MS. Pal. Lat. 1071 featured the additions and over-edits of his son, Manfred, so the text could be published and circulated. This considered, an omission of space and time constraints is not inconceivable. Wood & Fyfe, 'General Prologue,' 3n.

[45] Wood & Fyfe, 'Diseases of and Accidents to Hawks, and their Treatment,' 428. See also F. Salvin & W. Brodrick, *Falconry in the British Isles*, (London: John Van Voorst, 1855).

[46] Haskins, 'The 'De Arte Venandi cum Avibus' of the Emperor Frederick II,' 334-5; Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men,* 47-50.

[47] DAV, Lib. I, Cap. x. Again, this translation of *De arte uenandi cum auibus* is my own from Willemsen's Latin edition, and MS. Pal. Lat. 1071.

Frederick does not suggest how many vultures were seeled,[48] nor how long they were in this condition before carrion was presented to them. There appears no suggestion of whether or not the seeling ('ciliare') caused the vultures any distress; and there is no description whatsoever of the sort of carrion placed before them, nor is its location from the birds, nor whether putrefying flesh (that emitted more of an odour) was preferred to fresh meat. Admittedly, to ask these sorts of questions of Frederick's work is, in some senses, anachronistic. However, they also cast considerable doubt on whether or not Frederick's sentence can appropriately be considered an experiment, or even a proto-experiment (whatever that may be), in the scientific sense. There is a considerable distance between Frederick's sentence and the problematic early nineteenth-century observations of Audubon.[49] In short, like Frederick's challenge to Gerald of Wales's description of Barnacle



'Seeling' of a falcon by two handlers. Biblioteca Apostolica Latina, MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, f. 61v.

[48] Commenting upon the experiment, Oggins suggests that a 'blindfolding' of the vultures took place. This confusion may derive from Oggins' mention of Frederick introducing the 'hood' from Arabic falconry in the same section of his work. Whilst hoods are mentioned in Frederick's text, they were only used on species of Falcon, and less-often than the conventional practice of seeling. As footnoted above, the Latin text offers no reason to think anything other than 'seeling' ('ciliare') took place on vultures (especially since the manuscript illustration shows falconers stitching the eyes with the head of the bird uncovered in MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, f.61v). Therefore, Oggins' suggestion of 'blindfolding' is misleading. See: R. Oggins, 'Falconry and Medieval Views of Nature,' in *The Medieval World of Nature,* (ed.), J. Salisbury, (London: Garland Publishing, 1993), 48-56.

[49] These are all important considerations. In recent years criticism has been directed at experiments conducted on North American Turkey vultures in the early nineteenth-century by Audubon. Audubon's experiments were recorded with far more detail (than Frederick's one-line mention of the vulture's smell). Nonetheless, Audubon's experiments were based on flawed assumptions relating to vultures preferring putrefying flesh. It must be noted that Audubon also confused North American Turkey vultures (Cathartes aura) with North American Black vultures (Coragyps atratus), and this confusion has been further compounded by Mynott's very recent conflation of North American vultures with species referenced in ancient European texts when attempting

Geese in his *Topographia Hibernica*,[50] the vulture experiment has been assumed as 'scientific' in nature, without a thorough consideration of the ideas with which he engaged.

A different question to entertain with respect to the passage on the vulture is whether Frederick's aim was not to make a point in natural philosophy but to distinguish the courtly symbolism of birds of prey from the tropological symbolism that pervaded competing contemporary traditions. Whilst seeing Frederick's interests in falconry through a 'recreational' lens begins to dismantle the notion that his ideas were proto-scientific, it is necessary to re-consider the significance of his dismissive engagement with contemporary medieval ideas. This calls for a re-examination of Frederick's vulture in light of the manuscript tradition with which he engaged, and to which he was responding. Not only will this affirm the recreational literary tradition in which Frederick wrote and operated, but it further helps to identify the existence and significance of an emerging theological tradition on birds.

Methodological Considerations

Using Frederick's text as basis for exploring the moralised vulture is historically grounded. When writing about birds, for instance, he engages with a number of sources which informed the development of the moralising second-family bestiary tradition.[51] The intention of the ensuing discussion, however, is to use Frederick's text as a platform for a broader exploration charting a shift from the recreational to the theological. The significance of Frederick's engagement with theological ideas can then be considered more fully.

Properly understood, recreational writings on birds can be categorically distinguished from their moralised (and ultimately theological) counterparts in terms recognisable to their medieval authors. The moralised, however, cannot be read in the same way as the recreational.

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an historical comparison. See: T. Birkhead, *Bird Sense: What it's like to be a bird* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), 129-33; J. Mynott, *Birds in the Ancient World: Winged Words* (Oxford, Oxford University Press: 2018), 174.

[50] DAV, Lib., Cap. xxiii, (shown as Cap.xxiii-f, pp.51-2, in Wood and Fyfe's translation). Compare this with Gerald's: TH, Dist. i, Cap. xv, pp.47-9, under the heading: 'De barnacis ex abiete nascentibus earumque natura', 'On the barnacle-geese born from the fir-tree, and their nature'.

[51] Gerald of Wales' Barnacle goose is the closest example: TH, Dist. i, Cap. xv, pp.47-9.

It is important to recognise that Frederick's apparently empirical approach has misled a generation of scholars since Haskin's early twentieth century work. However, Frederick's challenges to his contemporaries are effective not because they expose the bizarre, but rather because they distinguish themselves from a tradition of writing about birds that was, and is, supposed to be read differently. In other words, the moralised theological bird cannot translate into a tradition epitomised by Frederick's courtly interests. Instead, it must be read on its own terms, and according to the exegetical tradition of which it was part. This is seen particularly when the medieval vulture Frederick criticises is examined according to the inherited thought through which it was informed.

Frederick's Novelty Re-examined

The novelty of Frederick's conclusions about the vulture is questionable, as noted above. Looking at Frederick's descriptions of the vultures' behaviour in feeding, for example, the movement towards carrion is first made by a single vulture before others follow. It is in this manner that the birds swarm together 'congregare' in order to feed.[52] While containing some detail, Frederick's textual description is not dissimilar to descriptions of vultures gathering together in passages of contemporary theological texts, especially those connected to the second-family bestiary tradition. The *Aviarium* of Hugh of Fouilloy, for instance, similarly describes the manner in which a vulture descends to feed upon carrion.[53] By extension, this entry appears in second-family bestiary manuscripts such as MS. Ashmole 1511 where Hugh's

[52] MS. Pal. Lat. 1071, f. 11^{r}.
[53] Av. Cap. xliii, pp.200-201.

text is copied after each relevant entry.[54] Furthermore, MS. Bodley 764 (late twelfth-century)[55] emphasises the way the vulture perceives the imminence of death, and describes how crowds of vultures gather near soldiers engaged in conflict; something again drawn from Hugh and the earlier Isidorian tradition.[56] Regardless of how conclusions about the vultures' sensory characteristics were reached, or to what end they were employed, the imagery of the vulture descending and feeding was a textual feature common to a range of contemporary French and Latin bestiaries throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[57] In this sense, Frederick's text does not display a great deal of originality.

The Importance of Bartholomew the Englishman

On the sight and smell of vultures, Frederick's *De arte uenandi cum auibus* was most probably prompted by a passage in the slightly earlier *De proprietatibus rerum* of Bartholomew the Englishman.[58] Expanding on the earlier work of Pliny and Isidore of Seville, Bartholomew writes of vultures seeking out carrion over vast distances.[59] Yet, instead of suggesting they do

[54] Ashmole 1511's vulture entry is an especially striking example of this. Not only does Hugh's entry from the *Aviarium* appear in addition to the original bestiary description of the vulture (under the red subheading 'Item de wlturibus'), but the marginalia signals the addition with 'Iob 28:6' and the copied verse in another hand. It is worth mentioning here that the verse in the Vulgate (and in Clark's edition and translation) is Job 28:7 (not 6). See: Ashmole 1511 'Item de wlturibus'; Av., Cap. xliii, pp.198-201. For other bestiary manuscripts where Hugh's bird entries are copied out, see: Aberdeen MS. 24; Harvard MS. Typ 101; Caius MS. 372/621; BL MS. Harley 4751; BL MS. Royal 10.A.vii; MS. Ashmole 1511 (above mentioned); MS. Bodley 602; MS. Bodley 764; Oxford MS. Douce 151; and University College (Oxford) MS. 120.

[55] F. McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 36

[56] Here Hugh states that the vulture follows an army: 'Vultur siquidem exercitum sequitur'. Here 'exercitum' must be read in the accusative singular to represent an 'army' or 'group of men'. This makes grammatical sense, whilst corresponding to the earlier Isidorian tradition of vultures following soldiers. Hugh, of course, was extremely familiar with Isidore, and even quotes his sayings later in the vulture entry. Av. Cap. lxiii, pp.200-3.

[57] McCulloch mentions similar habits in a range of French and Latin bestiaries throughout the high Middle ages. What McCulloch does not note is that the vulture following soldiers in battle also appears in Hugh's text. See: McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* 184-6; Av. Cap. xliii, pp.199-203; Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 1511, & MS. Bodley 764.

[58] Bartholomew writes the most substantial account of the vulture's sense of smell. Other manuscripts that indicate the vulture's smell are sparse, and often of a later (and quite separate) vernacular literary tradition associated with the courtly *Bestiaire d'amour*. Given this, and that he published his work about ten years before Frederick, it is most probable that the nameless target of Frederick's challenge was none other than him.

[59] Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. vii. (12), p.264; Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturalis*, Lib. x, Cap. lxxxviii, pp.412-5. Note that whilst the sense of smell is taken from Pliny, the structure of the entry follows the pattern of Isidore. Bartholomew cites both Pliny and Isidore as direct sources, as well as Aristotle later in the passage.

this through sight as Isidore (and others) had maintained,[60] Bartholomew cites Pliny to suggest vultures locate carrion through an acute sense of smell.[61] This is found in both Latin and Middle-English editions of Bartholomew's work, where he incorporates a Plinean sense of smell into an Isidorian account of the bird (prompting the contemporary response of Frederick):

> He [Pliny] further says that in this bird the sense of smell is great, and they can sense the odour of carrion from afar. That is to say, they can sense carrion even beyond the sea.[62]

Whilst Bartholomew makes the Plinian assertion that vultures locate carrion by smell, for the most part, this medieval postulation is unique to him.[63] In fact, a close reading of the preceding tradition on vultures (to which the second-family bestiary tradition was central) reveals a strong Isidorian emphasis on the bird's remarkable sight.[64] The relevant passage is found in book twelve of the *Etymologies*, just prior to his moralisation of the bird:

> Vultures, just like eagles, can sense carrion even beyond the seas; indeed, when they are flying high, they can *see* many things from their height that are otherwise hidden by obscuring mountains.[65]

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[60] This is discussed in greater depth below.

[61] McCulloch mentions Pliny as a possible source for the vulture's sense of 'smell' (present in very few medieval manuscripts). However, McCulloch quotes another part of Pliny's text, and says that vulture's smell 'is not explicitly stated'. This, however, is untrue, as Pliny does state the vulture's keen ability to smell by comparison to man, the eagle, and the mole elsewhere in his work. 'Ex sensibus ante cetera homini tactus, dein gustatus; reliquis superatur a multis. aquilae clarius cernunt, vultures sagacius odorantur, liquidius audiunt talpae'. This translates as: 'Among the senses, that of touch in man ranks before all the other species, and taste next; but in the remaining senses he is surpassed by many other creatures. Eagles have clearer sight, vultures a keener sense of smell, moles acuter hearing.' See: Pliny the Elder, *Historia naturalis*, Lib.. x, Cap. lxxxviii, pp.412-5.

[62] The Latin editions of both Korberger (1483), and Husner (1505), contain identical entries on the vulture's smell. The transcription here, as well as the Latin translation above, are my own: 'Dicit etiam ideo quod maximus sensus olfatus in hac aue. Unde et sentiunt odore cadauere a remotis. enim ultra mare sentiunt cadauera.' As can be seen below, the way Bartholomew writes about the vulture is strikingly similar to Isidore, with the addition of Pliny's emphasis on smell, rather than Isidore's emphasis on sight. See also: DPR, Vol. i, Lib. xxii, Cap. Xxxvi, pp.642-4.

[63] There is also a mention of the vulture's smell in the contemporary work of Thomas of Cantimpré, the *Liber de natura rerum*. Since Thomas also composed his work before Frederick, this raises the possibility that Frederick responded to more than one text. However, Thomas' assertion is brief and relies upon the same sources as Bartholomew. See: Thomas de Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum: edition princeps secundum codices manuscriptos* (Berlin, Walter de Gruyter: 1973), Book 5, chapter 58, 230. For the most part Thomas repeats Isidore, but with the addition of 'Volando olens cadaver respicit', meaning 'By soaring, the smelling vulture looks for carrion.' This addition is most-likely inspired by Pliny, whom he mentions as a source in the prologue to his text (pages 3-5 of the Latin edition).

[64] Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. vii, (12), p.264. Isidore's entry here, is repeated word-for-word in prominent second-family bestiaries, such as MS. Bodley 764, and MS. Ashmole 1511. This is discussed in greater depth below.

[65] Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. vii, (12), p.264: 'Uultures autem, sicut et aquilae, etiam ultra maria cadauera sentiunt; altius quippe uolantes multa, quae montium obscuritate celantur, ex alto illae conspiciunt.'

Comparatively, the striking similarity between the respective passages of Bartholomew and Isidore (of sensing even beyond the sea) reveal that Pliny provides only an attribute of the vulture used by Bartholomew, whereas Isidore provides the framework for the entire entry. To appreciate the significance of this, it is needful to comprehend Isidore's place in the broader moralising tradition.

Isidore's writings on animals, and especially its arrangement, were immensely popular throughout the Middle Ages.[66] As such, their influence can be easily identified in the arrangement of medieval zoological writings in the broader bestiary tradition.[67] For instance, the mid-thirteenth-century second-family manuscript MS Bodley 764, asserts that: 'vultures, however, like eagles *sense carrion* even beyond the seas.'[68] Whilst identifiable again from the mention of sensing beyond the sea, of most significance here is the phrase 'cadauera sentiunt', which is borrowed directly from Isidore's text. In fact, a close examination of MS. Bodley 764 reveals its opening sentences are taken entirely from Isidore's earlier entry, with practically no variation at all.[69] Both the text of Isidore, and that of MS. Bodley 764, clarify the use of 'sentire' (to sense) in relation to vultures by then referring to 'conspicere' (to see) in the sentences that follow. An attentiveness to this detail calls modern translations of MS. Bodley 764 into question, and firmly argue for the bird's sight (rather than its ability to smell).[70]

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[66] Clark & McMunn, *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*, 3.

[67] The first-family bestiary tradition was defined by James because of the way in incorporates Isidore's *Etymologies* with the *Physiologus*. Isidore continues to feature in the tradition as it flourishes throughout the mid-twelfth to late-thirteenth centuries.

[68] MS. Bodley 764, f. 61^{v}. 'uultures autem sicut et aquile etiam ultra maria cadauera sentiunt.' The above translation is my own.

[69] To quote MS. Bodley 764, f. 61^{v}, linea i-vii: 'Uultur a uolatu tardo nominata putatur. Magnitudine quippe corporis praepetes uolatus non habet. Uultures autem sicut et aquilae etiam ultra maria cadauera sentiunt. Altius quippe uolantes multa quae montium obscuritate celantur. sed ex alto illi conspiciunt.' This compares with Isidore's text which reads: 'Vultur a uolatu tardo nominata putatur: magnitudine quippe corporis praepetes uolatus non habet. *Harum quasdam dicunt concubitu non misceri, et sine copula concipere et generare; natos que earum paene usque ad centum annos procedere.* Vultures autem, sicut et aquilae, etiam ultra maria cadauera sentiunt; altius quippe uolantes multa, quae montium obscuritate celantur, ex alto illae conspiciunt.' Etym. Lib. xii, Cap. vii, (12), p.264. As can be seen, with some only very minor variations, the passages are identical. The only significant difference is that MS. Bodley 764 omits the sentence here italicised.

[70] Barber's choice of the English word 'scent' in his translation is misleading. Suggesting 'scent' instead of

The similarities present in Isidore's *Etymologies* and MS. Bodley 764 begin to reassert a narrative about the vulture that was popular from the seventh to the thirteenth centuries. It is important to realise, however, that the transmission of ideas throughout the bestiary tradition is complex, and often multi-layered. Whilst the presence of Isidore in later bestiary manuscripts is undeniable, what prompted the vulture's inclusion, especially considering its absence in first-family bestiaries such as the British Library's Stowe 1067, requires a much deeper analysis.[71] Only by looking out into the wider intellectual landscape in which a bestiary manuscript was situated, and tracing the complex transmission of the ideas it contains, can one begin to understand the category to which it ought to be assigned as well as a better understanding of the interests and vocations of their (known) authors.

It is clear that MS. Bodley 764 is reflective of a broader Latin moralising textual tradition that peaked in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.[72] It is also, however, a younger sibling to the twelfth-century MS. Ashmole 1511, also held in the Bodleian Library.[73] MS. Bodley 764 and MS. Ashmole 1511 possess very similar entries on the vulture, especially in relation to Isidore's *Etymologies*.[74] Before appearing in MS. Bodley 764, for instance, Isidore's sentences on the eyesight of the vulture and the eagle were transmitted through MS. Ashmole 1511 with the same opening sentences appearing in both.[75] This transmission of Isidore is significant, in that it indicates the survival of certain zoological characteristics throughout a

'sense' and 'corpses' instead of 'carrion' is a deviation from the Latin of both the Bestiary, and the *Etymologiae* of Isidore from which it was copied. Clearly, 'cadauera sentiunt' is properly translated as 'sense carrion' rather than 'can scent corpses'. In addition to the translations above, see: R. Barber, *Bestiary: Being an English Version of the Bodleian Library, Oxford MS. Bodley 764* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), 126.

[71] BL Stowe 1067. Dating to the first-half of the twelfth century, this manuscript demonstrates an amalgamation of parts of the Anonymous Physiologus, and the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville. It is, however, important to note that Isidore's section on the vulture does not feature in this manuscript. This prompts questions about what inspired the vulture's presence in the later second-family group of manuscripts.

[72] Clark & McMunn, *Beasts and Birds of the Middle Ages*, 4.

[73] C. de Hamel, "Introduction," in *Book of Beasts: A Facsimile of MS Bodley 764*, (ed.), C. de Hamel (Broad Street, Oxford: The Bodleian Library, 2008), 5.

[74] A comparison between MS. Bodley 764, f. 61^{v}, and the first vulture entry in MS. Ashmole 1511 (the one that precedes Hugh of Fouilloy's entry) reveals remarkable similarities.

[75] The Isidorian line appears in both manuscraipts: 'Uultur a uolatu tardo nominata putatur. Magnitudine quippe corporis praepetes uolatus non habet.'

period of fundamental change within the bestiary tradition.[76] Yet the continuity of Isidore in English second-family bestiary manuscripts is further significant in so far as it demonstrates that Bartholomew was writing in continuity with his forebears, especially on birds.

Returning to Bartholomew, it is important to note that there is some evidence that ancient authors, beyond Pliny, emphasised the bird's ability to smell.[77] However, it is worth stressing that beyond Pliny (who is named), the transmission of these authors is difficult to trace in the medieval textual tradition. The vulture's sense of smell seldom emerges as a recognisable contemporary characteristic of medieval zoological texts and is not a feature of the most prominent second-family Latin manuscripts.[78] The most significant aspect of Bartholomew's text, therefore, lies beyond its agreement or disagreement with ancient sources; and rather with the patristic authors whose works (with Isidore) informed the structure and content of the broader tradition.

The textual prominence of the vulture's sight in the bulk of bestiary manuscripts, an

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[76] The distinction between families of bestiary manuscripts according to the development of animal entries was first devised by Montague Rhodes James in the early twentieth century. See: M. James, 'The Bestiary', *Histor*y, 16:61 (1931), 1-11.

[77] As is seen above, Pliny is quoted by Bartholomew on this very trait. But very few other sources suggest the same. Mynott, for instance, cites Dionysius as one who asserts that 'vultures are quickly attracted to carrion from great distances because of their acute sense of smell'. In so doing Mynott states that this has recently become 'recognised as having a scientific basis'. However, it would seem that Mynott quotes a series of studies conducted on Turkey Vultures ('Cathartes aura') and American Black Vultures ('Coragyps atratus'), neither of which Dionysius, Frederick II, or any ancient or medieval European author for that matter, would have been able to write about, since their writings are dated several hundred years before the discovery of the New World. J. Mynott, *Birds in the Ancient World: Winged Words* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 174. Additionally, Lucretius' *De rerum natura* states: 'And therefore bees are drawn through the air to any distance by the scent of honey, vultures by carrion.' 'ideoque per auras mellis apes quamvis longe ducuntur odore, volturiique cadaveribus.' Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, (tran.), W. Rouse, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1975), Lib. iv.80. pp.328-9. The vulture's ability to smell can also be inferred from Ambrose's *Hexaemeron*, and it is possible that Bartholomew was aware of this. This can be seen in book five of Ambrose's text where paragraph 79 concludes with a discussion of the odour of death, and paragraph 81 commences with the question: 'I shall put this question before you: Why are vultures able *by certain indications* to foretell a man's death?', 'Interrogabo te, tu autem responde mihi unde uultures mortem hominum signis quibusdam adnuntiare consueuerint'. Since Ambrose does not explicitly link odour and the vulture's ability to smell (at best this connection can only be inferred), and other medieval zoologists either do not pick up on the inference, or choose to ignore it, Pliny emerges as Bartholomew's main source. See: Hex. AM, Dies. v, Cap. xxiii, Par. lxxix-lxxxi, pp. 197-8.

[78] This can be gleaned from individual manuscripts in the second-family tradition, and is evident in McCulloch's notes on the vulture: McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* 184-6. Here McCulloch notes the vulture's main attributes, with smell only emerging as a recognisable feature of later French manuscripts. This, for example, is seen in the Old French Cumbrai Bestiary, and later courtly culture, where smell becomes a prominent feature of the bird. See: E. Ham, 'The Cambrai Bestiary,' *Modern Philology*, 36, (1939), 233-7.

idea transmitted through the popularity of Isidore, appears to have patristic origins. In his *De civitate Dei*, Augustine posed the question: 'Could man match the eye-sight of eagles and vultures? Or the sense of smell of dogs?'[79] From this, the idea that vultures have a keen eye-sight comparable to the eagle, and that a keen sense of smell belongs to another creature, is evident enough. Further, the reference to the 'eye of the vulture' of the Vulgate features in Gregory the Great's *Moralia in Iob* where the imagery of Job 28.7 is used to speak about the inability of natural sight to foresee, or comprehend, the resurrection.[80] Influenced by both Augustine and Gregory, Hugh of Fouilloy's twelfth century *Aviarium* explicitly employs the imagery of Job 27.8. Given its own popularity, its bird entries subsequently appear in later second-family manuscripts; with the scripture Job 28.7 (including the phrase 'oculus uulturis') being copied in full in the marginalia of MS Ashmole 1511.[81]

Furthermore, the popularity of Hugh's text is attested to by its significant influence on the development of second-family bestiary manuscripts. This is clearly seen in the vulture entry of MS Ashmole 1511, but it is also seen across the secondary-family tradition where Hugh's earlier twelfth-century entries emerge in a number of manuscripts. As Clark demonstrates, with the exception of 'Harvard, Dubrowsky II, the Aberdeen Group, Sidney Sussex, Bodley 602, Cremona, Lyell, St Victor, Rome, St Amand and the vernacular versions', all illustrated *Aviaria* include Hugh's Latin inscriptions of the vulture: 'Occulus vulturis est intentio Redemptoris' ('The eye of the vulture is the purpose of the Redeemer'). What is more, bestiary manuscripts incorporating Hugh's textual expositions on birds from his *Aviarium* include: Aberdeen, University Library MS. 24; Harvard (Cambridge, MA, Houghton Library MS. Typ 101); Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College MS. 372/621; London, British Library MS. Harley

[79] DCD, Lib. viii, Cap. xv. 'quis hominum uidendo aequabitur aquilis et uulturibus? quis odorando canibus?' The translation above is my own.
[80] Mor.I., Lib. xviii, Par. xxxiv.
[81] Clark, 'Catalogue of Illuminated Aviary Manuscripts' in *The Medieval Book of Birds*, 267-311. See also: Appendix b.

4751; London, British Library MS. Royal 10.A.vii; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Ashmole 1511 (above mentioned); Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Bodley 602; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Bodley 764; Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Douce 151; and Oxford, University College MS. 120. With the exception of Harvard (which is French), and MS Bodley 602 (a transitional bestiary), all these manuscripts are English Second-family Bestiaries.[82]

Concluding Remarks and Next Steps

Given the contemporary manuscript culture, both the anomalous nature of Bartholomew's 'smelling' vulture (alongside Bartholomew's place in the bestiary tradition) suggests that, despite Frederick's own claims of novelty (and certainly the positivism projected onto his *De arte uenandi cum aibus* by modern historiographers of science),[83] the vulture of the *De arte uenandi cum auibus* shares much in common with the broader theological tradition it sought to refute. The fact that theological accounts of birds agreed in many respects with Frederick's descriptions is something that is either seldom or never mentioned within the historiographical tradition. Despite the claims of Haskins, Grant, and others, this in turn suggests that Frederick selectively challenged contemporary ideas about the vulture without acknowledging the harmonious nature of the broader tradition's emphasis on the vulture's sight. Whilst it is more likely that this was conducted in order to distinguish the noble art of falconry (as a literary tradition) from contemporary theological writings (reflected in the bestiary manuscript tradition), it also demonstrates that Frederick had little regard for whether

[82] Clark, 'Catalogue of Illuminated Aviary Manuscripts' in *The Medieval Book of Birds*, 267-311; Av., Cap. lxiii, pp.200-3. In addition to Hugh's text, see: MS Ashmole 1511 'Item de wlturibus'. This additional section, appearing on the verso of the folio on the vulture, is copied word-for-word from Hugh of Fouilloy's *Aviarium*. Interestingly, in the left-hand margin, Job 28.7 (which also appears in the body of the text without the scriptural reference) has been copied out in a different hand. Though, for some reason, the scribe is under the impression that the verse corresponds with Job 28.6. This may have been the case in the scribe's contemporary version of the Vulgate, which chapter and verse divisions may have differed. Also, a slight difference between the text body and the marginalia of MS. Ashmole 1511 is only that the body of the text quotes the scriptural phrase 'eye of the vulture' as 'oculos vulturis'; whereas the marginalia corrects the case ending (in alignment with the Vulgate), and reads: 'oculus vulturis'.

[83] Haskins, *Studies in the History of Mediaeval Science,* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1924), 299-326; Hays, *Birds, Beasts, and Men,* 47-50; van Cleve, *The Emperor Frederick II of Hohenstaufen,* 13-7; Masson, 'An Emperor's Views on Falconry,' 1890-92.

the characteristic he challenged was anomalous or representative of the tradition to which it belonged. Given Frederick's disingenuous claims of novelty, it is unfortunate that Frederick's vulture has resulted, paradoxically, in modern assumptions of its genuine novelty resulting from a corresponding lack of thorough historiographical investigation.

What is more, Bartholomew's emphasis on the vulture's smell presents seeming contradictions and points of departure between authors working in the same textual tradition. This observation prompts a need to interrogate relevant contemporaneous texts on vultures, and prompts the question, to be considered in what follows, of how medieval theological ideas about birds relate to inherited exegetical practice. Leaving Frederick's text to one side, such an approach suggests that the nature of Bartholomew's interest in the vulture is found in the inherited thought that informed it, and aims to place medieval ideas about the vulture within a broader, and connected, moralised theological tradition, irrespective of particular characteristics sometimes emphasised, sometimes not. The question left to be answered, therefore, is not how zoological texts and ideas were different from one another, but how, in spite of their inevitable differences, should contemporary and modern readers read the moralisations they contain.

Chapter Five

A Sacrament of Fish and Birds: Turning to the Exegetes

A Theological Enterprise

Despite its somewhat anomalous reference to the vulture's sense of smell, Bartholomew the Englishman's *De proprietatibus rerum* contains considerable parallels with figurative birds of prey in the Vulgate. Chapter four has already shown how Isidore informed much of the structure and content of Bartholomew's vulture (if not every particularity).[1] It has further been suggested that the figurative language of the broader bestiary tradition, of which Bartholomew's text was part, paralleled patristic ideas about the attributes of the vulture, such as its remarkable eyesight.[2] However, comprehending how the figurative vulture grew out of a wider exegetical tradition that developed from the patristic period through to the Middle Ages, requires an understanding of how patristic exegetical practice informed the process of figuratively expositing medieval birds. In turn, this enables a recognition of the vulture as a sacramental point of contact between God and humans, understood in much the same way as scripture. This sort of re-evaluation of Bartholomew's text, therefore, becomes theological, and places the idea of zoological exposition into a larger exegetical conversation where humans both apprehend and respond to the voice of God, sounding throughout the created world.

Considering Scripture as Sound

The medieval vulture gives pause for a reconsideration of the medieval understanding of scripture. This is because the creation of high-medieval expositions on birds, at least those produced in the monasteries and schools, is so often intertwined with biblical expositions.[3]

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[1] See the section titled '*The Importance of Bartholomew the Englishman'* in chapter four of this thesis.
[2] A comparison between Bartholomew's text, extant bestiary manuscripts, and passages from Augustine and Gregory the Great is conducted in chapter four. Again, see '*The Importance of Bartholomew the Englishman'* in chapter four of this thesis.
[3] On this, Clark states: 'Towering over all medieval writing was the Bible, source and inspiration for many theological treatises and commentaries… Alongside these imposing works is a smaller, less formal body of medieval literature also steeped in the Bible, but designed to appeal to the lower orders of the Church and to lay people. Prominent in this category are the books of animal allegory, or bestiaries.' W. Clark, (ed.), *The*

Perhaps the most pertinent examples can be located in authors who produce heuristic treatises on the interpretation of scripture, and who simultaneously participate in what might be termed 'zoological' exposition. A good example is to be found in Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon*.

In a passage on scripture, Hugh shows how the language of creatures contained within the text parallels the actual created world (outside of the text), and is used to make divine Wisdom visible (though of itself, it is invisible):

> And the divine Wisdom ['divina sapientia'], which the Father has uttered out of his heart, invisible in Itself, is recognised through creatures and in them ['per creaturas et in creaturis']. From this is most surely gathered how profound is the understanding to be sought in the Sacred Writings ['sacris litteris'], in which we come through the word to a concept ['per vocem ad intellectum'], through the concept to a thing ['per intellectum ad rem'], through the thing to its idea ['per rem ad rationem'], and through its idea arrive at Truth ['per rationem pervenitur ad veritatem'].[4]

Specifically, Hugh here presents the idea that scripture, or even 'Sacred Writings' ('sacris litteris' as he refers to them), parallels the created world. Just as Divine Wisdom ('Sapientia'), that is to say the Second Person of the Trinity,[5] can be recognised 'in and through' created things, so too can Truth be apprehended through a figurative reading of creation reproduced textually.[6] Seeing sense outside of the page (as well as within it), such a reading of Hugh becomes transformative. This is especially so when applied to writings produced by other Augustinian Canons working essentially in the Victorine tradition, such as Alexander

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Medieval Book of Birds: Hugh of Fouilloy's Aviarium, (Binghamton, New York: 1992), 'The Author and the Text', 1-5.

[4] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97: 'et diuina sapientia, quam de corde suo Pater eructauit, in se inuisibilis, per creaturas et in creaturis agnoscitur. ex quo nimirum colligitur, quam profunda in sacris litteris requirenda sit intelligentia, ubi per uocem ad intellectum, per intellectum ad rem, per rem ad rationem, per rationem peruenitur ad ueritatem.'

[5] F. Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', *Augustinian Studies,* 37:2, (2006), 219-46.

[6] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97.

Neckam.[7] In the case of Neckam, and as demonstrated in chapter one, writings presumed to be scientific, or limited to the phenomena of physical sight or sensory perception, are exposed as extended exercises in biblical exposition, wherein God awaits (re)discovery. In other words, from an initial engagement with Hugh and Neckam, it would seem that figurative expositions on creation were specifically written as a mode of conveying God's presence. Hugh's guide to expositing a sacred text, therefore, provides an insight into the world inhabited by medieval theologians, and draws attention to the fact that an exposition produced in the monasteries or the schools was a reflective engagement with the medieval theologian's surrounding environment.

To follow Hugh and Neckam, perhaps it is only *through* the medium of the physical senses that the divine reality of God can be seen in created realities present throughout the medieval world, whether within or outside of the text. This considered, it is fitting that Hugh's passage from book five of his *Didascalicon* describes the reading of 'Sacred Writings' as a fivefold process where the human subject moves through word, concept, thing, and idea, before finally arriving at the Truth.[8] Despite Taylor's English rendering of 'word', the Latin term Hugh uses is actually 'vocem' meaning 'voice' or 'sound'.[9] And it is precisely the figurative function of 'voice' that well captures the medieval conception of scripture, where the 'sound' or 'voice' of God's spirit speaks through the various biblical authors, and awaits discovery in either reading *or hearing*.[10] What Hugh provides, therefore, is not only the process through which Divine Wisdom and Truth can be apprehended, but also an indication of the human senses through which Divine Wisdom and Truth can be experienced.

That scripture pertains to the ears, as well as the eyes, of its human recipients, is further

[7] See the discussion in chapter one of the thesis.
[8] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97
[9] Didas., Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97 '…quam profunda in sacris litteris requirenda sit intelligentia, ubi per uocem ad intellectum, per intellectum ad rem, per rem ad rationem, per rationem peruenitur ad ueritatem.'
[10] DS, Lib. i, Pars. viii, Cap. xii, p.149.

made clear by Hugh in his *De sacramentis christianae fidei*. Here Hugh states: 'The Scriptures have to do with impressions on the body: on the eyes if one reads them; or on the ears, if one has heard them.'[11] In many respects, this way of conceptualising scripture is strikingly similar to the approach of the earlier medieval exegete, Gregory the Great. As Gregory argues in the preface of his *Moralia in Iob*, just as it would be ridiculous to presume the scribe of a letter to also be the author of that letter, so it is ridiculous to think of man, who has scribbled scripture into written language, as the author of scripture. Rather, to Gregory, the author is the voice of the Holy Spirit, dictating:

> The search for the author of this book is certainly a vain one, because we believe in truth that the author is the Holy Spirit. The author of a book is the one who dictated it.[12]

Considering Hugh in light of Gregory's observations, the medieval conception of scripture emphasises the authority of author and voice; the reader or listener finds the inspired Word of God as both united and harmonious, and dictated to their human senses.[13] Despite the presence of many biblical authors, and subsequently many patristic and medieval biblical commentators, it is God's spirit that ensures unanimity and is thought to speak throughout the biblical books and their corresponding biblical commentaries, sounding out into the created world.[14]

Shifting focus to the medieval reception of scripture, then, the Word of God becomes a reality to be received by the physical senses of the perceiving human subject, rather than merely something to be discerned in textual reading. A recognition of this moves scripture away from the modern 'historical-critical model of exegesis' and toward its authoritative living reality as

[11] DS, Lib. ii, Pars. xviii, Cap. xvii, p.473.
[12] Mor.I., 'praef.' Pars. i. 'praef.', pp.57-8: 'Sed quis haec scripserit, ualde superuacue quaeritur, cum tamen auctor libri spiritus sanctus fideliter credatur. Ipse igitur haec scripsit, qui scribenda dictauit.'
[13] Smalley comments on Origen's conception of scripture as a mirrior, reflecting its divine harmonious underpinnings. See: B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1978), 86–97.
[14] E. Poleg, *Approaching the Bible in Medieval England,* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 2.

conceived by medieval exegetes.[15] In other words, this recognition begins to look outward from the physical pages on which scripture is written, or even the monastic libraries in which it is contained and studied, and into the created world where its letter shapes, and word forms, can be sounded out audibly for its intended human audience, reflecting the very world they inhabit.

To demonstrate, the medieval understanding of scripture, found in Hugh, is described in Harrison's discussion on scripture and preaching in the early church, where she sees the role of the preacher as one who brings scripture to the life of the senses. This articulation of the wider pre-modern context of scripture sets the scene for understanding medieval exegesis:

> …the preacher was himself first and foremost a listener, before he could become a speaker: to Christ, the inner teacher; to Scripture, the Word of God. Between himself and his listeners there was always an inspired text which he attempted to communicate, through spoken words, to his congregation. The elusive, but crucial, moments, first, of the 'voicing' of Scripture by the preacher, and then of the hearing or imprinting of Scripture on the minds of his hearers, are the ones we need to pay attention to, for in them Scripture speaks; it is no longer a text to be read, but becomes a matter of speaking and listening, of communication, conversation – in a real sense it comes alive and enters the realm of time, change, and the senses, demanding a response, interpretation, imaginative appropriation, and ethical action.[16]

Here, the importance of community is introduced into the experience of a text. To be sure, whatever is written can be seen and processed through the act of reading. More significantly, however, scripture can be vocalised and processed through the communal act of preaching and

[15] L. Ayers, 'Patristic and Medieval Theologies of Scripture: An Introduction', in *Christian Theologies of Scripture: A Comparative Introduction*, (ed.) J. Holcomb, (New York: New York University Press, 2006), 11.
[16] C. Harrison, *The Art of Listening in the Early Church*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 150.

hearing: a hearing of the human sound of scripture.[17] This conception of scripture is especially relevant when approaching an adequate definition of scripture throughout the High Middle Ages, and gives context to the idea that a figurative exposition was supposed to be etched or sounded out, so that its audience could experience it with their human senses. As William of Malmesbury put it in his *Liber super explanationem Lamentationum Ieremiae Prophetae*: 'we cannot know or express incorporeal things ['res incorporeas'] without using corporeal sounds ['corporeis sonis']'.[18]

As Harrison demonstrates, the importance of scripture as voice and sound is found prominently in patristic writings.[19] For instance, in book four of his *De doctrina Christiana*, it is fitting that Augustine repeatedly refers to sound in scripture, drawing upon the biblical 'sound of the psaltery'.[20] And, in the first book of the *De doctrina Christina,* Augustine states that whilst all human activity is ultimately unworthy of God, the human voice has been sanctioned for praising God:

> Yet although nothing can be spoken in a way worthy of God, he has sanctioned the homage of the human voice, and chosen that we should derive pleasure from our words in praise of him.[21]

As well as sanctioning the human voice for God's own praising, as Augustine suggests here, in his *De Genesi ad Litteram* Augustine further suggests that God's very utterances in Scripture, utterances given by himself in time, are sounded through a bodily voice, one that is

[17] Tiegreen speaks about liturgical performance and the human senses in the Middle Ages: C. Tiegreen, 'Heaven on Earth in Medieval Europe: Material Expressions of an Immaterial Realm', PhD Thesis, History Department: Georgia State University, (2021), 131-47.
[18] LSEL, Lib. i, Cap. i, Ver. Xix, p.113. 'res incorporeas sine corporeis sonis nec nosse nec enuntiare possumus.'
[19] Harrison, *The Art of Listening*, 87-96. Here Harrison speaks of the reciprocal nature of catechesis in the early church, where the fathers observe how instruction from scripture is heard and received. Of the examples Harrison cites, most relevant are those from Augustine, John Chrysostom, Ambrose, and Cyril of Jerusalem.
[20] DDC, Lib. iv, 17(49), 216-7; 19 (55-6), pp.220-1. The phrase Augustine uses here is 'vocem psalterii'.
[21] DDC, Lib. I, 6(14), pp.16-9. 'Et tamen deus, cum de illo nihil digne dici possit, admisit humanae vocis obsequium et verbis nostris in laude sua gaudere nos voluit.'

external to his own substance, by creatures under his command.[22]

Further, in the preface of the *De doctrina Christiana*, Augustine communicates the importance of humans both vocalising scripture and carrying it to the senses of (other) human hearers.[23] Warning against those who might reject the need for human preachers to mediate the Word of God, Augustine emphatically states that the tangible and perceptible elements of human liturgy, sacrament, and worship are, in fact, useful and indispensable ways of communicating the mystery of God to all humans. This he articulates through the respective conversions of Paul and Cornelius which, as divinely instituted as they may appear to be be, can never escape the very human element of sound.[24] The passage is lengthy, but it conveys an extremely important point:

> No, they should learn, without any pride, what has to be learned from a human teacher; and those responsible for teaching others should pass on, without pride or jealousy, the knowledge they have received. Let us not tempt the one in whom we have placed our trust, or we may be deceived by the adversary's cunning and perversity and become unwilling even to go to church to hear and learn the gospel or to read the biblical text or listen to it being read and preached, preferring to wait until 'we are caught up into the third heaven, whether in the body or out of the body' (in the words of the apostle), and there hear 'words that cannot be expressed, which a human being may not utter' or see the Lord Jesus Christ in person and hear the gospel from him rather than from men. Let us beware of such arrogant and dangerous temptations, and rather reflect that the apostle Paul, no less, though prostrated and then enlightened by a divine voice from heaven, was

[22] DGAL, Lib. ix, 2(3), pp.377-8.
[23] DDC, 5(11)-6(12), 'praef.', pp.6-7 (As quoted below).
[24] DDC, (11)-6(12), 'praef.', pp.6-7 (As quoted below). Augustine uses the verb 'audire' ('to hear') in relation to receiving the gospel as it is preached from the biblical text.

> sent to a human being to receive the sacrament of baptism and be joined to the church. And Cornelius the centurion, although an angel announced to him that his prayers had been heard and his acts of charity remembered, was nevertheless put under the tuition of Peter not only to receive the sacrament but also to learn what should be the objects of his faith, hope, and love.[25]

Here, Augustine describes the human teacher as one who mediates the divine voice through reading aloud, or preaching, from the biblical text. What is more, the biblical examples Augustine uses of Paul and Cornelius each convey this indispensable human-divine mode of expression through the idea of sacrament ('sacramentum').

Sacrament, Sound, and Scripture: Augustine and Hugh of St Victor

That Augustine speaks of scripture as voice in relation to the sacrament of baptism is significant. Citing the conversion of Paul, Augustine first emphasises that Paul's moment of enlightenment came in the form of 'a divine voice from heaven' ('divina et caelesti voce') before noting Paul's very-human participation in the sacrament of baptism.[26] Through this, and other examples, Augustine's broader conception of 'sacramentum', as harmoniously blending both the divine incorporeal and the human corporeal worlds, emerges into view.[27] And it is

[25] DDC, (11)-6(12), 'praef.', pp.6-7 'Immo vero et quod per hominem discendum est, sine superbia discat, et per quem docetur alius, sine superbia et sine invidia tradat quod accepit; neque temptemus eum cui credidimus, ne talibus inimici versutiis et perversitate decepti ad ipsum quoque audiendum evangelium atque discendum nolimus ire in ecclesias aut codicem legere aut legentem praedicantemque hominem audire et exspectemus rapi usque in tertium caelum sive in corpore sive extra corpus, sicut dicit apostolus, et ibi audire ineffabilia verba quae non licet homini loqui, aut ibi videre dominum Iesum Christum et ab illo potius quam ab hominibus audire evangelium. Caveamus tales temptationes superbissimas et periculosissimas magisque cogitemus et ipsum apostolum Paulum, licet divina et caelesti voce prostratum et instructum, ad hominem tamen missum esse ut sacramenta perciperet atque copularetur ecclesiae; et centurionem Cornelium, quamvis exauditas orationes eius elemosinasque respectas ei angelus nuntiaverit, Petro tamen traditum imbuendum, per quem non solum sacramenta perciperet sed etiam quid credendum quid sperandum quid diligendum esset audiret.'

[26] DDC, (11)-6(12), 'praef.', pp.6-7

[27] The importance of the 'human expositor', so that divine truth may be mediated through the sound of human voice, is continued in Augustine's preface with the examples of Philip receiving instruction from a eunuch and Moses turning to Jethro for advice. The relevant section here, states: 'But if he reads and understands without any *human expositor*, why does he then aspire to expound it to others and not simply refer them to God so that they too may understand it by God's inner teaching rather than through a human intermediary?' 'Sed cum legit et nullo sibi hominum exponente intellegit, cur ipse aliis affectat exponere ac non potius eos remittit deo, ut ipsi quoque non per hominem sed illo intus docente intellegant?' DDC, 8(16), 'praef.', pp.8-9. In this respect, the opening of Augustine's entire text mirrors its closing, as Augustine concludes his 'lengthy' work with the note that, 'but it is not too long for the reader *or hearer* who welcomes it.' '…sed legenti vel audienti cui gratus est

precisely this conception of 'sacramentum' that provides a model for understanding human engagement with scripture in the High Middle Ages.

In commenting on Augustine's conception of 'sacramentum', it is important to draw attention to its unsystematic nature. Rather than presented explicitly through a theological summa, it is found implicitly through several of Augustine's written excursions on human history, experience, and salvation. For this reason, it has been described as 'pervasive but often indirect' in the Western tradition.[28] Certainly, Augustine's thought revolves around the Latin terms 'mysterium' (from the Greek 'mustērion/mysterion'') and 'sacramentum'.[29] However, his use of these terms has applicability beyond the 'traditional' sacraments such as baptism, marriage, and the Eucharist; doctrines which would not receive formal systematic treatment until the time of Peter Lombard and his followers in the late twelfth-century schools of Paris.[30] Therefore, although Augustine's thought on sacramental mystery includes baptism, marriage, and 'the Lord's cup', his conception of 'sacramentum' was more expansive than later systematic developments that have since become traditional in the Western Church.[31]

According to Lienhard, Augustine broadly defines 'sacramentum' as sensible realities that signify 'spiritual or supernatural realities'.[32] This is confirmed by Macy, who suggests that Augustine's basic concept of 'sacramentum' is seen in both 'outward signs that point… to the spiritual reality, but also to the spiritual reality itself', which would align with the idea of

longus non est.' DDC, Lib. iv, 64(166), pp.284-5. Augustine's work on interpreting scripture thus appeals to the human sense of 'hearing', as a means of hearing God's voice in the world, and not merely seeing it on the page.
[28] G. Macy, 'Sacramental Theology' in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, (eds.) K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[29] Macy, 'Sacramental Theology'. See also: M. Hellwig, 'Sacrament: Christian Sacraments', in *Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 12,* (ed.) L. Jones, (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 7958-64; E. Cutrone, 'Sacraments', in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia*, (ed.) A. Fitzgerald, (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishings, 1999), 741-8.
[30] J. Lienhard, '*Sacramentum* and the Eucharist in St. Augustine', *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review*, 77:2, (2013), 174-5.
[31] J. Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine, Vol. 3, The Growth of Medieval Theology,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 29-30. See also: G. Macy, 'Sacramental Theology'. Macy notes the controversy of real presence, the influence of Berengar, and twelfth-century paradigmatic developments that make the historical development of sacramental theology complex.
[32] Lienhard, '*Sacramentum*', 178.

'mysterium' as an object or thing awaiting spiritual interpretation.[33] Viewed this way, and in light of Augustine's exposition on the conversions of Paul and Cornelius, 'sacramentum' becomes a way of apprehending divine realities through the realities of the human, sensible, world, or even hearing the divine realities of God through the realities of human sound. Indeed, in each of the examples Augustine provides, the reader sees 'sacramentum' at play in the human world where, despite the textual presence of angels and voices from heaven, a human Paul goes to another human to be baptised, and a human Cornelius goes to a human Peter for further instruction.

However, to suggest that 'sacramentum' is limited to signification would be misleading. In Augustine's *De doctrina christiana,* he asserts that in all existent things ('res') there are both things that are ('res') and things that signify ('signum').[34] But this is not to say that every sign ('signa') is necessarily a sacrament ('sacramentum'). More than Leinhard's definition suggests, a sacrament ('sacramentum') is not merely a mystery to be discovered, rather, it is a divine/spiritual reality that has a transformative effect upon the recipient through faith, and is communicated through a corporeal reality. In this sense, a sacrament does not just signify, but it communicates God's transformative power, enabling the faithful (and responding) recipient through grace.

As Augustine argues, the respective conversions of Paul and Cornelius, despite being initiated through the divine providence of voices and lights from heaven, are found when each goes to a human to receive the sacrament ('sacramentum') of baptism, through human voice and sound.[35] Strikingly, in book eight of the *Confessiones,* Augustine's own conversion in the Milan garden embodies this definition of 'sacramentum'. After saying 'I hear a voice' ('audio vocem'), Augustine interprets the children playing and singing 'tolle lege, tolle lege' as a

[33] G. Macy, 'Sacramental Theology'.
[34] DDC, Lib. i, 4(7)-4(10), pp.15-7.
[35] DDC, (11)-6(12), 'praef.', pp.6-7

sign.[36] Remembering the conversion of Antony, 'as if what he was reading was being *spoken* for himself' ('tamquam sibi diceretur quod legebatur'),[37] this prompts Augustine's own reading of scripture through an act of bibliomancy, a reading he describes as transformative on account of his faithful response. After reading scripture, he says:

> I neither wanted nor needed to read further. Immediately the end of the sentence was like a light of sanctuary poured into my heart; every shadow of doubt melted away… For you converted me to you, not to seek either a wife or any worldly hope, but to take my stand on that rule of faith.[38]

As Augustine anticipates, there may be some who, like the third critic in the preface to his *De doctrina christiana*, argue that divine illumination comes to humans without any recourse to human learning (or perhaps the experience of the human senses), but only as a gift from God.[39] This, if taken as a rule, would undermine the importance of human learning in Christian living and, more significantly, present a challenge to the transformative power of 'sacramenta' which relies upon the faithful human's apprehension of God's grace through corporeal things. Therefore, Augustine sees this approach to scripture and sacrament as particularly problematic and as anomalous rather than indicative of human experience, perhaps akin to someone who declares their God-given ability to read without first having learned the alphabet.[40] As Augustine goes on to say:

> My argument is with Christians who congratulate themselves on a knowledge of the holy scriptures gained without any human guidance and who – if their claim is valid – thus enjoy a real and substantial blessing. But they must admit

[36] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29), pp. 408-9.
[37] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29), pp.410-1.
[38] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29-30), pp.410-3. 'statim quippe cume fine huiusce sententiae quasi luce securitatis infusa cordi meo omnes dubitationis Tenebrae diffugerunt…convertisti enim me ad te, ut nec uxorem quaererem nec aliquam spem saeculi huius, stans in ea regula fidei.'
[39] DDC, 2(3), 'praef.', pp.2-3.
[40] DDC, 5(8-9), 'praef.', pp.5-6. Interestingly, in book six of his *Didascalicon*, Hugh of St Victor also appeals to the importance of learning the alphabet before one can even read their name: Didas. Lib. vi, Cap.. iii, p.136.

> that each one of us learnt our native language by habitually hearing it spoken from the very beginnings of childhood, and acquired others – Greek, Hebrew, or whatever – either by hearing them in the same way or by learning them from a human teacher.[41]

Integral to apprehending God's divine reality is, for Augustine, that which can be experienced with the human bodily senses and, therefore, that which conveys the reality of God in human terms. Or, to put it another way, when viewed as a signifier of the divine (or even a communicator of God's grace through sacrament), corporeal realities, including sounds that can be heard with the human ear, become part of the process of illumination in the human quest to experience God in the human world.[42]

Turning to the twelfth century, Hugh of St Victor conceptualises 'sacramentum' in a similar way to Augustine. On a very basic level, Hugh describes apprehending God as a process that must include the experience of the physical human senses.[43] Significantly, Hugh's writings embody a twelfth-century Augustinian reception that would, in turn, enjoy their own significant

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[41] DDC, 5(9), 'praef.', pp.5-7. 'Certe enim quoniam cum Christianis nobis res est qui se scripturas sanctas sine duce homine nosse gaudent et, si ita est, vero et non mediocri gaudent bono, concedant necesse est unum quemque nostrum et ab ineunte pueritia consuetudine audiendi linguam suam didicisse et aliam aliquam vel graecam vel hebraeam vel quamlibet ceterarum aut similiter audiendo aut per hominen praeceptorem accepisse.'

[42] In book thirteen of Augustine's *Confessiones* mentions the oral tradition of preaching in relation to 'sacramentum': 'With my pen acting like a tongue, when am I up to the task of proclaiming all your encouragements and all your terrors, the consolations and directions, by which you convinced me to preach your word and minister your sacrament to your people?', Quando autem sufficio lingua calami enuntiare omnia hortamenta tua et omnes terrores tuos, et consolationes et gubernationes, quibus me perduxisti praedicare verbum et sacramentum tuum dispensare populo tuo?'. Conf. Lib. xiii, 2(2), pp.192-3.

[43] F. Battles, "Hugo of Saint-Victor as a Moral Allegorist." *Church History*, 18:4, (1949), 221. As Battles observes, in Hugh's writings, Augustine was second only to the bible.

The extent to which Hugh's contributions to medieval theology were shaped by Augustine cannot be underestimated. Hugh praises Augustine, explicitly writing how his mental ability surpasses both Origen and Jerome, and how there are simply not enough days or nights to read and write on his massive corpus. Didas. Lib. iv, Cap. xiv, p.115. See also: H. Feiss, (ed.), *Achard of Saint Victor:* Works, (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 2001), 'Introduction', 55-7. Medieval authors commonly refered to Augustine as 'father Augustine', seen in works by Peter the Venerable and Ivo of Chartres. See: G. Constable, *"Love and Do what You Will": The Medieval History of an Augustinian Precept, Morton W. Bloomfield Lectures IV* (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 1999), 10-3.

Hugh's presence at St Victor impacted Richard and Achard, the latter of whom composed a sermon '*On the Solemnity of St Augustine'* where he (like Hugh) consciously praised Augustine as 'our great father.' On the published edition of Achard's sermons, see: Achard de Saint-Victor, *Sermons inédits,* (Paris: J. Vrin, 1970). See also: J. Châtillon, 'Sermons et prédicateurs victorins de la seconde moitié du xii^{e} siècle', AHDLMA, 32 (Année 1965), 7-60.

reception from the twelfth century, well into the fifteenth.[44] Whilst Hugh's absorption of Augustine's thought is undoubtedly reflective of a broader Augustinian atmosphere throughout the twelfth-century schools and monasteries, there are particularly striking parallels between the two authors on the issue of 'sacramentum', something Hugh undoubtedly gleaned from Augustine.[45]

The similarity between Hugh and Augustine on how each conceive of 'sacramentum' can be found in book one of the *De sacramentis*. Hugh, like Augustine, draws upon the human senses figuratively. After speaking about humans being superior to the elements of the earth, Hugh notes (somewhat ironically) that salvation actually depends on the human ability to use these elements appropriately and, in so doing, to 'see' both the visible things of the earth and the invisible things of God, simultaneously, so that the stimulation of the human physical senses (through corporeal, visible things) may transform human nature through the act of receiving.[46] For clarity, Hugh states:

> The sacraments ['sacramenta'] were also instituted on account of instruction, that through that which is seen without in the sacrament in the visible species the human mind may be instructed to recognise the invisible virtue which consists within the thing of the sacrament. For man who knew visible things and did not know the invisible could by no means have recognised divine things unless stimulated by the human. And on this account while the

[44] The Bodleian Library's *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain* database lists several extant manuscript copies of Hugh's *Didascalicon* and *De sacramentis* dating from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries. Hugh's presence across the English Channel over the course of several centuries attests to his strong and continuous medieval reception. Manuscript copies of the *Didascalicon* and *De sacramentis* survive in: Bridlington, Lanthony, Leicester, Burton, Glastonbury, York, Canterbury, Dover, Westminster, Waltham, Bury, Crowland, Reading, Rochester, Thorney, Whitby, Titchfield, Welbeck, Aberdeen, Eton, Rotherham, Winchester, Oxford, Cambridge, Revesby, Durham, and so on. See: *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*. Bodleian Libraries, (2018). See also, R. Sharpe, 'List of Identifications', Latest Revision 15 October 2015, 1-938.

[45] M. Schrama, 'The Office in Honour of Saint Augustine: An Unknown Work of Rupert of Deutz', *Augustiniana*, 54:1/4, (2004), 589-651. Schrama explores the influence of Augustine in twelfth-cenutry monasteries and schools, including Benedictine, Cistercian, and Victorine. See also Constable's article on the reception of the Augustinian precept of love. See: Constable, *"Love and Do What You Will",* 1-41.

[46] DS, Lib. i, Pars. ix, Cap. iii, Col. 319-20.

> invisible good which he lost is returned to him the signification of the same is furnished him without through visible species, that he may be stimulated without and restored within; so in that which he handles and sees he may recognise of what nature that is which he received and does not see.[47]

To Hugh, then, 'sacramentum' requires both the stimulation of the human physical eye, as well as an awakening of the mind's eye, and becomes a way for humans to engage in the elements of the world in which they live, not only to recognise the divine presence of God within the world, but to receive it and have their natures transformed by it.[48]

Sacrament, Sound, and Scripture: Augustine in the Twelfth Century

Hugh's articulation of 'sacramentum' in his *De sacramentis* has relevance for examining an Augustinian theology of sight and sound in the High Middle Ages, especially one that is conscious of figurative readings of scripture.[49] In this sense, Augustine's approach to scripture as sound can be traced through a number of later medieval treatises where – like that found within scripture – the figurative sense of all created things can potentially (but not necessarily) perform a sacramental function. Whilst 'sacramentum' is a distinct mode of God's grace being communicated to humans through faith, it is also connected to a theology of things and signs and the nature of figurative exegesis. For this reason, it is worth briefly revisiting Augustine's theology of sound, before again tracing its reception in high-medieval treatises beyond Hugh.

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[47] DS, Lib. i, Pars. ix, Cap. iii, Col. 320. 'Propter eruditionem quoque instituta sunt sacramenta, ut per id quod foris in sacramento in specie visibili cernitur, ad invisibilem virtutem quae intus in re sacramenti constat agnoscendam mens humana erudiatur. Homo enim qui visibilia noverat, invisibilia non noverat; divina agnoscere nullatenus posset nisi humanis excitatus. Et idcirco dum ei bonum invisibile quod admiserat redditur, foris ei ejusdem significatio per species visibiles adhibetur, ut foris excitetur; et intus reparetur, ut in eo quod tractat et videt, agnoscat quale sit quod percipit et non videt.'

[48] Coolman notes how Hugh perceives uncreated Beauty within created things, using the terms 'pulchritudo invisibilis' and 'pulchritudo visibilis': B. Coolman, '"Pulchrum esse": The Beauty of Scripture, the Beauty of the Soul, and the Art of Exegesis in Hugh of St. Victor', *Traditio,* 58, (2003), 176-7.

[49] Coolman, '"Pulchrum esse"', 175-8.

Augustine's theology of sound has attracted modern scholarly attention, not least for the implications this might have on understandings of the traditional divide between one's inner and outer life; the idea that even the innermost human thought is, in fact, a form of dialogue.[50] However, an appreciation of this sort is also found within Slocum's work, who writes how Augustine's musical semiotics has both 'possibilities as a sounding art' as well as 'metaphysical qualities', and therefore 'could act as a *speculum* of the universe, a means whereby one might apprehend the harmony of God's creation.'[51]

The relevance of Slocum's observations to Augustine's conception of scripture is further made clear, in that passages of the *De doctrina christiana* are presented alongside the *De musica* to demonstrate how musical sound – much like the art of reading and writing – can be utilised to make visible the invisible things of God, or rather make audible the otherwise inaudible things of God.[52] All this is done in order to 'ascertain what is eternal and spiritual from corporeal and temporal things.'[53] In other words, it is in Augustine that a strong case is made for the place of human sound in both understanding and receiving the Word of God. And it is for this reason that Augustine states in book thirteen of his *Confessiones*, that:

> The reason why all these words have to be physically spoken aloud is the abyss of this world and the blindness of our flesh, which mean that thoughts cannot be perceived, and thus need to be dinned into our ears.[54]

[50] Even Don Cupitt's Nonrealism owes a debt to Augustine's emphasis on audible human conversation, which Cupitt sees as central to Augustine's conversion in book ten of the *Confessiones*. See: D. Cupitt, *Solar Ethics*, (London: SCM Press, 1995), 23-8.
[51] K. Slocum, '*De doctrina christiana* and Musical Semiotics in Medieval Culture', in *Reading and Wisdom: The De doctrina christiana of Augustine in the Middle Ages*, (ed.) E. English, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 143.
[52] See also: C. Harrison, *On Music, Sense, Affect, and Voice,* (London: T&T Clark, 2019).
[53] Slocum, '*De doctrina christiana* and Musical Semiotics', 150-1. Here, Slocum quotes from book one of the *De doctrina christiana*: DDC, Lib. i, 4(9), pp.16-7. Whilst Slocum uses Robertson's translation, for consistency, I have presented Green's translation above. 'hoc est ut de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus aeterna et spiritalia capiamus.'
[54] Conf. Lib. xiii, pp.394-5. 'Quibus omnibus vocibus corporaliter enuntiandis causa est abyssus saeculi et caecitas carnis, qua cogitata non possunt videri, ut opus sit instrepere in auribus.'

Notwithstanding the fact Augustine's conception of scripture *as sound* has captured the attention of the modern scholar, such an approach to scripture was commonplace throughout the High Middle Ages.[55] Even Peter Abelard's *Sic et non* begins with the basic understanding of scripture as the spirit of the Father, *speaking* in humans,[56] leading Abelard to pose the question, taking account of the Fall:

> What wonder is it that, if that spirit – through which these things were written *and dictated*, and by which they were intimated to these writers – is absent in us, and understanding of them is lacking in us?[57]

Like many of his contemporaries, Abelard was immersed in a culture where scripture was read aloud for both the instruction and edification of those who heard it. In the schools of Paris, the practice of reading the bible aloud saw the development of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, where the teacher had the text of the bible together with various commentaries from accepted authorities.[58] Often associated with the scholastic career of Abelard's contemporary and rival, Anselm of Laon, the medieval Gloss stood as an aid for teaching aloud, in such a way that references never became a part of the text. As Smith notes:

> This was still a teaching culture where the spoken word predominated, with success in oral exposition, whether commenting on the biblical text or dealing with questions arising from it, was what made a master's reputation.[59]

First and foremost, therefore, the practice of reading the medieval bible was rooted in an oral tradition, where the human voice gave sound to the voice of God.

In many respects, the size and influence of the oral tradition in the Middle Ages

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[55] Again, see: Harrison, *Music, Sense, Affect, and Voice*, 109-51.
[56] SN, Lin. vi, 'prol.', p.89. Here, Abelard quotes Matthew 10.20 for support. 'For it is not you that speak but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you', 'Non enim vos estis qui loquimini, sed spiritus patris vestri qui loquitur in vobis.'
[57] SN, Lin. ix, 'prol.', p.89. 'Quid itaque mirum si absente nobis spiritu ipso, per quem ea et scripta sunt et dictata atque ipso quoque scriptoribus intimata, ipsorum nobis desit intelligentia?'
[58] L. Smith, *The Glossa Ordinaria: The Making of a Medieval Bible Commentary,* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 193-5.
[59] Smith, *Glossa Ordinaria,* 194.

transcends the bible and is seen throughout contemporary culture. In fact, the basic underlying concept of text as symbol awaiting vocalisation, can be found in high-medieval commentaries on grammar, being one of the arts belonging to the Trivium. John of Salisbury, for instance, says of learning to read through discerning letter shapes as symbols: 'it [reading aloud] introduces wisdom both through the ears and eyes by its facilitation of verbal intercourse. Words admitted into our ears knock on and arouse our understanding.'[60] John, of course, attributes this perspective on grammar to Augustine who, in addition to writing specifically on the oral preaching of the bible (above), writes his own discourses on the human ascent to wisdom with reference to the human senses.[61] The very idea that a written text was brought to life through communal reading and hearing, potentially connects the medieval understanding of the bible with all acts of reading, wherein the Wisdom of God may be apprehended through the sound of human voice.[62]

The importance of scripture as 'voice' being imprinted 'on the minds of… hearers' has considerable implications for the way medieval expositions (whether scriptural or otherwise) are read and understood. In much the same way as the bible and the Fathers were read aloud by the abbot of a monastery or school, so that the listening community could receive the Word through the communal act of hearing,[63] so too were zoological expositions designed to be read aloud, sometimes in the very same places and often as part of the very same exercises. Bernard of Clairvaux, for instance, opens his sermon on the biblical Canticles by addressing his

[60] Meta. Lib. i, Cap. xiii, pp.37-8. '…tam per aures quam per oculos ut sic procedat oratio sapientiam introducit. Verba enim per aurem intromissa pulsant et excitant intellectum...'
[61] See chapter one of this thesis. See also: B. Brennan, 'Augustine's "De Musica"', *Vigiliae Christianae,* 42:3, (1988), 267-81.
[62] On hearing and seeing with reference to John of Salisbury, see: M. Clancy, *From Memory to Written Record: England 1066-1307,* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013), 255-61.
[63] This is found in Bruzelius' article on Clarrisan architecture in the thirteenth century, where women's orders were physically separated from male clerics from whom they received the sacraments. Often receiving the sacraments audibly, but not visually, through curtains, screens, and chambered gates, women's religious experience took place through hearing, rather than seeing. In this way, the transformative grace of the sacraments took the form of sound, and participation required the reciprocal use of human voice through reading, chant, and prayer: C. Bruzelius, 'Hearing is Believing: Clarissan architecture, c. 1213-1340', in *Medieval Religion: New Approaches,* (ed.), C. Hoffman Berman, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 272-89.

'brothers' in the monastery with reference to the mortification of their senses to receive the divine spirit of God.[64] Not only does Bernard deliver this collection of his sermons orally in the Cistercian monastery, but within them he also provides great insight on the spiritual nature of 'sight' and 'hearing'. This he does through a figurative exposition on the dove and the human senses:

> You no longer occupy yourself with great affairs or marvels beyond your scope, but like that guileless bird who builds her nest in the crevices of the rock, you are content to be unpretentious, to linger near my wounds, happy to contemplate with dove-like eyes the mysteries of my Incarnation and Passion.
>
> However, since the Holy Spirit appeared in the form of this bird, the vision commended to us under the sign of a dove is not mere simple gazing but spiritual contemplation. I think too that we should refer this present text back to the one where the companions promise to make ornaments for her ears, not, as I pointed out, with the purpose of adorning her bodily ears *but to fashion the hearing of her heart*.[65] As a consequence, with a heart made purer by the faith that comes from hearing, she is more fully equipped to see where previously she failed. And since by accepting the ornaments she notably acquired a keener power of spiritual understanding, she became pleasing to the Bridegroom who always prefers to be seen in a spiritual manner.[66]

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[64] CC, Ser. i, 1(1)-2(4), pp.1-3.

[65] CC, Ser. xlv, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6. Where Walsh translates 'sed informare auditum cordis' as 'but to prepare the ear of her heart', I have translated it as 'but to fashion the hearing of her heart'. This better distinguishes the noun 'auris' ('the ear') from 'auditus' ('the hearing'). I have also translated 'informare' as 'fashion' rather than prepare, as this preserves Bernard's poetical expression in Latin where he uses 'ornare' ('to adorn') in relation to bodily ears, followed by 'informare' ('to shape/fashion') in relation to the hearing of the heart.

[66] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6. 'Ergo: oculi tui columbarum. Iam, inquit, non ambulas in magnis, neque in mirabilibus super te; sed instar simplicissimae volucris contenta es simplicioribus, nidificans in foraminibus petrae, meis vulneribus immorans, et libenter ea quae sunt de me, dumtaxat incarnato et passo, oculo intuens columbino. Aut certe, quia in specie avis huius Spiritus Sanctus apparuit, spiritualis magis quam simplex in ea intuitus columbae nomine commendatur. Et si placeat, oportet referas capitulum praesens ad id, quod paulo ante

Bernard's words are a remarkably clear example of the way a written text, whether scripture or commentary on scripture, is brought to the life of the senses by the medieval exegete. Just as John of Salisbury remarks that hearing can 'arouse our [human] understanding' ('excitant intellectum'), Bernard figuratively draws upon 'bodily ears' ('auris corporis') as a way of communicating with the 'hearing of the heart' ('auditum cordis').[67] Bernard goes on to explain how this 'hearing of the heart' attunes the 'spiritual understanding' ('intelligentiam spiritualem').[68] In both John and Bernard, the reader observes the way medieval schoolmen and monks actively engage a range of human senses, so that an inner spiritual sense may be realised. In John, the philosophical term 'intellectum' is used.[69] In Bernard, the mystical sense of the heart 'cor' is used to enhance the understanding ('intelligentia').[70] In both, therefore, it is the figurative sense of human hearing that enables an apprehension of God, sounding out, in the created world.

Towards A Sacrament of Birds: Setting the Scene

Whilst the above examples have begun to broach the ideas of scripture and sacrament, present in Augustine, Hugh, and Bernard, it is striking that Bernard's biblical expositions expose a figuratve dimension of birds. In fact, that Bernard uses both birds and the human senses to articulate the workings of an inner figurative sense, offers the reader or listener an important insight not just into medieval exposition, but into medieval zoological expositions across a range of authors. In comparable fashion to the way Anselm of Canterbury and Alexander Neckam exposit the human sense of sight to convey a deeper sense of seeing (discussed in chapter one), so too does Bernard figuratively exposit animals, sight, and hearing

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sodales muraenulas ei facere aureas promiserunt, non intendentes, ut tunc docui, ornare aures corporis, sed informare auditum cordis. Potuit itaque fieri, ut fide, quae est ex auditu, corde amplius mundato, ad videndum, quod ante non poterat, instructior redderetur. Et quoniam de acceptis muraenulis in visu acutiori ad intelligentiam spiritualem visa est profecisse, placuit sponso, cui semper, quod in se est, placet magis videri in spiritu.'

[67] Meta., Lib i, Cap. xiii, pp.37-8; CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.

[68] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.

[69] Meta., Lib i, Cap. xiii, pp.37-8

[70] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.

to articulate the same process, whereby the perceiving human is able to apprehend divine Wisdom itself.[71] It is fitting that, in explaining this process, Bernard uses the sight of the dove to distinguish the simple act of seeing (with the physical eye) from the more complete spiritual act of seeing (with the mind's eye).[72] Moreover, Bernard then clarifies the contrast between the physical and the spiritual senses by figuratively using sound and hearing before remarking that the Bridegroom, perhaps the greatest example of figurative exposition at work within the Old and New Testaments, is seen in this same manner.[73] What Bernard introduces in this passage, therefore, is the connected nature of sound and animals, which are figuratively intertwined to articulate divine things, even the presence of God Himself in the created human world.

In the above passage on the dove, Bernard is engaged in a mode of medieval figurative exegesis. The form or appearance ('species') of a dove represents something present in the human world, that can be seen with physical sight or heard with physical ears, and yet also conveys God's presence in the mind's eye or within the heart's ear.[74] In an Augustinian sense, the sense of the dove becomes figurative ('figura'), in that it presents itself as one thing but figuratively denotes another thing.[75] This approach to reading can be traced back to the various senses of scripture found in patristic exegetical practice, and has received the scholarly attention of de Lubac, Dawson, and Robertson, with Dawson making a cogent argument for the use of the term 'figura' when speaking about what others refer to as the spiritual sense of scripture.[76] Developed under Gregory the Great, this mode of figurative exegesis was adopted

[71] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.
[72] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.
[73] Following the early church Fathers, the figurative bridegroom was prevalent throughout the Middle Ages, particularly in sermons on the Song of Songs. The major work in this field that of Denys Turner: D. Turner, *Eros and Allegory: Medieval Exegesis of the Song of Songs,* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1995); Copeland & Struck, *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory,* 1-12; 39-54; 101-16; 148-61.
[74] CC, Ser. xl, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.
[75] D. Dawson, 'Figure, Allegory', in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* (ed.) A. Fitzgerald, (Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1999), 365-8.
[76] Dawson, 'Figure, Allegory', 365-8; see also: D. Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1992), 4; T. Harmon, 'Historicism Versus History and Spirit: Henri de Lubac on What We Can Learn from Studying Origen', *Logos: A Journal of Catholic*

by Bernard and Hugh (among others), and placed great emphasis on exposing the figurative sense of things contained in scripture through a process of reading, interpretation, preaching (reading aloud), and writing.[77]

It is important to state that the idea of figurative exposition is not necessarily sacramental. Any passage that signifies a deeper layer of intention cannot, therefore, be necessarily regarded as 'sacramentum'. It is significant, however, to observe that 'sacramentum' is defined as a sacred sign.[78] And that the symbolic nature of scripture is, at times, articulated by Augustine through the terms 'sacramentum', 'mysterium', 'figura', and 'prophetia' when it 'identifies the mystery of Christ', and when its visible words are 'received in faith.'[79] To this end, the figurative sense of scripture, and the hermeneutical mode of exposing a deeper mysterious layer of intention through preaching (human sound), interpretation, and writing (commentary, or figurative expositions) becomes potentially sacramental, as if it is received in faith, it has transformative potential. Augustine's conversion in the Milan garden, therefore, views the Pauline passage from Romans, and the figurative meaning discovered in voices of playful children, as sacramental only because of its transformative effect on Augustine following his faithful response and, indeed, the process of Augustine dictating the episode in his *Confessiones* as a form of 'narratio'[80] for other faithful readers to see and hear.[81]

In Hugh's *De sacramentis* the assertion is made that humans, in their postlapsarian condition, find themselves divided between taking 'sacraments of the devil' and 'sacraments

Thought and Culture, 19:3, (2016), 29-30; D. Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading,* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), 38-71.
[77] Robertson, *Lectio Divina,* 57-71.
[78] E. Cutrone, 'Sacraments, Sacraments as a Sacred Sign, Sacraments are Visible Words, Sacramental Formulations', in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* 741-7.
[79] Cutrone, 'Sacraments as a Sacred Sign, Sacraments are Visible Words', in *Augustine through the Ages: An Encyclopedia,* 742-5.
[80] Harrison, *The Art of Listening,* 102-7.
[81] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(29-30), 408-13. The scripture Augustine quotes is Romans 13.13-4.

of Christ' in the created world.[82] And it is precisely into this world that God Himself enters as the 'Incarnate Word' (in Hugh's terminology), or as the 'Bridegroom' (in Bernard's), or even as 'Sapientia', that is to say 'Divine Wisdom', (to use an Augustinian term common across the writings of Hugh and Bernard).[83] Furthermore, as Southern observes, when Neckam comments on the nature of his biblical and moral lectures on Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, and Canticles, books full of natural and zoological figurative expositions, he too refers to them as a human dialogue with Wisdom.[84] Therefore, God as Word ('Logos') being etched or sounded out in human terms, whether through scripture or figurative expositions on the created the world, is a God who awaits apprehension by humans; a Creator awaiting discovery in creation. When considered in this light, and as one may expect, the figurative sense of medieval birds, whether painted, sculpted, or written, is crafted or sounded out in the world for human eyes and ears, both signifying and embodying the presence of the (Incarnate) God in the created world, in much the same way as scripture. Faithful participation in this sort of mode of figurative exposition, whereby medieval birds symbolically denote the mystery of Christ in both scripture and the created world, becomes potentially sacramental. As Harrison explains in relation to Augustine, creation, scripture, and sacrament:

> Creation, therefore, like Scripture, assumes the nature of a book, witnessing to its author: like Scripture and the Incarnation of the Word of God, it contains and engenders symbols, allegories, and, indeed, sacraments, which enable its invisible, spiritual sense—its Creator—to be seen more clearly through and in the visible. For example, in *Epistula* 55, Augustine describes natural phenomena being used as a parable to symbolize divine mysteries and

[82] DS, Lib. i, Pars. viii, Cap. xi, pp.148-9.
[83] DS, Lib. i, Pars. viii, Cap. xi, p.149.
[84] Balliol College, MS 40, folio 116^{v}, cited in: Southern, 'From Schools to University', 23.

> explain spiritual truths, by drawing comparisons from them, or by using them sacramentally.[85]

To understand how figurative readings of medieval birds may be used sacramentally to communicate the Incarnate God, it is needful to trace parallels with birds contained in the Vulgate. Bartholomew the Englishman's seemingly anomalous claim about the vulture's sense of smell was considered in relation to near-contemporary texts which engaged with his claim.[86] More significant, it would seem, are the parallels between medieval and biblical bird expositions in how each are used to convey the Person of Jesus. For instance, in similar fashion to Bartholomew's vulture, and in pursuing the theme of birds of prey seeking out the dead, Matthew 24 uses the eagle to figuratively signify the way Christ seeks out the dead. This process is articulated through the inevitability of eagles discovering and swarming around carrion.[87] To turn to the chapter in question:

> For as lightning cometh out of the east and appeareth even into the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Wheresoever the body shall be, there shall *the eagles also be gathered together*.[88]

The first observation on this passage might be that Jerome's Vulgate identifies the birds not as 'uultures' (as Bartholomew's text does) but as 'aquilae', which literally translates as 'eagles'. The significance of the scripture, however, is discovered in its emphasis on birds of prey swarming, or gathering, around a body; much the same as various descriptions of vultures in later medieval texts.[89] While debates over whether vultures 'smell' or 'see' (or use both

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[85] C. Harrison, *Beauty and Revelation in the Thought of Saint Augustine,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 120.
[86] See chapter four of this thesis, especially in relation to Frederick II's 'experiments' with the sight and smell of the vulture.
[87] Whilst the Vulgate and Challoner's revision of the Douay-Rheims read 'eagles' ('aquilae'), the New Revised Standard renders the birds as 'vultures'. Whatever the identity of the birds, however, of most significance is the idea of them locating and swarming around bodies.
[88] St Matthew 24.27-28. 'sicut enim fulgur exit ab oriente et paret usque in occidentem, ita erit et adventus Filii hominis. Ubicumque fuerit corpus, illuc congregabuntur *aquilae*.'
[89] The manner in which vultures gather around bodies to feed has been discussed above.

senses) when sensing carrion may emerge in contemporaneous discussion, the fact remains that a sizable body of texts, from Ambrose to MS. Bodley 764, maintain the vulture's association with bodies.[90] Although an obvious point to make, the historiographical focus on 'sight' and 'smell' is one that is distracted by particularities, thereby distancing itself from the central exegetical concern at hand. The real significance of the vulture is that carrion, or literal corporeal bodies, are sought out, often over vast distances. Put simply, it is not *how* vultures sense, but *that* they sense the bodies of the dead; something asserted of the eagle in the Vulgate.[91]

In comparable fashion to Matthew's figurative use of the eagle, the book of Job figuratively exposits the vulture. Contained within the poetic response of Job in dialogue with Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar (who each, in the biblical narrative, speculate that Job's suffering may be divine retribution for an evil act), is the figurative use of 'oculus uulturis', or the eye of the vulture.[92]

> The bird hath not known the path, neither hath the eye of the vulture beheld it.[93]

Here, the Vulgate's figurative use of 'oculus uulturis' is used to contrast the natural with the

[90] See sections on the vulture in Ambrose, Basil, Origen, Augustine, Isidore, Gregory the Great, Jacques de Vitry, Peter the Chanter, Peter Comestor, Peter the Venerable, Second-family bestiary manuscripts, Thomas de Cantimpré, Bartholomew the Englishman, Frederick II, and Hugh of Fouilloy. To cite sources in addition to those above: Hex. AM, Dies v, Cap. xxiii, Par. 81, p.198; Basilius, *Homiliarum VIII Basilii Magni interpretatio Latina*, Ser. 4, p.74; Origenes, *In Leuiticum homiliae,* hom. 7, par. 7, 392; AII, Cap. v, p.516; Etym., Lib. xii, Cap. vii; Mor.I., Lib. xviii, Par. xxxiv; Iacobus de Vitriaco, *Sermones uulgares uel ad status,* Ser. xxiv, Par. xv, p.452; Petrus Cantor, *Summa quae dicitur Verbum adbreuiatum*, Cap. lxxviii, p.411; Petrus Comestor, *Historia scholastica*, Historia libri Danielis, Cap. v, 1453; Petrus Venerabilis, *De miraculis libri duo*, Lib. i, Cap. xiv; Thomas de Cantimpré, *Liber de natura rerum,* Lib. v, Cap. lviii, p.230. The association of vultures with bodies can also be found prior to Ambrose in the writings of Seneca, Pliny the Elder, and Lucretius. See: Seneca, *Epistulae morales ad Lucilium*, Epist. xcv, Par. xliii, p.450; Plinius maior, *Naturalis historia*, Lib. xxx, Par. xcii, Vol. iv, p.454; Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, Lib. iv. (80), pp.328-9.

[91] In various texts connected to the second-family bestiary entry, it is the vulture's attraction to a body that is significant. It is not *the way* it is attracted to it particularly, and certainly not whether this conforms to modern scientific understandings of the vulture's behaviour.

[92] In Job 4.7, Eliphaz is the first of Job's friends to posit the question: 'Remember, I pray thee, whoever perished being innocent? or when were the just destroyed?' 'recordare obsecro te quis umquam innocens perierit aut quando recti deleti sint?' Augustine writes on this point following his exposition on the vulture. See: AII, Cap. v, p.516.

[93] Job 28.7. 'semitam ignoravit avis nec intuitus est oculus uulturis.'

divine. In the next few verses, reference is made to God's divine all-seeing eye which brings hidden things to light.[94] The 'oculus uulturis' is, therefore, used as the supreme example of natural sight which, despite its greatness, simply cannot penetrate the hidden things of God.[95]

Perfectly encapsulating this approach to the eagle as figurative symbol drawn from the bible, Gerald of Wales writes in his *Topographia Hibernica*:

> These birds eye with fixed gaze the full effulgence of the solar rays; and it is reported that they teach their young to do the same, though unwilling. Hence eagles ('aquilae') are so called from their piercing eyes ('acumine'). Thus contemplative men strive to fix the whole powers of their mind without distractions on the very essence of the Divine majesty, and on the true sun of righteousness, and, putting their hands to the plough of the heavenly paradise, do not look backward. The fathers[96] of the church also, in order to accustom their sons in tender age to that which is good, teach them to turn the eyes of the soul to the intuition and the desire of the divine light.[97]

From here, Gerald goes on to draw out a moralised exhortation for those attempting to discern mysteries contained in scripture.[98] Significantly, therefore, this part of Gerald's text incorporates the figurative eagle of scripture, associated with both eyesight and the sun, into

[94] Job 28.10-11: '…his eye hath seen every precious thing. The depths also of rivers he hath searched, and hidden things he hath brought forth to light.' '…omne pretiosum vidit oculus eius. profunda quoque fluviorum scrutatus est et abscondita produxit in lucem.'
[95] Hugh of Fouilloy makes this same point, though in Augustinian fashion he suggests that physical sight is the nearest of all physical senses to inner sight. See: Av., Prol. I, pp.116-7.
[96] I have preserved Forester's translation of 'parens/parentes' as 'fathers', given the noun is used in relation to the church 'ecclesiasticus'.
[97] TH, Dist. i, Cap. xiii, pp.39-40. 'Aves istae in ipsos solaris corporis radios irreverberato lumine aciem defigunt oculorum; tenerosque fetus, ut fertur, ad idem erudiunt vel invitos. Unde et ab oculorum acumnie aquilae dicuntur. Sic viri contemplativi in ipsam divinae majestatis naturam, verumque justitiae solem, toto et indeflexo mentis tendunt intuitu; et ad aratrum coelestis paradisi manum mittentes, retro non respiciunt. Ecclesiastici quoque parentes filios in tenera aetate ut bonis assuescant, ad divini luminis intuitum simul et desiderium oculos dirigere docent interiores.'
[98] TH, Dist. i, Cap. ix, pp.39-40.

his own zoological exposition, wherein God as the 'divine light' ('divini luminis')[99] awaits discovery.

In quite a remarkable way, the parallels between medieval and biblical expositions on birds point toward the bird as figurative symbol, whether a vulture, eagle, or (as shall later be demonstrated) a dove or pelican. Common across these examples, is that all serve to articulate God's presence in the created world, and potentially God's salvific and transformative power. Noting these references in the Vulgate, where eagles and vultures are used figuratively to convey the resurrection or divine omniscience, it is tempting to presume direct parallels with the mass of expositions on the vulture produced in the High Middle Ages. This is especially so when individual attempts were made by medieval authors to describe the vulture's cry, and animal expositions so frequently articulated ideas about the divine.[100] However, medieval biblical expositions on animals (including those found in Isidore) were almost always read through, and inherited from, patristic exegetes. As such, figurative expositions on birds formed part of a much longer, and well-established tradition found in patristic exegetical practice with its use and purpose mirroring that of late antiquity.[101] What is more, an exploration of patristic exegetical practice becomes key to comprehending medieval zoological expositions, and understanding how each might be used, or viewed, as a sacrament according to context.

Towards a Sacrament of Birds: Patristic and Medieval Exegesis

As has been made clear throughout this thesis, adequately interpreting medieval figurative expositions on animals is a complex enterprise. Not only are these expositions formulated in response to growing intellectual trends and competing literary cultures, but they

[99] TH, Dist. i, cap. xiii, p.40.
[100] Alexander Neckam's *Suppletion Defectuum* references the sound of the vulture's cry, through the Latin verb 'pulsare'. SD, Dist. i, Ver: liii. 'pulsat uultur'. Figurative animal expositions often used the language of the sense, such as sight, in order to expose things perceptible only to inner sight, especially in Neckam's works. See chapter one 'A Deeper Sense of Seeing'.
[101] H. de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: Volume One, The Four Senses of Scripture,* (tran.), M. Sebanc (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998), 15-40. Here, de Lubac takes the reader from the fourfold senses and 'allegoria' in Origen, to 'scripture and revelation' in the School of St Victor.

also contribute to a long-standing tradition of exegetical practice whilst innovatively engaging in contemporaneous readings of scripture. It is true that chapter one of the thesis has already begun to demonstrate this sort of complexity with respect to Anselm and Neckam on the phenomenon of sight. And in this same effort, the hermeneutical sense of animals in Neckam's *De visu*, including the owl, bat, eagle, and the horse, has also been considered in relation to 'figura' or 'allegoria'.[102] However, it is now necessary to turn greater attention to the Christian conception of the world, and how this relates to scripture and 'sacramentum' with a view to more clearly appreciate what might be termed 'figurative exposition'.

Patristic exegetical practice places emphasis on the figurative, rather than merely the literal, sense of a scriptural passage.[103] This is the foundation for the hermeneutical model that de Lubac re-constructs, a model that accepts that the hiddenness of God is a reality that is revealed through the semiotics of scripture, and therefore certain divine realities must guide and order human reading of the sacred page so that God might reveal Himself.[104] de Lubac advocates the process of discovering the hidden things of God in the mystery of Christ; or the realities of God, which at first appear to be mystery but are to be realised through signs.[105] Expressed elsewhere, de Lubac sees a need to understand the 'objective structure' and 'distinctive characteristics' of scriptural interpretation according to divine order.[106]

Such was the reception of patristic exegetical practice in the High Middle Ages, that this emphasising of the figurative is key to both the composition and interpretation of medieval figurative expositions. The task of the exegete was to expose the spiritual truth contained within

[102] See chapter one, 'A Deeper Sense of Seeing'.
[103] As explored in chapter one, above.
[104] This model of exegesis contrasts the later theological contributions of John Hick who appeals to the hiddenness of God (as part of his theological pluralism) as a way of explaining theodicy – and therefore maintains this position by further distancing humans from the possibility that God might be apprehensible through His Son. This is not to dismiss Hick's contributions, but to demonstrate the contrast between Hick's pluralism and what might be termed traditional Christology. See: N. Trakaksi, 'An Epistemically Distant God? A Critique of John Hick's Response to the Problem of Divine Hiddeness', *HeyJ XLVIII* (2007), 214-26.
[105] de Lubac, *Medieval exegesis,* Vol. II, 19-21.
[106] de Lubac, *Medieval exegesis,* Vol. I, 16.

the letter.[107] This is not to say that the letter was unimportant: quite the opposite. Rather, both the letter and the spirit work together to represent two essential elements of reality according to the Christian conception of the world: namely, the material and the immaterial.

In tracing the origins of this mode of figurative exegesis in the west, of utmost importance is Origen's *De principiis*, where the 'flesh of scripture' ('corpore scripturarum') both encases and preserves the 'soul of scripture' ('scripturae anima') in order to convey the depths of the 'spiritual law' ('spiritale lege') to the recipient of the page.[108] What Origen initiates is also found in Ambrose and Augustine, where their respective contributions to developing exegetical practice sought too to expose the figurative dimensions of the letter.[109] Indeed, Augustine credits his moment of realisation in relation to this sort of reading in his *Confessiones*, to Ambrose.[110] For Augustine, Ambrose opens up another aspect of reality to his mind, beyond the material, and therefore ensures his conception of reality is not limited to merely the material world.[111]

The relevance of the Christian world-view in prominent writers of late antiquity and the Middle Ages, as a reality comprised of both materiality and immateriality, is of fundamental importance when grasping the nature of scripture, 'sacramentum', and associated writings in the High Middle Ages. The premises of both Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* and Hugh of

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[107] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 1-26.
[108] Origenes sec. translationem Rufini, *De principiis*, Lib. iv, Cap. ii, Par. iv, p.312. The term 'historialem intellectum', meaning the 'historical interpretation' is a later addition that appeared in the gloss of Rufinus. See the note by: Robertson, *Lectio Divina*, 46.
[109] de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis,* Vol. I, 15-9; 123. This understanding of the spiritual sense(s), which had 'a freer rein' compared with the historical sense, follows Origen and is present throughout the works of patristic exegetes. This is also confirmed in Denys Turner, who writes of the connection between Origen, Augustine, and Gregory on the division between the literal and spiritual: 'The broad distinction between "literal" and "spiritual" senses is there in general terms in Origen's *On First Principles* in the early fourth century, in Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* in the early fifth, and the distinction of the four senses in almost the exact terms in which Nicholas reports them is found in Gregory the Great in the late sixth century'. See: Turner, 'Allegory in Christian late antiquity', in *the Cambridge Companion to Allegory,* 71-2.
[110] Conf. Lib. vi, Cap. iv, Par. vi, pp.245-9. See the discussion in chapter one of the thesis.
[111] Conf. Lib. vi, Cap. iv, Par. vi, pp.246-9. 'He took away the mystical veil and opened the spiritual sense of things which seemed, according to the letter, to inculcate what was unreasonable'; '…cum ea quae ad litteram perversitatem docere videbantur, remoto mystico velamento, spiritaliter aperiret, non dicens quod me offenderet, quamvis ea diceret quae utrum vera essent adhuc ignorarem'.

St Victor's *Didascalicon* is a Christian world view that adopts, at least partially, the language of neoplatonism in order to express God's relationship with the world, and therefore speaks to the material and the immaterial as part of the same Christian reality.[112] In Augustine, this is expressed in his assertion that the Wisdom ('Sapientia') the philosophers sought, the supreme Truth, is in fact, the Incarnate God, the Second Person of the Trinity, who has come to humans in human form.[113] Augustine's assertion brings together two world views, and sees God signified within the material realities of the human world whilst simultaneously distancing himself from Manichaeism.[114] As Augustine documents a gradual coming around to this world-view through his confessional episodes, it is evident that, for him, the role of neoplatonism is not simply a philosophical system of thought to be appropriated for Christian purposes, but rather a useful catalyst for expanding human understanding of reality as not limited to the material world.[115] Where Plato argues true reality is the realm of the Ideal Forms, Augustine understands true reality as revealed in a complex human world, condescended to and created by God.[116] Thus, for Augustine, the signifying nature of 'things' ('res') present in the material,

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[112] This is seen in the very opening of book one of Hugh's *Didascalicon*, as demonstrated below.

[113] DDC*,* Lib. i, 13(23), 22-3. In this part of his treatise, in relation to humans making the voyage back 'to the homeland' ('ad patriam'), by which he means the human journey to discover God as Wisdom ('Sapientia'): 'This we would be unable to do, if wisdom itself had not deigned to adapt itself to our great weakness and offered us a pattern for living; and it has done so actually in human form because we too are human'; 'Quod non possemus, nisi ipsa sapientia tantae etiam nostrae infirmitati congruere dignaretur et vivendi nobis praeberet exemplum, non aliter quam in homine, quoniam et nos homines sumus'.

[114] W. Otten, 'Christianity's Content: (Neo)Platonism in the Middle Ages, Its Theoretical and Theological Appeal', *Numen*, Vol. 63, (2016), 245-70. See also: J. BeDuhn, 'A Religion of Deeds: Scepticism in the Doctrinally Liberal Manichaeism of Faustus and Augustine', in *Nag Hammadi and Manichaean Studies: New Light on Manichaeism: Papers from the Sixth International Congress on Manichaeism,* (ed.) J. BeDuhn, (Leiden, 2009), 2. Beduhn cites the work of Johannes van Oort to demonstrate that other faiths, such as Manichaeism, provide an example of the various 'Christianities' of the fifth century. Other examples of Roman North-African religions, all competing with Catholocism, include the Christian sect known as the Donatists, with which Augustine was familiar.

[115] Harrison discusses Augustine's relationship with neoplatonism after having read the 'books of the Platonists' ('platonicorum libros'). See: C. Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology: An Argument for Continuity,* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 23.

[116] DDC*,* Lib. i, 13(23), pp.22-3

In *De diuersis quaestionibus octoginta tribus*, Augustine demonstrates his familiarity with Plato's philosophy of the Ideal Forms, and discusses the significance of names: 'Plato is said to have been the first to use the name *ideas*. However, I do not mean to imply by this that, if there were no such name before he himself instituted it, there were accordingly no such things as those which he termed *ideas*, or that they were understood by no one. Rather, various people called them possibly by one name, possibly by another, for one is at liberty to impose any name whatever on something which is not yet defined and has no commonly accepted name.' 'ideas

only serves to bridge the ontological divide between Creator and creature, so that humans might be saved from their fallen (or disordered) natures.

Augustine's position on humans and the world in relation to God gives a prominent place to scripture. As Brown puts it:

> The remedy [to human fallenness] was plain: 'For the meantime, let the scriptures be *the countenance of God.*' The gulf which separated a direct awareness of God from a human consciousness dislocated, as it were 'repressed', by the Fall, had been mercifully bridged through the Bible, by a marvellous proliferation of imagery.[117]

In other words, the remedy to human fallenness resides in humans' ability to read the created world they inhabit, as contained in scripture, as a sign ('signa'), and to therefore apprehend God's condescension to the human world.[118] As Augustine puts it, quoting from Romans 1.20 (a verse he frequently uses to this end),[119] the human reader of scripture is to 'use the world' ('utendum est hoc mundo') so as to apprehend: 'the invisible attributes of God, which are understood through what has been made'[120] or, in other words, to ascertain what is eternal and spiritual from corporeal and temporal things.'[121]

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plato primus appellasse perhibetur. non tamen si hoc nomen antequam ipse institueret non erat, ideo uel res ipsae non erant, quas ideas uocauit, uel a nullo erant intellectae; sed alio fortassis atque alio nomine ab aliis atque aliis nuncupatae sunt; licet enim cuique rei cognitae, quae nullum habeat usitatum nomen, quodlibet nomen imponere.' DDQ, Qu. xlvi, Lin. i.

[117] P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography,* A New Edition, (London: Faber & Faber, 2000), 258-9.

[118] This appears in: Brown, *Augustine,* 256-66. And also in Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* where, in the context of interpreting scripture, Augustine appeals to a theology of things and signs. All existent 'things' ('res') may either be things in a strict sense, or things that are 'signs' ('signa') of other things. This exercise in semiotics becomes a useful way of discussing the presence of God signified in both the imagery of scripture and the created world. DDC, Lib. i, 4(7)-4(10), pp.15-7.

See also: F. van Fleteren, 'St. Augustine, neoplatonism, and the Liberal Arts: The Background to the *De doctrina christiana*', in *De doctrina christiana: A Classic of Western Culture,* (eds.) D. Arnold & P. Bright, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), 14-23.

[119] Augustine quotes this verse several times throughout his corpus, to communicate the discovery of God through the created world: DVR, Cap. lii, Lin. viii; IIET, Tract. Xiv, Par. iii, Lin. xiii; En.Ps., Sr. lii, Cap. v, Par. xv, p.69; & DT, Cap. xii, Par. xix, p.171.

[120] Romans 1.20.

[121] DDC*,* Lib. i, 4(10), pp.16-7. '*invisibilia dei per ea quae facta sunt intellecta* conspiciantur, hoc est ut de corporalibus temporalibusque rebus aeterna et spiritalia capiamus.'

When turning to the second book of Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon*, a similar conception of God, the human world, and scripture is found. Adapting his theology for the scholastic climate of the twelfth-century, Hugh posits that the pursuit of philosophy is really an exercise in loving Wisdom ('Sapientia'), meaning divine Wisdom.[122] Since the human world is created in the likeness of divine Wisdom, a pursuit of learning through a study of the liberal arts (in preparation for scriptural interpretation), enables humans to apprehend Wisdom, and have the since-lost divine likeness in themselves restored. Such a use of the created world is focussed on human salvation in God. Hugh states:

> The more we are conformed to the divine nature, the more do we possess Wisdom, for then there begins to shine forth again in us what has forever existed in the divine Idea or Pattern, coming and going in us but standing changeless in God.[123]

As the *Didascalicon* progresses, Hugh's discussion of reading 'things' ('res') in scripture, like Augustine, once again makes a clear break from being a mere philosophical exercise. Rather, reading 'things' correctly becomes the task of the human theologian to discover the 'voice of God' sounding throughout the created world. Given that the 'things' to which Hugh refers encapsulate what is meant by the imagery of scripture, and not simply the words of scripture, his remarks in this part of his treatise have considerable relevance for understanding medieval expositions.

> The philosopher knows only the significance of words, but the significance of things is far more excellent than the significance of words, because the latter was established by usage, but Nature dictated the former. The latter is

[122] Didas. Lib. i, Cap. ii, p.6.
[123] Didas. Lib. ii, Cap. i, p.23. 'hoc ergo omnes artes agunt, hoc intendunt, ut diuina similitudo in nobis reparetur, que nobis forma est, Deo natura, cui quanto magis conformamur tanto magis sapimus.'

the voice of men, the former the voice of God speaking to men.[124]

Here Hugh represents God's presence in scripture, and by implication throughout the created world, through 'voice'.[125] Fittingly, in the preceding chapter of Hugh's treatise, the threefold understanding of scripture found in Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, is figuratively articulated through the song of the zither, again drawing upon the idea that the voice of God is intended to be reproduced through human sound.[126] But most significantly, Hugh presents the idea that within Nature ('natura') the voice of God resides, sounding out to the human world and awaiting human engagement, participation, and ultimately transformation through hearing and interpretation.[127]

In distinguishing the interpretation of 'things' in scripture, from the 'words' that signify them, Hugh offers an example. Given that the *Didascalicon* was primarily written as a textbook for students of scripture, Hugh is, in fact, demonstrating how the spiritual/figurative sense of scripture is to be expounded by the medieval exegete.[128] Moreover, that Hugh's scriptural example is an animal demonstrates how 'words' in scripture signify 'things' in the created world, and how those 'things' in turn may become signifiers of 'things' beyond themselves to a transformative end.[129] This Hugh demonstrates through an exposition of 1 Peter 5.8, where the adversary is represented through the language of a roaring lion:

That the sacred utterances employ the meaning of things, moreover, we shall

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[124] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.96: 'philosophus solam uocum nouit significationem, sed excellentior ualde est rerum significatio quam uocum, quia hanc usus instituit, illam natura dictauit. hec hominum uox est, illa uox Dei ad homines.'

[125] M. Gardiner, *Hildegard von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum: A Musical and Metaphysical Analysis*, (Abingdon: Routlege, 2019), 18-9. See the section titled: 'From sound to Word: The Vineyard of the Text' in his chapter, 'A Metaphysical Medieval Assemblage'.

[126] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, pp.96-7.

[127] Again, see: Gardiner, *Hildegard von Bingen's Ordo Virtutum,* 18-9.

[128] Though lacking the patristic exegetical context, Wei discusses the nature of Hugh's text for students of scripture. I. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris: Theologians and the University, c.1100-1330,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 78-80.

[129] To Hugh, this approach was necessary as it provided clarity to a process of exposition where words were understood in relation to things, and things in relation to other things. This eliminated the problematic nature of reading words synonymously with the eventual things they signified and was essentially borrowed from Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana*: DDC*,* Lib. i, 4(7)-4(10), pp.15-7. See also: Harkins, '*Secundus Augustinus*: Hugh of St. Victor on Liberal Arts Study and Salvation', 219-46.

> demonstrate by a particular short and clear example. The Scripture says: "Watch, because your adversary the Devil goeth about as a roaring lion." Here, if we should say that the lion stands for the Devil, we should mean by "lion" not the word but the thing. For if the two words "devil" and "lion" mean one and the same thing, the likeness of that same thing to itself is not adequate. It remains, therefore, that the word "lion" signifies the animal, but that the animal in turn designates the Devil. And all other things are to be taken after this fashion, as when we say that worm, calf, stone, serpent, and other things of this sort signify Christ.[130]

The clarity of Hugh's above exposition of the roaring lion of 1 Peter is at least partially found in the fact that the scripture explicitly reveals its figurative intention of meaning. Put succinctly, the grammatical construction of the scripture employs an 'as' comparison, rather than a predicate noun or an implicit metonym, and thus explicitly reveals its intended figurative reading by presenting both the subject (the devil) and its noun of comparison (the lion). Translated idiomatically, the verse reads: 'your adversary the devil' ('adversarius vester diabolus') 'as/just as' ('tamquam') 'a roaring lion' ('leo rugiens') 'goes around/about' ('circuit').[131] It is for this reason that Hugh states that 'Devil' and 'lion' cannot possibly be interpreted as synonymous terms, as the grammatical construction of the scripture simply does not allow for that reading.

In conveying the aforementioned process whereby the reader or hearer of scripture ascends 'through the word to a concept, through the concept to a thing, through the thing to its

[130] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97. 'quod autem rerum significatione sacra utantur eloquia, breui quodam et aperto exemplo demonstrabimus. dicit scriptura: Vigilate, quia aduersarius uester diabolus tamquam leo rugiens circuit. hic, si dixerimus leonem significare diabolum, non uocem, sed rem intelligere debemus. si enim due he uoces, id est diabolus et leo, unam et eandem rem significant, incompetens est similitudo eiusdem rei ad seipsam. restat ergo, ut hec uox leo animal ipsum significet, animal uero diabolum designet. et cetera omnia ad hunc modum accipienda sunt, ut cum dicimus uermem, uitulum, lapidem, serpentem et alia huiusmodi Christum significare.'
[131] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97.

idea, and through its idea arrive at Truth', Hugh is demonstrating the figurative function of scripture, specifically those that refer to animals, as a mode of conveying divine Truth.[132] True enough, Hugh's more explicit example of 1 Peter sees the 'lion' of the verse eventually signify the 'Devil' through the actual presence of lions in the created world. However, the fact that the words of scripture reflect 'things' that can be both seen and heard in the created world, with the 'roaring lion' ('leo rugiens') providing a perfect example of scriptural concepts being paired with sounding 'things' in the world, is important.[133] For Hugh, animals in scripture encourage an imaginative engagement not merely with the text, but with the human world. In turn, such an imaginative engagement has the potential to bridge the ontological divide between the material and the immaterial, where figurative readings of 'things' ('res') conveys not only the philosophical idea of the divine, but the divine itself in the form of the Incarnate God (to whom humans turn for salvation).

Like Augustine's *De doctrina christiana* produced centuries before, whilst Hugh engages with the language of neoplatonic philosophy in his text, the medieval exegetical exercise he describes with the 'roaring lion' of 1 Peter is a theological exercise rather than a philosophical one.[134] In much the same way as Augustine, Hugh draws attention to the fact that words in scripture ought to prompt the reader to explore the deeper significance of 'things' ('res') in the world, and apprehend an Incarnate God who has descended to those 'things' in order to bring humans back, as Augustine says, to their homeland ('patria').[135] This prompts an imaginative engagement with 'zoological expositions', whereby the exegete creates their own imaginative zoological treatise by innovating the figurative animal expositions of

[132] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.97. 'per uocem ad intellectum, per intellectum ad rem, per rem ad rationem, per rationem peruenitur ad ueritatem.'
[133] Didas. Lib. v, Cap. iii, p.96-7.
[134] This departs from Wei's take on Hugh's interpretation of 'things' in the Bible, as it is described only in the context of scholastic approaches to logic. Wei, *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Paris,* 78-82.
[135] This has been discussed throughout this chapter and can be seen by comparing the first two books of Augustine's *De doctrina Christiana* and Hugh's *Didascalion*. See especially DDC, Lib. i, 3(7)-4(8), 14-6.

scripture. Again, at the root of all zoological expositions, whether within or outside of the text of the medieval bible, the figurative sense of 'things' allows for a reading of God in the world, which both Hugh and Augustine each assert:

Augustine's De doctrina christiana	*Hugh of St Victor's Didascalicon*
Ignorance of things makes figurative expressions unclear when we are ignorant of the qualities of animals or stones or plants or other things mentioned in scripture for the sake of some analogy. The well-known fact about the snake, that it offers its whole body to assailants in place of its head, marvellously illustrates the meaning of the Lord's injunction to be as wise as serpents, which means that in place of our head, which is Christ.[136]	Because less well instructed persons do not take account of this, they suppose there is nothing subtle in these matters on which to exercise their mental abilities, and they turn their attention to the writings of the philosophers precisely because, not knowing the power of Truth, they do not understand that in Scripture there is anything beyond the bare surface of the letter… And all other things are to be taken after this fashion, as when we say that worm, calf, stone, serpent, and other things signify Christ.[137]

In the respective theologies of Augustine and Hugh, it is evident that the shadows and reflections of reality that were central to neoplatonism are transformed, and instead take on a Pauline tone, 'whether 'in a mirror' or 'obscurely'' where secular things *to be used* signified

[136] DDC, Lib. ii, 24(59), pp.82-5. 'Rerum autem ignorantia facit obscuras figuratas locutiones, cum ignoramus vel animantium vel lapidum vel herbarum naturas aliarumve rerum quae plerumque in scripturis similitudinis alicuius gratia ponuntur. Nam et de serpente quod notum est, totum corpus eum pro capite obicere ferientibus, quantum illustrat sensum illum quod dominus iubet astutos nos esse sicut serpentes, ut scilicet pro capite nostro, quod est Christus.'

[137] Didas. Lib. v, cap. iii, p.97: 'quod dum quidam minus docti non considerant, nullam in eis esse subtilitatem estimant, ubi exerceri possint ingenia, et ob hoc ad philosophorum scripturas se transferunt, quia profecto nil aliud ibi concipiunt, nisi solam littere superficiem, uirtutem ueritatis ignorantes… et cetera omnia ad hunc modum accipienda sunt, ut cum dicimus uermem, uitulum, lapidem, serpentem et alia huiusmodi Christum significare.'

sacred things *to be loved*,[138] all of which can be used by humans to remedy their fallenness, and enable their return to the homeland.[139] As Hugh demonstrates through the example of the lion, when encountering animals in scripture, the method of the medieval exegete is one of figurative interpretation, whereby an animal may well signify a reality beyond itself. In line with this, de Lubac offers the typical example in medieval exegesis where 'allegoria' presents a way of harmoniously reading the Old Testament in light of the New,[140] pointing to the Christological reinterpretation of Jonah and the whale found in Matthew 12.40.[141] The intended sense of this passage, which features in the expositions of both Ambrose and Augustine, is self-consciously allegorical: it identifies a literal narrative of the Old Testament, and performs a re-reading of it in light of the New Testament Gospel.[142] As Augustine directly quotes before offering his figurative exposition in his *Enarrationes in Psalmos*: 'Just as Jonah was in the belly of the whale three days, and three nights, so will the Son of Man be in the earth three days, and three nights.'[143] To de Lubac, then, Jonah becomes a spiritual exposition of Old Testament scripture in the New, as well as epitomising the way in which patristic exegetes perceived it to be potentially Christological. For clarity, de Lubac's quotation of St Matthew reads:

> For as Jonah was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.[144]

[138] DDC, Lib. i, 30(66), pp.40-1. 'vel *per speculum* vel *in* aenigmate'. See also: R. T. Wallis, *Neo-Platonsim*, (London: Gerald Duckworth & Company, 1972), 17.
[139] DDC, Lib. i, 3(7)-4(8), 14-6.
[140] R. Wilken, 'Foreword' in de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis,* Vol. I,, ix-xii.
[141] Influenced by de Lubac, Robertson picks up on this example of Jonah and the Whale. See: Duncan Robertson, *Lectio Divina: The Medieval Experience of Reading,* (Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2011), 40.
[142] Hex. AM, Dies v, cap xxiv, Par. xcii, p.203; Augustinus, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, psalmus 65, par. 6. In his exposition of Psalm 65, Augustine quotes this passage before offering an exposition. 'sicut enim fuit ionas in uentre ceti tribus diebus, et tribus noctibus, sic erit et filius hominis in corde terrae tribus diebus, et tribus noctibus.'
[143] En.Ps., Psalm. lxv, Par. vi. 'sicut enim fuit ionas in uentre ceti tribus diebus, et tribus noctibus, sic erit et filius hominis in corde terrae tribus diebus, et tribus noctibus.'
[144] de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis*, Vol. I, 125. St Matthew 12.40: 'Sicut enim fuit Ionas in ventre ceti tribus diebus et tribus noctibus, sic erit Filius hominis in corde terrae tribus diebus et tribus noctibus.'

Whilst Matthew reveals that the literal sense of the passage is found in the Old Testament narrative of Jonah and the whale; the figurative sense is found when the reader understands that Jonah allegorically signifies the death and resurrection of the Person of Jesus. The figurative sense (and its moral and prophetic implications) is always the eventual intended destination for the reader or hearer of scripture.[145] This means that scripture apprehended properly becomes a mediator between the human recipient and the divine. As such, the purpose of the literal is always potentially sacramental. It is not until the words are given literal or historical meaning that they can mediate between the things to which they refer, and the things which, in turn, they signify to remedy human fallenness.

Origen, Ambrose, and Augustine frequently called upon biblical expositions on fish and birds to draw out their explicit Christological significance through which readers find a point of contact with the divine. Matthew's mention of eagles, for instance, is drawn upon in the concluding paragraph of Book V of Ambrose's *Hexameron*. Employed to identify the mystery of eagles ('aquilae') in relation to the body of Jesus ('corpus Iesu'), Ambrose writes:

> And so, now that we have enjoyed ourselves with birds and have crowed with the cock, let us sing the mysteries of our Lord. Let the eagles, when they have been rejuvenated, gather by the body of Jesus, for now the mighty whale has really restored Jonas to us. Let us congratulate ourselves that evening has come. The morning shall become – the sixth day![146]

Ambrose's exposition of scripture here is both impressive and relevant. Concluding a long chapter examining the fifth-day of creation, and drawing out the mystical sense of fish and

[145] de Lubac, *Medieval exegesis,* Vol. II, 19-21; Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages,* 91-3. Whilst Smalley makes this point in relation with Hugh, it is important to state that Hugh was not dismissing the Gregorian spiritual sense in favour of the literal (as Smalley argues quite emphatically), but rather Hugh was arguing for the literal as an essential hermeneutic before spiritual meanings could be derived. See also: Didas. Lib. v, cap. ii-iii, p.95-7

[146] Hex. AM, Dies v, Cap. xxiv, Par. xcii, p.203. 'Et ideo qui cum auibus lusimus, cum gallo cantauimus, iam domini canamus mysteria, et ad corpus Iesu conueniant aquilae peccatorum ablutione renouata; iam enim cetus ille magnus uerum nobis Ionam reddidit, et gratulemur quod factus est nobis uesper, et fiat mane dies sextus.'

birds in relation to the creation of man (yet to come on the sixth day), Ambrose provides a reading of Creation, and more particularly the eagle, that is Christological, and, as a result, potentially sacramental. To Ambrose, the eagles' rejuvenation at the body of Jesus calls for human celebration. Crowing with the cock signals humans singing the mysteries of the Lord, just as the eagle is regenerated by the sun and finds rest in Jesus' body.[147] Put another way, Ambrose repurposes a biblical metaphor for the inevitable coming of Jesus; only the 'eagle' now represents humans, and the 'body' at which the eagle gathers represents the 'corpus Christi'. Ambrose's Christological eagle was typical of patristic exegesis. He, and his near contemporaries, offered sometimes multiple interpretations of birds as signifiers of the very body of Christ.[148] However, the figurative eagle of Ambrose is intended to articulate the divine to human recipients, and to do so sacramentally through reading, sound, hearing and participation in the sacramental body of Christ.

Like Ambrose, the figurative sense of eagles and vultures features significantly in the scriptural expositions of Augustine. In addition to the passage of the *De civitate Dei* which speaks about the keen eyesight of eagles and vultures,[149] Augustine is constantly drawn to birds. In no less than 20 works,[150] Augustine figuratively refers to the eagle, including 24 references in his *Enarrationes in Psalmos*,[151] and ten in his *In Iohannis evangelium tractatus*.[152] Augustine also uses vultures figuratively in a number of his works, including substantial

[147] Hex. AM, Dies v, Cap. xxiv, Par. xcii, p.203. The Eagle's regeneration appears Bede's commentary on the Song of Songs (Lib. iv, Cap. vii), as well as: A. Holder, 'Christ as Incarnate Wisdom in Bede's Commentary on the song of Songs' in *Innovation and tradition in the writings of the Venerable Bede*, (ed.) S. DeGregorio, (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2006), 169-88.
[148] Augustine's *Adnotationes ad Iob* introduces the vulture to represent the Lord, adapting the vulture's imagery to iterate different aspects of God as both divine and incarnate in the body of Christ: AII, Cap. xxxix, pp.623-5.
[149] DCD, Lib. viii, Cap. xv.
[150] Augustine's use of eagle (aquila) imagery is found in the following works: *Enarrationes in Psalmos; In Iohannis euangelium tractatus; Sermones ad populum; Adnotationes in Iob; De ciuitate Dei; De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum; Quaestionum in heptateuchum libri septem; De consensu euangelistrarum; Quastiones euangeliorum; Epistulae; De Genesis contra Manichaeos; De gestis Pelagii; Confessionum libri tredecim; De quantitate animae; De sermone Domini in monte; De opere monachorum; De diuinatione daemonum; Contra Adimantum; Contra Cresconium;* and *De spiritu et littera.*
[151] En.Ps. Psalm lxi, lxvi, lxx, lxxiii, cii, & cxxiii.
[152] IIET, Tract. xv, xix, xxxvi, xl, xlviii, & lxxxiv.

iterations of the vulture in *Adnotationes in Iob* as a signification of Christ.[153] Like Ambrose, Augustine's figurative use of bird is self-consciously Christological. A striking example of this is found when consulting the fifth chapter of *Adnotationes*:

> *A vulture's chicks fly the highest*. The vulture is rightly understood as the Lord, because at the height of prophecy he looks upon our mortality, on which he would feed when he descended, converting us into his body. *The vulture's chicks*, then, are called the bridegroom's children, flying *the highest*, having their way of life in heaven, so that they are freed from the toil in which man is born.[154]

Immediately apparent from Augustine's Old Testament commentary is the way the vulture is used to articulate God's descent to humanity. Theologically, Augustine uses the vulture to convey three things. The first is the vulture as God Incarnate, the Second Person of the Trinity, descending to human form; the second is the vulture's chicks as faithful humans responding to this great descension by joining Christ's body, that is the church, just as the bride joins the bridegroom in marriage.[155] The third is that of the vulture's chicks 'flying the highest', confirming the manner in which humans, on becoming the offspring of God as members of his body, are saved from their postlapsarian state of mortality. Therefore, the Incarnation, the sacramental process of joining Christ's *ecclesia*, and the idea of transcending mortality, are all contained within Augustine's figurative exposition on the vulture – to be used by humans as a form of 'sacramentum'.

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[153] See chapter five of *Adnotationes in Iob* where Augustine uses the image of the vulture to represent Christ: AII, Cap. v, p.516. 'The vulture is rightly understood to be the Lord.' 'uultur bene intellegitur dominus.'

[154] AII, Cap. v, p.516. 'pulli autem uulturis altissime uolitant: uultur bene intellegitur dominus, quia altitudine prophetiae uidit mortalitatem nostram, qua descendens pasceretur, conuertens nos in corpus suum. pulli ergo uulturis ut filii sponsi dicti sunt, altissime autem uolitantes conuersationem in caelis habentes, ut a labore liberentur in quo homo nascitur.'

[155] Turner, *Eros and Allegory*; R. Copeland & P. Struck (eds.) *The Cambridge Companion to Allegory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010). On the patristic origins of maternal laguage in the Middle Ages: C. Walker-Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages,* (Berkley: University of California Press, 1982), 125-9.

It is important to comment that Augustine's vulture conveys ideas present in his broader theology. As Gerald Bonner has demonstrated, Augustine's ecclesiology emphasises the significance of discovering the connection between 'Supreme Wisdom' and the 'created world'. This is symbolised by humans becoming incorporated into the body of Christ through physical baptism, yet anticipating the glory of the Kingdom of Heaven as members of Christ's body through participation in the Eucharist.[156] The image of vulture and chicks as both the Person and Body of Christ therefore speaks to human apprehension of God in the world, and signifies the sacramental process of being incorporated into his body *through* the created world. As Harrison has noted, this is something evident in a range of Augustine's works, even in his earlier work *De ordine*: the sacraments present an effective way for all humans to experience the omnipresence, incarnation, and condescension of God.[157]

Given the vulture figuratively denotes the corporeal presence of the body of Jesus in Augustine's expositions, and may be used sacramentally for human salvation, it is fitting that later in his *Adnotationes* Augustine endows the vulture with the dual function of representing (in addition to the Person of Christ) virtues associated with human mortality. As the eagle stands for 'rising up' to contemplate lofty things, so the vulture stands for 'tarrying… in the flesh' and remaining 'attentive to lower things through temperance, which is suited to human affairs'.[158] In similar fashion to Ambrose, Augustine's expositions on the eagle and the vulture

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[156] G. Bonner, 'Augustine's Understanding of the Church as a Eucharistic Community', in *Saint Augustine the* Bishop, eds. Fannie LeMoine & Christopher Kleinhenz (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1994), 39-64.
[157] Harrison, *Rethinking Augustine's Early Theology*, 45-6.
[158] For context, see: AII, Cap. xxxix, p.624. 'The rising up of the eagle can also be applied to what the Apostle says, *If we have risen above our minds, it is for God*, so that the verse that follows about the vulture pertains to what also follows there: *If we are temperate, it is for you.* For there it follows, *Or will the vulture tarry upon its nest, sitting on a rock?*, because it seems to have been said out of a disposition not to contemplate lofty things by rising above the mind but to be attentive to lower things through temperance, which is suited to human affairs, so that the ungodly, who are taken for dead, once having been justified through the word, that is, as if devoured by mouth, may be converted to the body of the Church, for a vulture feeds on the dead.' 'potest et exaltatio aquilae ad id pertinere, quod ait apostolus: siue enim mente excessimus, deo, ut uersus, qui sequitur de uulture, ad id pertineat quod etiam ibi sequitur; siue temperantes sumus, uobis. sequitur enim: aut uultur super nidum suum in petra sedens morabitur? quia ex affectu dictum uidetur non sublimia contemplandi mentis excessu, sed inferioribus consulendi per temperantiam, qua humanis rebus congruitur, ut inpii qui pro mortuis habentur iustificati per uerbum, hoc est quasi ore deuorati conuertantur in corpus ecclesiae. uultur enim de mortuis pascitur.'

are integral to his approach to scripture, and are used sacramentally by faithful readers and hearers to communicate ideas about God, humans, and the *ecclesia*. Again, this was performed to enable human apprehension of God in the world, that they might be incorporated into his body in the church.

Returning to de Lubac's use of Matthew 12.40, it is evident that Jonah and the whale shares much in common with the later passage in St Matthew 24.27-8 about eagles. Leaving aside the fact that they respectively use the metaphor of eagles/whales (and bodies), both passages in fact refer to the person of Jesus as the Son of Man ('Filius hominis'). In and of itself, this expression is significant. Throughout Augustine's works especially, 'Filius hominis'[159] expresses the humanity of the Second Person of the Trinity who has descended to human form to offer a pattern ('praeberet exemplum') for human living.[160] This is a notion promulgated by other patristic authors: that God became human so that humans might become divine;[161] or as Augustine later puts it 'to make a God man and a man God' ('deum hominem faceret et hominem deum').[162] It is also a notion central to Hugh of St Victor's *Didascalicon* where the purpose of all learning is realised in a love of Wisdom; and Wisdom, as the Second Person of the Trinity, is described as 'the living mind, and sole primordial idea or pattern of

[159] The phrase 'filius homini' appears throughout Augustine's works, but is defined most clearly in his *De trinitate*: DT, Lib. i, Cap. viii. See also: AII, Cap. xxxv, p.585; Cap. xxxvi, p.593; & Cap. xxxviii, p. 601.

[160] The phrase 'praeberet exemplum' translates as 'offers a pattern', or 'offers an example', and is frequently used by patristic authors when referring to Person of Jesus. In his *Moralia in Iob,* Gregory the Great states: 'For the mediator between God and Humans, the man Christ Jesus, came to live among humans in order to give them an example.' 'Venit namque inter homines mediator dei et hominum, homo christus iesus ad praebendum exemplum uitae hominibus, simplex.' Mor.I., Lib. ii, Par. xxiv.

Augustine employs the same phrase in his *De doctrina Christiana* when referring to Wisdom, or the Second Person of the Trinity: 'This we would be unable to do, if Wisdom itself had not deigned to adapt itself to our great weakness and offered us a pattern for living; and it has done so actually in human form because we too are human.' 'Quod non possemus, nisi ipsa sapientia tantae etiam nostrae infirmitati congruere dignaretur et vivendi nobis praeberet exemplum, non aliter quam in homine, quoniam et nos homines sumus.' DDC, Lib. i, Par. xiii, pp.22-3.

[161] McGrath confirms this point in his brief summary of the Alexandrian School. A. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An* Introduction, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2001), 360-2.

[162] Augustine writes about this in book one of *De trinitate*: 'It was in the form of a servant that he was crucified. For that "take-over" was such as to make God a man and a man God.' 'ex forma enim serui crucifixus est, et tamen dominus gloriae crucifixus est. talis enim erat illa susceptio quae deum hominem faceret et hominem deum.' DT, Lib. i, Cap. xiii.

things' that, having descended to human form, has the ability to restore the divine likeness.[163] The doctrine of the 'Son of Man', therefore, was one that prompted figurative readings; man ('homo') evoking the humanity of God incarnate so that divinity might be apprehended.

That biblical verses about whales, eagles, and the Son of Man are found in the figurative expositions of Ambrose and Augustine is indicative of the way scriptural exegesis revealed the divinity of God through apprehensible things. An especially relevant example is, again, found in Augustine's *Adnotationes in Iob*. Whilst this section of the commentary is void of animals, its interpretation relies upon a figurative reading of a literal narrative. This is contained in the New Testament parable, the Good Samaritan:

> *Like a Son of Man (flilius hominis) to his neighbour*. The Lord, having taken on a man, [is compared] to him who had fallen among thieves. *For years, counted off, came to me*, because in the fullness of time help may come to me through Christ.[164]

In Augustine's reading, the man 'fallen among thieves' from Luke 10 becomes fallen man; and the Samaritan who had compassion on his neighbour is referred to as the 'Son of Man' ('filius hominis'), meaning Christ.[165] In other words, just as the Samaritan loved his neighbour, God became man to save humans from their fallen state, through love. This interpretation is confirmed in Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos* where the second exposition of Psalm 30

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[163] Didas. Lib. ii, Cap. i, p.23. 'It is called 'living Mind' because what has once existed in the divine Mind never is forgotten; and it is called 'the primordial Idea or Pattern of things' because to its likeness all things have been formed. There are those who say that what the arts are concerned with remains forever the same. This, then, is what the arts are concerned with, this is what they intend, namely, to restore within us the divine likeness, a likeness which to us is a form but to God is his nature.' 'Viuax mens idcirco appellatur quia quod semel in diuina fuerit ratione nulla umquam obliuione aboletur. primeua ratio rerum est quia ad eius similitudinem cuncta formata sunt. dicunt quidam quod illud unde agunt artes semper maneat. hoc ergo omnes artes agunt, hoc intendunt, ut diuina similitudo in nobis reparetur, que nobis forma est, Deo natura, cui quanto magis conformamur tanto magis sapimus.'

[164] AII, Cap. xvi, p.544. 'sicut filius hominis ad proximum suum: dominus homine susceptor ad eum qui inciderat in latrones. Anni enim dinumerati uenerunt mihi: quod mihi per Christum subueniatur plentitudine temporum.'

[165] In St Luke, the twin command of charity is taught directly, and then through parable. The Good Samaritan represents he who truly loves their neighbour. See: St Luke 10.25-37.

confirms that: 'this [Samaritan] is our Lord, who took pity on the human race.'[166] Most importantly, however, the reading demonstrates the prominence of the figurative sense in Augustine's commentaries, where the 'Son of Man' is articulated through a careful and consistent exposition of the bible, according to pre-established rules, and is to be used to communicate to humans their salvation.

That the patristic approach to reading scripture found significance in the Middle Ages, and could potentially be used sacramentally, is found in Hugh of St Victor's own scriptural expositions, where the figurative foreshadowed an apprehension of the divine *through* 'sacramentum'. In book four of his *De archae Noe*, Hugh details this in relation to the Old Testament narratives of Noah's Ark and the parting of the Red Sea.[167] First, Hugh revisits the basic elements of exposition through the floors of the ark. The first floor of the ark corresponds to shadow ('umbra'); the second floor to body ('corpus'); and the third to spirit ('spiritus').[168] In comparable fashion to Origen's three-fold flesh, spirit, and law of scripture,[169] Hugh's use of these terms are to be understood to metonymically signify the terms figure, things, and truth ('figura, res, veritas').[170] Hugh then goes on to explain that 'figura' relates to that which prefigures the visible body of Christ; 'corpus' relates to the sacraments, which are performed for the benefit of the body of the church; and spirit relates to grace, which operates within the sacraments.[171] Hugh then demonstrates this through an exposition of the Red Sea:

> For example, to take one sample [from scripture], the Red Sea prefigured ('prefigurauit') baptism, which is now sacred in the Holy Church; however, this same visible ('uisibile') baptism signifies a cleansing from judgment,

[166] En.Ps., Psalm. xxx, En. ii, Ser. i, Par. viii: 'quem transiens sacerdos praeteriit, transiens leuita praeteriit, transiens samaritanus miseratus est, id est ipse dominus, qui miseratus est genus humanum.'
[167] K. Kinsella, 'Ediface and Education: Structuring Thought in Twelfth-Century Europe', DPhil Thesis, Faculty of History, University of Oxford, (2016). See especially the section: 'Hugh of St Victor's Mystic Ark', 157-9.
[168] DAN, Lib. iv, Cap. ix, p.114.
[169] Origenes sec. translationem Rufini, *De principiis*, Lib. iv, Cap. ii, Par. iv, p.312.
[170] DAN, Lib. iv, Cap. ix, p.114.
[171] DAN, Lib. iv, Cap. ix, p.114.

> under which sacrament the Holy Spirit operates in our souls invisibly, bathing the body.[172]

That Hugh revisits the process of exposition, and then demonstrates its validity through the exposition in practice, confirms the way the exegete ought to read scripture. First, and especially, the Old Testament understood literally prefigures corporeal things. Second, the things themselves then provide the 'body' for the sacrament; and third, the sacrament of things is apprehended to reveal the deeper figurative dimension. The process of reading scripture in this way, therefore, becomes potentially sacramental in that is offers the transformative grace of God to faithful humans through corporeal 'things' ('res') *used* correctly.

The potentially sacramental nature of Hugh's expositions applies to 'things' ('res') within and outside of scripture. The process of exposition, therefore, identifies sacramental value within the created world, found in the figurative nature of fish and birds in relation to the Second Person of the Trinity who ought to be apprehended sacramentally. For this reason, Hugh's *De sacramentis* literally terms fish and birds as a sacrament through the phrase: 'sacramentum quare pisces et aves.'[173] This appears entirely consistent with the language of 1 Corinthians 15.39 of the Vulgate, which speaks of flesh in terms of humans ('homo'), beasts ('pecus' – cattle, sheep, horses, and other quadrupeds), birds ('volucer' – literally 'things that fly'), and fish ('pisces').[174] In both *De archa Noe* and *De sacramentis*, the created 'things' of the world, such as the Red Sea or the distinct flesh of aviary or aquatic bodies, potentially signifies the Creator's sacramental relationship with creatures and the wider creation, whereby the mystery of God's grace is communicated through things present in the created world.

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[172] DAN, Lib. iv, Cap. ix, p.114.The above translation is my own. 'Verbi gratia, ut unum exemplum ponamus: Mare rubrum prefigurauit baptisma, quod nunc in sancta Ecclesia consecratur; ipsum autem baptisma uisibile significat emundationem criminum quam Spiritus sanctus sub sacramento quo corpora tinguntur inuisibiliter in animabus operatur.'

[173] DS, Lib. i, Pars. i, Cap. xxvii, Col. 203.

[174] 1 Corinthians 15:39 'All flesh is not the same flesh, but one is the flesh of men, another of beasts, another of birds, another of fishes', 'Non omnis caro eadem caro, sed alia hominum, alia pecorum, alia volucrum, alia piscium.'

Given the influence of patristic exegetes on the thought of Hugh and his forebearers, it is unsurprising that the potential use of fish and birds as 'sacramentum' may have been received from Augustine. For instance, in book thirteen of the *Confessiones* Augustine allegorises the creation of the world and its creatures and, specifically in chapter 21, suggests the creation of fish and birds figuratively alludes to the Eucharist.[175]

> As a consequence, human beings, though made in your image, did not receive power over the lights of heaven, nor over that hidden heaven of heavens, over the day and night which you called into being before you established this heaven, nor over the gathering of the waters (which is to say, the sea); but they did receive power over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, and all flocks and herds, and all the land, and all the crawling things that crawl over the earth. They act as judges, and they approve whatever they find to be right, and disapprove what is wrong: they do so either by celebrating the sacraments into which those whom your mercy searches out in the great waters are initiated; or by celebrating how that fish which was raised up from the deep is made manifest for the faithful earth to consume; or in the meanings and expressions of words under the authority of your book as the birds are under the firmament of heaven. They interpret, explain, describe, argue, bless, and invoke you—as the meanings burst and resound from their lips, so that the people can respond, "Amen." [176]

[175] Conf. Lib. xiii, 21(29), pp.382-5.
[176] Conf. Lib. xiii, 24(34), pp.392-5. 'Ideoque homo, quem fecisti ad imaginem tuam, non accepit potestatem luminarium caeli neque ipsius occulti caeli neque diei et noctis, quae ante caeli constitutionem vocasti, neque congregationis aquarum, quod est mare, sed accepit potestatem piscium maris et volatilium caeli et omnium pecorum et omnis terrae et omnium repentium quae repunt super terram. iudicat enim et approbat quod recte, improbat autem quod perperam invenerit, sive in ea sollemnitate sacramentorum quibus initiantur quos pervestigat in aquis multis misericordia tua, sive in ea qua ille piscis exhibetur quem levatum de profundo terra pia comedit, sive in verborum signis vocibusque subiectis auctoritati libri tui tamquam sub firmamento volitantibus, interpretando, exponendo, disserendo, disputando, benedicendo atque invocando te, ore erumpentibus atque sonantibus signis, ut respondeat populus, "amen.".'

Incorporating themes discussed across his works, in the above passage Augustine provides a remarkable insight not only into the figurative sense of animals, but his wider conception of God's presence in creation. Discernible in this passage is the place of humans in the created order, and the nature of providence. In order to see the workings of voluntary providence in the world, humans must first realise the motions of the entire created order are an act of Natural providence. In themselves, humans are ontologically distinct from the Creator, and 'do not receive power' unique to God's Creation ('non accepit postestatem' as Augustine says).[177] But, as part of the Creative order made in God's image, they 'do receive power' ('accepit potestatem') over the creatures that dwell upon, within, and above the created elements: over the 'the fish *of the sea* and the birds *of the air*, and all flocks and herds, and all the land, and all the crawling things that crawl *over the earth*.'[178] Furthermore, it is precisely this relationship that can be used sacramentally; that by adopting a right relationship with all created things, and reading their figurative natures accordingly, humans might receive the communication of divine mercy from the Creator and be transformed from their fallen natures.[179]

Central to Augustine's conception of creation, then, is that the material and immaterial, or the corporeal and incorporeal, are aspects of the same reality. In one sense, Augustine does not actually denigrate the material world as Plato does, and therefore he cannot be considered Neoplatonic in the strict sense of the term. Rather, as Oliver summarises Augustine's theology: 'God administers externally through measure, number and weight, the natures he has created internally in the *rationes seminales.*'[180] In this way, God 'draws material and spiritual creation

[177] Conf. Lib. xiii, 24(34), pp.392-5.
[178] Conf. Lib. xiii, 24(34), pp.392-5. 'sed accepit potestatem piscium maris et volatilium caeli et omnium pecorum et omnis terrae et omnium repentium quae repunt super terram.'
[179] Conf. Lib. xiii, 24(34), pp.392-5.
[180] S. Oliver, 'Augustine on Creation, Providence and Motion', *International Journal of Systematic Theology,* 18 (2016), 397-8. It is worth noting that the term 'rationes seminales' features most significantly in Augustine's treatise *De Genesi ad Litteram*, and denotes those things that are created at the beginning but contain within themselves the potential for their future development, growth and change. They are Augustine's way of asserting that God created everything in the beginning: DGAL, Lib. ix, 17(31-2), pp.394-5. See also Pollmann

into his life'[181] through both the external act of creation, and the internal workings of Natural providence at play within creation itself through 'rationes seminales'.[182] It is a theology of creation which blends together both 'the intrinsic and extrinsic providential order', and sees the arrangement of number, measure, and weight of all created things existing in and through God.[183] In this, the Incarnation serves to emphasise the unity of creation, with God himself condescending to creation so that he might draw his creatures back into full participation in the divine life.[184] Interpreting the figurative sense of creation, therefore, becomes paramount for all humans. Whether contained in textual expositions or sounded out through the medium of the human voice, creation's figurative potential becomes a way for humans to apprehend God's divine nature forming, sustaining, providentially ordering and directing all created things.

The reception of Augustine's thinking with respect to the created world is also to be found in a prominent place in the zoological expositions of Gerald of Wales' *Topographia Hibernica*. It is Augustine that Gerald cites when commenting on the nature of sound and sense in relation the music in the third distinction of his *Topographia Hibernica,* suggesting that music was divinely sanctioned so that 'the Creator might receive the praises of his creatures in manifold ways; and that the feelings of the performers in acts of melody might be inflamed to higher degrees of divine love.'[185] To Gerald, this is in harmony with Augustine's confessional musings about voices of singers enabling his heart to receive truth,[186] and participation in musical chants turning the heart to piety.[187]

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on 'rationes seminales', and its connection with modern theological thought on evolutionary processes: K. Pollmann, '*De Gensis ad Litteram'*, *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, (eds.) K. Pollmann & W. Otten, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

[181] Oliver, 'Augustine on Creation, Providence and Motion', 398.

[182] DGAL*,* Lib. ix, 17(31-2), pp.394-5.

[183] Oliver, 'Augustine on Creation, Providence and Motion', 398; See also: DGAL, Lib iv, Cap. vii-viii.

[184] Oliver, 'Augustine on Creation, Providence and Motion', 398.

[185] TH, Dist. iii, Cap. xiv, p.160. 'quoniam et Creator a creaturis multimode laudari non renuit, et ipse modulatio modulantis affectum ad divinum amorem altius accendit.'

[186] Compare: TH, Dist. iii, Cap. xiv, p.160; with Conf. Lib. x, Cap. xxxiii, pp.164-9.

[187] Compare: TH, Dist. iii, Cap. xiv, p.160; with Conf. Lib. ix, Cap. vi, pp.28-9.

Moreover, it is fascinating that Gerald discusses the interior and exterior aspects of creation, and entertains the question of whether God as the 'Creator of natures' ('naturas creare') is able, by divine external means, to intervene in the natural state of affairs and disrupt the created order by divine command.[188] Invariably, Gerald responds that God is able to do this, offering both the Biblical examples of Lot's wife being transformed into a pillar of salt, and the miracle of the water being transformed into wine. Not only does Gerald go on to comment (by declaring he is unable to possibly comment) on the potential applicability of this idea to the transubstantial nature of the Eucharist,[189] but the entire discussion bears remarkable resemblance to Augustine's discussion of God's being, and the nature of the 'rationes seminales' in his *De Genesi ad Litteram*.[190]

Further still, it is fitting that when Gerald comments on the figurative natures and significations of birds in the first distinction of his *Topographia Hibernica*, an example of his own commentaries on creation, he draws upon both Augustine and Gregory the Great for patristic authority.[191] Commenting on the Kingfisher, and perhaps conscious of the sacramental symbolism of the Fisher King of Chrétien de Troyes,[192] Gerald writes about the fabulous characteristics of the bird in order to convey a deeper moral meaning to his readership, one that is shaped and informed by patristic voices. More particularly, when Gerald writes on the Kingfisher ('de martinetis'), he writes that, when dead, the bird's flesh is preserved and does not putrefy, to such an extent that it fragrances clothes with a pleasant odour.[193] If hung from a tree, the bird regenerates its coat of features, as if it were restored to new life.[194] This

[188] TH, Dist. ii, Cap. xix, p.106.
[189] TH, Dist. ii, Cap. xix, p.107.
[190] Compare: TH, Dist. ii, Cap. xix, pp.106-7; with DGAL, Lib. ix, 17(31-2), pp.394-5.
[191] TH, Dist. i, Cap. xii, p.35. Note that the chapter divisions of the 1867 Latin edition, by Brewer, Dimock, and Warner, do not perfectly match up with the divisions found in the recent translation by Forester.
[192] Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances,* 'Perceval', Lin. 2976-3-612, especially 3494. This is mentioned in the last section of chapter three of the present thesis: 'Bringing together the Moral and Material: Fishmonger and Creation.'
[193] TH, Dist. i, Cap. xviii, pp.50-1.
[194] TH, Dist. i, Cap. xviii, pp.50-1.

considered, the fact that Gerald speaks of the bird in terms of being restored ('renovantur'), and goes on to use the figurative Kingfisher as part of a moralised exposition on the restoration of humans to God,[195] connects to the idea of reading God in creation, whereby the Divine is continually re-created through human figurative expositions modelled not just on discovering the Word in scripture, but receiving the communication of the sound God's word for human salvation.

Towards a Sacrament of Birds: Hugh of Fouilloy's Aviarium

Gerald's *Topographica Hibernica* was one of the most popular zoological texts produced in the High Middle Ages. Putting this alongside a text such the *Aviarium* of Hugh of Fouilloy[196] provides test-cases for the development of a potentially sacramental theology in medieval figurative expositions on birds. While there are, of course, many other zoological texts produced across this period, few others (aside from perhaps Neckam's *De naturis rerum*) had such a profound impact on the development of the bestiary tradition.[197] It would be Hugh and Gerald's novel expositions on animals that would be incorporated into bestiary manuscripts so as to directly impact the way animals are written about well into the thirteenth century. This is witnessed in extant manuscripts such as Bodleian MS Ashmole 1511, British Library Royal 10 A VII, Aberdeen Bestiary MS 24, Bodleian MS Bodley 764, and British Library Harley 4751, the first three of which include lengthy excerpts from Hugh's *Aviarium*, the latter of which includes extracts from Gerald's *Topographia Hibernica* on Irish birds, and MS Bodley 764 including considerable excerpts from both Gerald and Hugh, respectively.[198]

In addition to being an important source for the developing bestiary tradition, when

[195] TH, Dist. i, Cap. xviii, pp.50-1.
[196] F. McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries,* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1962), 30-9.
[197] The bestiary manuscript British Library Harley 3244, produced in the third quarter of the thirteenth century, is presented alongside works by Alan of Lille, Bernard of Clairvaux, William de Montibus, and Robert Grosseteste, all of whom (like Neckam, Gerald, and Hugh) produced remarkable zoological expositions.
[198] Comparing these manuscripts with Hugh of Fouilloy's *Aviarium* and Gerald of Wales' *Topographia Hibernica* reveals that many of the entries found in second-family bestiaries, listed above, are directly copied from both Hugh and Gerald. See also: McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries,* esp. 30-4 & 36-8.

Gerald produced his *Topographia Hibernica* he did so through various manuscripts designed for different audiences, including versions for the Angevin court, clerical audiences, and for those engaged in pastoral care.[199] The expectation that these manuscripts, full of figurative zoological expositions, were supposed to be read aloud for their intended audiences is shown by Gerald's three-day public reading of his text in Oxford, in the late 1180s.[200] Not only did Gerald give voice to the animals in his *Topographia Hibernica* but, as Southern notes, he explicitly did so because Pliny had established the ancient oral tradition of reading works aloud: 'Pliny had read his panegyric of Trajan over a period of three days: just so, Gerald read his *Topographia*'.[201] Gerald, therefore, followed in the footsteps of an accepted ancient authority who wrote extensively about animals and their moralised characteristics for oral transmission, only Gerald's expositions were shaped by the bible.

In a comparable way to Gerald's *Topographia Hibernica*, Hugh of Fouilloy produced his *Aviarium*, a moral treatise about birds, with a listening audience in mind. Opening his text by addressing his 'beloved' (expressed through the superlative 'carissime'), Hugh draws upon the biblical dove of Psalms 67 to engage the senses of readers and hearers.[202] This opening paragraph to Hugh's text speaks not only to the visible and the audible in the developing bestiary tradition, where a text would be read aloud accompanied by a painted image, but also to the nature of exegetical practice with which it was intertwined, not dissimilar from Bernard's figurative use of the biblical dove in his sermons on canticles.[203] This is made clear by visiting Hugh's passage, and tracing his thought:

[199] A. Borrego Sargent, 'Gerald of Wales's *Topographia Hibernica:* Dates, Versions, Readers', *Viator,* Vol. 43, No. 1, (2012), 241-61; though the point is introduced in 243-4.
[200] R. Southern, 'From Schools to University' in *The History of the University of Oxford: Volume I, The Early Oxford Schools,* (ed.) J. Catto, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984), 13-4.
[201] Southern, 'From Schools to University', 13-4.
[202] Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7.
[203] CC. Ser. xlv, 2(4)-3(5), pp.235-6.

> Desiring to fulfil your wishes, dearest beloved,[204] I decided to paint the dove whose wings are silvered and the hinderparts of the back in pale gold, and by a picture to instruct the minds of the simple,[205] so that what the soul of the simple[206] could scarcely comprehend with the mind's eye, it might at least discern with the physical eye; and what their hearing could scarcely perceive, their sight might do so. I wished not only to paint the dove physically, but also to outline it verbally, so that by the text I may represent a picture; for instance, whom the simplicity of the picture would not please, at least the moral teaching of the text might do so. Therefore, for you to whom the dove's feathers are given, who fled the world in order that you might stay and rest in solitude, who do not seek delay with a raven's cry, *cras*, *cras*, but repentance with a dove's sigh, for you I say, I shall now paint not only the dove, but also the hawk.[207]

For Hugh, the ability of a text to reach the 'simple soul' through image and sound is of paramount importance and speaks to the nature of expositing animals in both biblical and extra-biblical sources.

An adequate interpretation of Hugh's passage on the dove and raven requires close examination of his choice of language. In this respect, it is important to note that, in places,

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[204] Clark translates 'carissime' as 'dearest friend', but I have opted for 'dearest beloved'. This is more consistent with 1 John 3.2 of the Vulgate where 'carissimi' is rendered (in the Dumbarton Oaks English translation) as 'dearly beloved': Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7.

[205] Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7. Where Clark has translated 'simplicium mentes' as 'the minds of simple folk' I have opted for 'the minds of the simple'.

[206] Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7. Where Clark has translated 'simplicium animus' as 'the intellect of the simple folk' I have opted for 'the soul of the simple'. My reasoning for this becomes much clearer below, and is a point of no small importance.

[207] Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7. 'Desiderii tui, carissime, petitionibus satisfacere cupiens, columbam cuius pennae sunt deargentatae et posteriora dorsi eius in pallore auri pingere et per picturam simplicium mentes aedificare decrevi, ut quod simplicium animus intellegibili oculo capere vix poterat, saltem carnali discernat; et quod vix poterat auditus percipiat visus. Nec tantum volui columbam formando pingere sed etiam dictando describere, ut per scripturam demonstrem picturam; velut cui non placuerit simplicitas picturae, placeat saltem moralitas scripturae. Tibi ergo cui datae sunt pennae columbae, qui elongasti fugiens ut in solitudine maneres et requiesceres, qui non requiris dilationem in voce corvina, "cras, cras," sed contritionem ingemitu columbino, tibi inquam, non tantum ad praesens columbam, sed etiam accipitrem pingam.'

Clark's translation of Hugh draws the English reader away from, rather than closer to, Hugh's original sources. As already noted, the 'carissime' at the beginning of Hugh's passage on the dove is best rendered as 'dearest beloved', consistent with the language of the Douay-Rheims of 1 John 3.2.[208] What is more, Clark's translation of 'simplicium animus' as 'the intellect of the simple folk' overlooks a significant detail. Later in Hugh's text, the dove is said to be any 'faithful and simple soul' ('fidelis et simplex anima').[209] This, it would seem, is a take on Augustine's statement in his exposition of Psalm 103 where he suggests that winged creatures signify 'spiritual souls' ('spiritales animas'),[210] before going on to confirm that 'birds signify something spiritual'[211] and then asking whether certain spiritual people are signified by birds.[212] With this striking comparison between Hugh and Augustine in mind, a better translation of Hugh's 'simplicium animus', despite the difference between 'animus' and 'anima' across Hugh's two uses of 'simplex', would be 'the soul of the simple'.

That Hugh's choice of language on the dove is comparable with Augustine's expositions of the Psalms, is fitting for another reason. Looking closely to Hugh's observations on the respective calls of the dove and the raven, the readers (as well as the monastic readers and hearers of his text) are presented with a raven that calls 'cras, cras', which being translated from the Latin means 'tomorrow, tomorrow'.[213] Clark's decision to keep the Latin 'cras, cras' in her English translation preserves the original onomatopoeian sense of the exposition, whilst

[208] See above.
[209] Av. Cap. iii, pp.124-5.
[210] En.Ps., Psalm ciii, Ser. iii, Par. v, Lin. 14.
[211] En.Ps., Psalm ciii, Ser. iii, Par. v, Lin. 20. 'aues significantes aliquid spiritale'.
[212] En.Ps., Psalm ciii, Ser. iii, Par. v, Lin. 30. 'unde, rogo uos, nisi quia significantur in auibus quidam spiritales, quorum aetas temporalis propterea tacetur, quia aeterna meditantur, et transgrediuntur desiderio et intellectu omnia temporalia?'
[213] Av., Prol. i, pp.116-7. 'Therefore, for you to whom the dove's feathers are given, who fled the world in order that you might stay and rest in solitude, who do not seek delay with a raven's cry, cras, cras, but repentance with a dove's sigh, for you I say, I shall now paint not only the dove, but also the hawk.' 'Tibi ergo cui datae sunt pennae columbae, qui elongasti fugiens ut in solitudine maneres et requiesceres, qui non requiris dilationem in voce corvina, "cras, cras," sed contritionem ingemitu columbino, tibi inquam, non tantum ad praesens columbam, sed etiam accipitrem pingam.'

also conveying the pro-*cras*-tination of the sinner who puts off repentance.[214] However, the exposition is not unique to Hugh. In Augustine's exposition of Psalm 102, it is Augustine that uses both the dove's contrite sigh and the raven's procrastinatory cry to say a word about the sinner who perpetually puts off repentance until 'tomorrow'. For Augustine says:

> What God wants is not the procrastination of the raven's cry but the moaning confession of the dove. When the dove was sent forth, she did return. How long will you go on crying, "Cras, cras"? Watch out for that last "tomorrow". You do not know when the last one will be; all that matters is that you have lived as a sinner until today.[215]

Intriguingly, despite the fact that Boulding too preserves the Latin 'cras, cras' in her English translation (which predates Clark's edition and translation of the *Aviarium*), Clark does not identify Augustine as Hugh's source.[216] What is more, aside from the figurative dove and raven, the discussion of not delaying the sinner's repentance until 'tomorrow', but confessing a cry of contrition 'now', pairs neatly with Augustine's process of conversion in his *Confessiones*. For instance, in book six Augustine speaks of becoming aware of Wisdom ('sapientia') in his nineteenth year, but putting off truly finding Wisdom until 'tomorrow' ('cras inveniam').[217] In book eight, Augustine returns to this discussion of putting off the seeking of Wisdom ('sapientia'), re-emphasising that he first became aware of Wisdom in his nineteenth year yet still procrastinated, leading to his infamous procrastinatory phrase: 'Grant me chastity and celibacy, but not just yet!'[218] And finally, when Augustine describes the moment of his conversion to Wisdom ('sapientia') at the foot of the fig tree in the Milan garden, he again uses

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[214] As Clark notes in her translation: 'The pun on the Latin word *cras* ("tomorrow") cannot be easily recreated in English.' Av. Prol. i, p.117n.
[215] En.Ps., Psalm cii, Par. xvi, Lin. 25. 'non quaerit deus dilationem in uoce coruina, sed confessionem in gemitu columbino. missa columba reuersa est. quamdiu: cras, cras? obserua ultimum cras; quia ignoras quod sit ultimum cras, sufficiat quod uixisti usque ad hodiernum peccator.'
[216] En.Ps., Psalm cii, 8(16), p.99n. In the footnote, Boulding writes, like Clark does in her translation: 'Literally "Tomorrow, tomorrow!" but the harsh sound of *cras, cras* in Latin reminds Augustine of a raven's cry.'
[217] Conf. Lib. vi, 11(18), pp.274-5.
[218] Conf. Lib. viii, 7(16-7),pp. 386-9. 'da mihi castitatem et continentiam, sed noli modo'.

the language of ‘‘cras’ et ‘cras’’ in prayer, only this time he does so to contrast his pleading for God to hear his cries of contrition with: not ‘tomorrow’, but now.[219] In this Augustine’s infamous ‘sed noli modo’ is turned on its head, and becomes ‘quare non modo?’[220] Therefore, in the very confessional episodes of Augustine’s own life, he consistently contrasts the procrastinatory cry of ‘cras’ with the contrite cry of imminent repentance, which he would also communicate figuratively through the dove and raven, and does so to sacramental effect with the ‘narratio’ of his conversion.[221]

Given the context afforded by Augustine’s *Confessiones*, Augustine’s exposition of Psalm 102 becomes a mode of expressing an idea already present within his semi-autobiographical confessional episodes. Only the dove and raven of scripture, and the sounds they make in the created world, carry the message of repentance to the human hearer in the world. It is fitting, therefore, that Augustine would emphasise, in a strikingly comparable way to Hugh’s prologue at the beginning of his *Aviarium*, that his figurative expositions literally sound out God’s own voice in the world. Creation contained in scripture and reproduced with sound, reveals God’s creative presence in the created world, ever calling humans to repentance through his mercy. As Augustine so clearly exclaims:

> On every side he calls us to amend, from every quarter he summons us to repent. He calls through the blessings of creation, he calls by granting us a prolongation of our lives, he calls through the reader, he calls through the preacher, he calls through our inmost thoughts, he calls through the corrective scourge, he calls through his comforting mercy: he is long-suffering and

[219] Conf. Lib. viii, 12(28), pp.408-9. Here Augustine writes: ‘I sobbed out my pitiful cries. “How long? How long must it be ‘tomorrow’ and ‘tomorrow’? Why not ‘now’?’ ‘iactabam voces miserabiles: “quamdiu, quamdiu, ‘cras’ et ‘cras’? quare non ‘modo’?’
[220] Conf. Lib. viii, 7(16-7), pp.386-9; 12(28), pp.408-9.
[221] This is discussed earlier in chapter of this present study.

richly merciful.[222]

For both Augustine and Hugh, then, God calls through the raven's procrastinatory cry, through the dove's contrite sigh, through the reader of the page, and through the preacher both sounding out and being heard; even through the very fabric of creation itself. The expectation of the medieval theologian, as exegete and expositor, is that they are deeply and reflectively engaged in the world they inhabit, in order that they, and those they commune with, may apprehend the divine in the created order as they each experience it. In this, medieval birds potentially become a 'sacramentum' to be used to communicate divine grace to the faithful, and one that that harmoniously blends both the corporeal and incorporeal realms into one Christian reality. Further, the medieval bird itself stands as an image of the Person of Jesus in the world, and takes on Christological meaning.

The reception of Christological bird expositions throughout the Middle Ages, where the 'body of Christ' is frequently signified through the image of the bird, is remarkably faithful to Origen, Ambrose, and Augustine in content and structure.[223] Building upon the vulture and the eagle, birds that are often grouped together in scriptural commentary,[224] the most popular example of the bird as Christ in the Middle Ages is the vulning pelican; its body pierced for the sake of its children.[225] As Augustine says in his exposition of Psalm 101, which would

[222] En.Ps., Psalm cii, Par. xvi, Lin. 5. 'uocat undique ad correctionem, uocat undique ad paenitentiam, uocat beneficiis creaturae, uocat impertiendo tempus uiuendi, uocat per lectorem, uocat per tractatorem, uocat per intimam cogitationem, uocat per flagellum correptionis, uocat per misericordiam consolationis: longanimis et multum misericordiae.'

[223] On Christological bird expositions in Ambrose and Augustine, see: Hex. AM, Dies v, Cap. xxiv, Par. xcii, p.203; En.Ps., Ser. i, Par. viii, Lin. 26; AII, Cap. xxxix, p.625.

[224] In his *Adnotationes ad Iob,* Augustine groups together the eagle and vulture as representing the divine and human aspects of the person of Jesus. This is drawn from the vulture of Job, and the eagle of St Matthew 24: AII, Cap. xxxix, p.625. That neither Gregory nor Hugh appear to have had a knowledge of Augustine's commentary on Job strengthens the argument for exegetical continuity through the broader tradition.

In his homilies on Leviticus, Origen groups together the eagle and vulture as birds of prey that humans are forbidden to eat. To quote Origen: '"You will not eat" it says, "that which defiles: [namely] the eagle and the vulture" and other similar birds.' "Non manducabis" inquit "haec, quia immunda sunt: aquilam et vulturem" et cetera his similia.' See: Origenes, *In Leuiticum homiliae*, hom. 7, par. 7, 392. It would appear that Origen is paraphrasing the Vulgate's Leviticus 11.9-14.

[225] Rubin highlights this in her monograph on Eucharistic imagery and culture in the Middle Ages. See: M. Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture,* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 310-6. The Christological pelican was almost omnipresent in medieval society, and can be found in the

inform a wealth of high-medieval expositions on the pelican, eagle, vulture, and other birds of Christological significance (including the owl and sparrow): 'If the story about this bird [the pelican] is true, then, this bird is a very apt image of the flesh of Christ – Christ, by whose blood we have been given life.'[226] It is, therefore, fitting that (alongside the pelican and the dove), the eagle and the vulture both enjoyed prominence throughout the bestiary tradition as signifiers of Christ – even the very Eucharistic flesh of Christ's body.[227]

The twelfth century witnessed a revival of interest in scriptural exegesis, in line with institutional developments at monasteries and schools.[228] Naturally, this growing intellectual climate fostered, through its large interconnected network of centres of learning, a continued (and unprecedented) interest in patristic exegetical practice shaping the direction, as relevant to the current discussion, of the bestiary.[229] As previously established, this is evident Hugh of St Victor's and Gerald of Wales' reliance upon Augustine; and further evident in Hugh of Fouilloy's reliance upon (in addition to Gregory the Great) Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos*.[230] Despite this, however, the influence of Augustine and Gregory the Great on the tradition is not generally acknowledged. The vulture of late twelfth-century MS. Ashmole 1511 is a prime example of the second-family bestiary, where Isidore, Gregory, and Ambrose are acknowledged, but (despite the manuscript following Hugh's *Aviarium* in its sections on birds)

bulk of medieval texts about birds, including Alexander Neckam, Hugh of Fouilloy, and the broader bestiary tradition. The pelican can also be seen atop the 16th-century sundial column of Charles Turnbull, which stands in the courtyard of 'Corpus Christi' College, Oxford – attesting to its continued significance. See especially: Av., Cap. xxxviii, pp.168-71. 'De pelicano'.

[226] En.Ps., Psalm cii, Ser. i, Par. viii, Lin. 26. 'habet ergo haec auis, si uere ita est, magnam similitudinem carnis christi, cuius sanguine uiuificati sumus.' Note, in the above translation, and for precision, I have modified Boulding's translation of 'haec auis' to 'this bird' rather than 'the pelican'.

[227] See this in Augustine's exposition below. En.Ps., Psalm cii, Ser. i, Par. viii, Lin. 26.

[228] Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 26-36.

[229] See the discussion above. See also: Smalley, *Study of the Bible,* 37-82. See especially the chapter 'Monastic and Cathedral Schools'. Despite James' view of the Bestiary as predominantly a work of medieval natural history, it is impossible to disregard the influence of Ambrose's *Hexameron,* as well as medieval biblical teaching and learning, on the shape of the second-family bestiary. See: M. James, 'The Bestiary', *History,* 16:61, (1931), 4-5.

[230] To reiterate: TH, Dist. ii, Cap. xix, pp.106-7; DGAL, Lib. ix, 17(31-2), pp.394-5. En.Ps., Psalm cii, Ser. i, Par. viii, Lin. 26.; Av. Prol. i, pp.116-7. Conf. Lib. xiii, 21(29), pp.382-5; DS, Lib. i, Pars. i, Cap. xxvii, Col. 203.

Augustine is not.[231] Yet, in a very real sense, this debt to Augustine's presence in the early church is an accurate observation of the theological nature of the genre.

In addition to the examples provided throughout this chapter, the strongest example of the medieval vulture as a product of patristic reception, and thus part of a continued exegetical tradition, is found when Hugh of Fouilloy's highly-popular 'Vulture' entry in his *Aviarium* is directly compared with the work of patristic exegetes, with which it frequently appeared, especially in French and Portuguese *Aviaria*.[232] The presence of the Augustinian vulture is obvious at first glance and is consistent with Hugh's wider text which draws upon Augustine's biblical commentaries, most strikingly in its opening, but continuously throughout.[233] A closer comparative reading, however, reveals that the similarities between Hugh and Augustine in relation to the vulture were a result of Gregory the Great's influence on Hugh, and raises the possibility that whilst Hugh relied on Augustine elsewhere in his treatise, Hugh's vulture was more directly received through Gregory; indeed the entry is copied directly from Gregory's *Moralia in Iob*.[234] Beyond the fact that Hugh directly lifted his vulture exposition from Gregory, and that Hugh's vulture entry would be transplanted into second-family bestiary manuscripts such as MS. Ashmole 1511, the figurative sense of Hugh's vulture is both biblical and sacramental.[235] For instance, the vulture's behaviour in seeking out carrion features only in Hugh's (and Gregory's) treatise to draw out a moralisation: that God, in the Person of Jesus, mediates between Creator and creature, just as the New Testament designates Christ as

[231] McCulloch, *Mediaeval Latin and French Bestiaries,* 30-36.
[232] In the La Ferté Aviary, Hugh's work appears alongside St Ambrose and St Jerome; in the Cîteaux Aviary, alongside St Augustine; in the Lorvão Aviary, alongside St Ambrose and St Isidore; in the Alcobaça Aviary, alongside St Augustine and St Isidore; and the Melk Aviary (the origin of which is uncertain, but thought to be in close proximity to Melk, Austria), alongside St Gregory. See: Clark, *The Medieval Book of Birds*, 'Catalogue of Illuminated Aviary Manuscripts', 267-311.
[233] This is evident in Hugh's first entry which contrasts the respective calls of the dove and raven – taken directly from Augustine's exposition of Psalm 102. But also evident in their respective discussions of the pelican, sparrow, and night-owl ('nyctiorax'). Compare: En.Ps., Psalm ci, Ser. i, Par. 7-88; Av. Cap. xxxvi-xxxix, pp.166-75.
[234] Mor.I., Lib. iv, Cap. xxxiv, Par. liv & lix; Lib. xviii.
[235] McCulloch, *Medieval Latin and French Bestiaries,* esp. 30-4 & 36-8.

Mediator.[236] Indeed, the very notion that, to Hugh, the 'vulture' signifies 'God's Mediator and Redeemer of humans' ('Mediator Dei et hominum Redemptor') who, in turn, 'deigned to be made man for us' ('Fieri quippe propter nos homo dignatus est') through a condescension to created things, speaks sacramentally to both Augustine's and Hugh of St Victor's respective discussions of 'Wisdom' ('Sapientia') being made flesh.[237] In this, and having surveyed a broad range of high medieval zoological expositions, it is quite clear that, in context, medieval zoological expositions were supposed to be read or heard not literally, but figuratively. And they were composed with a deeper figurative intention of meaning (that could be potentially used as 'sacramentum'), rather than a natural scientific meaning, in mind.

[236] 1 Timothy 2.5: 'For there is one God and one mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ, who gave himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due times.' 'Unus enim Deus, unus mediator Dei et hominum, homo Christus Iesus, qui dedit redemptionem semet ipsum pro omnibus, testimonium temporibus suis.'
[237] Compare: Av. cap. xiii, pp.198-201, 'De Vulture'; DDC, Lib. i, 13(23), pp.22-3; Didas. Lib. i, Cap. ii, p.23.

Conclusion

A Partridge in a Pear Tree

The scope of this present thesis has been broad, and its aims have been ambitious. Any effort in reception history alongside a consideration of corresponding theological implications is always a large and complex undertaking. This is no less true when reassessing the nature of medieval figurative expositions on animals (from Augustine to Grosseteste) which, by their very definition, are multifaceted and multi-layered. The arguments presented here, however, are both needed and important in modern scholarship. Whilst there is undoubtedly an historiographical awareness of the moral/figurative character of medieval writings on animals which form part of, or which are somehow connected to, the evolving medieval bestiary tradition, many modern contributions are still held back by their use of the terms 'natural history', 'scientific', and 'encyclopaedic' (terms made popular by Haskins) when attempting to categorise the medieval texts they interrogate. It is hoped, therefore, that the present thesis has, in the wake of such scholarship, contributed to a rediscovery of the category to which the bestiary (and its related literature) belongs; a need identified by Baxter.

In chapter one, not only has the inadequacy of scientific presentism been made clear when deciphering the use of figurative examples in Alexander Neckam's *De naturis rerum*, but greater attention has been drawn to the absence of theologically-informed modern readings of certain medieval texts. One wonders whether the hold empiricism has over historical academic disciplines stifles the creativity of the modern author, especially when so much is known about Neckam and his religious inheritance (both within and outside of Grant and Lindberg's academic contributions), and yet such transformative readings of his most popular work is still proven possible by this present thesis. The main conclusion drawn from this first chapter is how, despite the modern (and almost instinctive) assumptions a modern reader may have about a particular exposition or idea being absurd or bizarre, there still remains to be

found an incredible amount of sophistication and beauty beneath the literal (and sometimes deceptive) surface that first meets the eye; a surface that conceals Anselm, Augustine, and the figurative exegesis of the School of St Victor.

The significance of 'seeing beyond seeing' is further made clear in chapter two, which has both traced the culture of authority that ensured the perpetuity of exegetical practice from late antiquity through to the High Middle Ages (through Charlemagne, Alcuin, and Bede), and called for a re-reading of popular medieval treatises that are not-so-obviously exegetical in nature. Prompted by Ferrari's reading of Augustine's pear-theft in his autobiographical episodes, the forms of 'auctoritas' that shaped and guided prominent medieval authors demonstrates the 'fruitful' nature of re-reading Abelard's *Historia,* and instead seeing 'figura' at play. In this, chapter two has developed a theology of reading and living that enables the faithful human to apprehend, and be transformed by, divine Wisdom ('sapientia') – the end of all medieval learning and study.

Considering the groundwork done in chapters one and two, the latter three chapters of the thesis have become a case study in medieval figurative expositions on animals, focussing on 'fish' and 'birds' as moral signifiers. In chapter three, Neckam's 'Oyster and the Cloister' and Lanercost's pike story about Grosseteste, are both connected to the moralising tradition, as well as to the material ubiquity of fish in a medieval culture where 'fish' represent human morality, and inform ideas about celibacy, eating habits (monastic and secular evidenced by the 'fish event horizon'), trade, and associated iconography. Importantly, such an investigation sees a thread of consistency in a theological taxonomy of fish, which was informed by hexameronic conceptions of creatures associated with particular elements of creation (birds with the air, and fish with the waters), and was thus distinct from culinary (and other) interests. This gives reason to considering the aquatic nature of the beaver's tail, the hippopotamus, and

the crocodile as ‘fish’ (‘pisces’), and questions the historiographical suggestion that theological fish lists were supposed to be encyclopaedic.

Bringing Frederick II’s *De arte uenandi cum auibus* into the discussion in chapter four becomes important for three important reasons. First, appearing in the scholarship of Haskins, Grant, Hays, Epstein, and others, Frederick’s interest in birds of prey has long been thought to be a model example of ‘scientific inquiry’ in the Middle Ages. This suggestion is frequently made with reference to his vulture experiment, but very little efforts have been made (historiographically speaking) to interrogate whether the nature of Frederick’s interest in birds can truly be called ‘scientific’, nor has his manner of engagement with the moralising tradition been given sufficient consideration. Such an approach in modern scholarship has neglected the fact that Frederick appears to selectively engage only with the contemporaneous voices he disagreed with (and not with those with which he is in agreement), let alone the fact that his interests were purely recreational and aristocratic (and actually had nothing to do with modern science).

The fifth chapter of the thesis has developed the idea of figurative exegesis (presented, chiefly, in chapters one, two, and three) according to the ways in which humans experience the figurative in medieval acts of reading. Again, returning to the role of the physical senses in human visual and auditory experience, this chapter has argued that the semiotics of Augustine, which enjoyed an important reception in High Medieval Europe, are present across medieval figurative expositions on animals. The medieval experience of a figurative ‘zoological’ exposition, therefore, is one that engages the full range of human sensory experience in order to articulate that which cannot be heard or seen with human ears or eyes. In conversation with the figurative vultures and eagles of scripture, and recognising the importance of the auditory senses when experiencing the medieval biblical text, chapter five has ultimately argued that the ideas of medieval figurative expositions on animals, and ‘sacramenta’, potentially coincide.

Importantly, this consideration recognises the corporeal, whether that be presented as image or sound (and whether ordinary or mundane), as a bearer of spirituality or grace that (if received by the faithful) communicates the Wisdom of God to humans to transformative effect. All 'things' ('res') present in the created world have a use, and all may reorder the human's disordered postlapsarian condition, so that God and neighbour may be loved.


Bodleian Library, MS. Bodley 602, fol. 23ᵛ
13th Century, Partridge ('Perdix') with chicks.

Ultimately, the arguments of this present thesis comprise a hermeneutical mode of reading and experiencing the world that 'sees' value and meaning beneath the literal surface of a text, culture, or tradition. Much like Ferrari's reading of Augustine's episode of biblical pear-theft, or the reading of the partridge in the bestiary and aviary traditions as an allegory of the Devil,[1] a deeper intention of meaning awaits discovery beneath, or within, that which first meets the physical eye. Such a mode of interrogating texts and ideas may well discover irony, finding a sceptical Piaget retelling the biblical Fall, or a Grant and Lindberg unable to 'see' the Euclidean optics in Neckam's moon rays and horses (through his innovative 'camera obscura'). Most significantly, however, the arguments of this thesis offer much-needed empathy in explorations into human history, culture, and belief, framing especially medieval thought as 'scientia' to 'sapientia' (rather than Radding's 'Superstition to Science'), and exposing a greater depth of meaning in the absurd or the bizarre; even in moon-rays and castration, or oysters and cloisters. Or perhaps, most especially, in a partridge and a pear tree.

[1] Av. Cap. lv, pp.234-7; MS. Bodley 602, fol. 23ᵛ.

Appendix a:

Fish 'pisces' lists from second-family and transition bestiary manuscripts (found in Clark and White):

Latin	*English*
Agredula	Field frog
Anguilla	Eel
Anguis	Sea snake
Araneus	Weever
Aspidochelone/aspido-testudo/cetus[1]	Great fish/Shield turtle
Aurata	Gilt-bream
Balaena	Whale
Calamites	Green frog
Cancer	Crab
Cete	(A large sea animal – whale, dolphin, shark)
Coclea	Snail
Cocodrillus	Crocodile
Concha	Shellfish
Corvus	Sea-raven
Delphines	Dolphin

[1] 'Cetus' is defined by Clark as a group of large fish, or simply a 'great fish'. The moralisation that accompanies both the Northumberland Bestiary and Clark's second-family selections here refers to the biblical account of Jonah and the Whale, stating: 'Ceti etiam dicta ob immanitatem corporis, est enim ingens sicut ille qui excepit Ionam' ('Great fish indeed suggests a monstrous body like, for instance, the vastness of the one that took Jonah'). In the Old Testament book of Jonah, the Vulgate reads 'praeparavit Dominus piscem grandem' ('the Lord prepared a great fish'). The New Testament gospel of St Matthew repeats the story, using the phrase 'fuit Ionas in ventre ceti' ('Jonah was is the belly of the great fish'), again using a term that could refer to a 'great fish', rather than a 'whale' specifically. See: Jonah 2.1; Matthew 12.40; *Medieval Book of Beasts,* 205-6. The Latin above is taken from the Vulgate and Clark's edition, but I have re-translated from the Latin of Clark's edition for continuity.

Echenais	Remora
Echinus	Sea-urchin/Sucking fish
Equus marinus	Sea-horse
Escarius/scarus	Scar
Gladius	Swordfish
Hippopotamus	Hippopotamus
Lacertus[2]	Sea-fish
Leo	Sealion
Locusta[3]	Lobster
Loligo	Cuttlefish
Lupus	Wolf-fish
Mugilis	Grey mullet
Mullus	Red mullet
Murena	Sea-eel/Moray eel
Murex	Purple mollusc
Musculi	Mussel
Musculus	Bull-whale
Musica	Sea-snail/purple-dye fish
Niger merulus	Sea-carp
Occeola	Pearlbearer
Orbis	Orb-fish
Ostreum/Ostrea	Oyster

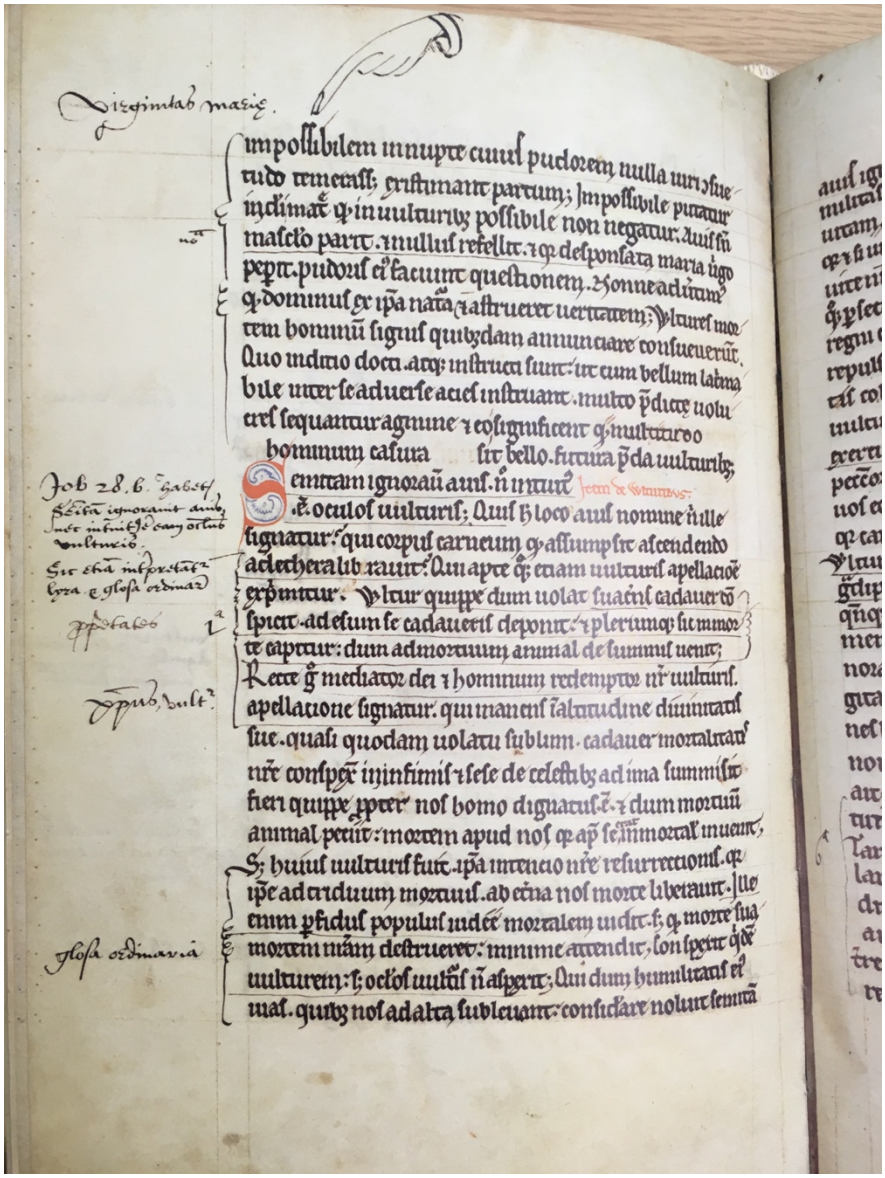
[2] Clark's translation of 'lacertus' as 'lizard' may be misleading. It appears in a section referencing a group of shellfish and accompanies a mistranslation of the Latin word for lobster. Clark, *Medieval Book of Beasts,* 214.
[3] Clark mistranslates 'locusta' as 'locust', when it should read 'lobster'. The same passage appears in White's edition of the Northumberland Bestiary, though her translation properly renders 'locusta' as 'lobster'. See: NB, Lib. vii. Cap.xxvii, p.249; Clark, *Medieval Book of Beasts,* 214.

Pavus	Sea-peacock
Polippus[4]	Octopus/Sea-polyp
Porcus marinus/ suillus	Sea pig
Rana	Frog
Rubeta	Toad
Sar	Sardine
Scarus/escarius	Scar
Scorpio	Scorpion fish
Serra	Saw fish
Solea	Sole
Testudo	Tortoise
Torpedo	Electric ray
Turdus	Sea-thrush
Umbra	Grayling
Varia/tructa	Trout
Vitulus/baca	Sea-calf

Note: the list here is a combination of White's edition and translation of the transitional Northumberland Bestiary, and Clark's compilation of lists found in second-family bestiary manuscripts. See: NB, Lib. vii. Cap. i - Lib. viii, Cap. ii, pp.222-262; *A Medieval Book of Beasts: The Second-Family Bestiary,* pp.205-20.

[4] Again, Clark's translation is misleading. Rendering 'polippus' in Latin (in the English translation), Clark inserts the definite article, saying: 'The *polippus* is the multipede, for it has many pods'. White, on the other hand, translates: 'The (polyp) means many-footed, for it has very many appendages.' An alternative translation could be, 'The octopus means many-feet, for it has a plurality of grappling limbs.' The Latin is almost identical between the editions of Clark and White. White's reads: 'Poilippus id est multipes. Plurimos enim habet nexus.' Clark's reads: 'Polippus, id est multipes, plurimos enim nexus habet.' My translation is from the Latin of Clark's edition, and takes 'polippus' to mean an Octopus or a similar creature. This moves away from the 'multipede' suggestion of Clark, which takes 'multipes' (literally meaning 'many feet') as its own creature.

Appendix b:



Bodleian Library, MS. Ashmole 1511

The paragraph beginning ‘Item de uulturibus’ is copied from Hugh of Fouilloy’s *Aviarium*, beginning with the line: ‘Semitam ignoravit avis, nec intuitus est oculos vulturis. Quis hoc loco avis nomine nisi Ille signatur qui corpus carneum quod assumpsit ascendendo ad aethera libravit?’ For Hugh’s full entry, see: Av. Cap. xiii, pp.198-201.

Note that Hugh lifted the vulture entry (which made its way into MS. Ashmole 1511) directly from Gregory the Great’s *Moralia in Iob* which begins in the very same way: ‘Semitam ignorauit auis, nec intuitus est oculos uulturis. Quis hoc loco auis nomine, nisi ille signatur qui corpus carneum quod assumpsit, ascendendo ad aethera librauit?’ For Gregory’s full entry, see: Mor.I. Lib. xviii, Par. xxxiv.

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