INFERNAL TOPOGRAPHY: THE EVOLUTION OF HELL IMAGERY IN THE MIDDLE AGES

by

Janis Johnston Elliott
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We accept this thesis as conforming to the required standard

[redacted]

Dr. John L. Osborne, Supervisor (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. S. Anthony Welch, Departmental Member (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. Lloyd H. Howard, Outside Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. John J. Tucker, External Examiner (Department of English)

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University of Victoria

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Supervisor: Dr. John L. Osborne

ABSTRACT

Pictorial images of Christian hell began in the eighth century with scenes of the Anastasis, in which Christ tramples the personification of Hades during his descent to the underworld. From the ninth century on, hell occurs in psalter illustrations and apocalyptic cycles, and most frequently in Last Judgment scenes. The impetus for the invention of the Anastasis scene, and for the expansion of the older pictorial traditions of the Last Judgment and Apocalypse to include specific images of hell, was the Church's decision in the late seventh century to promote the use of pictorial images in the struggle against heretical groups. With this decree the medieval imagination was set loose to develop an infernal topography.

This thesis is a survey of that topography from its eighth century inception until the turn of the fourteenth century. The pre-Christian descriptions of the underworld and the documented medieval visions of hell which constitute the first two chapters of the thesis provide a literary framework for the pictorialization of the Christian hell. Although it is impossible to link every image with a textual source, and indeed the influences are reciprocal, an attempt has been made throughout the subsequent chapters to show the connections between image and word. For example, the influence of *The Aeneid* is apparent in the ninth century Trier Apocalypse and may be responsible for the

horned Satan and the four fiery rivers of hell in Giotto's Last Judgment in the Scrovegni Chapel, Padua.

The third chapter describes the early development of the Anastasis and the first few centuries of Last Judgment and Apocalypse scenes. Experimental stages in the iconography of these scenes can be found in Carolingian psalter illustrations. In particular the Stuttgart and Utrecht Psalters play pivotal roles in the evolution of hell imagery. Prototypes for the Byzantine Last Judgment appear in the Utrecht Psalter (fol. 53v and 84v), and the Stuttgart Psalter (fol. 10v) provides many infernal models for later hell imagery.

Chapter IV discusses three major developments in Romanesque art from different regions: the English mouth of hell; the Byzantine Last Judgment; and the Last Judgment portal sculptures of the French pilgrimage routes. The Great Reform and the Crusades were responsible for the wide dissemination of many Romanesque images. To establish the context in which they appeared, a summary of important historical and political developments of the Romanesque period has been included.

The Tuscan Last Judgment scenes of the thirteenth century rely more on Byzantine and Roman influences than on contemporary developments in Europe. Nevertheless, the possible influence of the sculptures of Conques on the Florence Baptistery Last Judgment are discussed along with its Byzantine influences. A comparison between the Baptistery mosaic and Giotto's Last Judgment at Padua marks the transition from Medieval to Renaissance art and concludes the study of the topography of hell in the Middle Ages.

A summary of significant points in the evolution of hell imagery concludes the thesis. Examples are given, from the fourteenth century B.C. to the thirteenth century A.D., of the concept of hell as the negative counterpart of heaven and earth. Particularly strong themes, like the mouth of hell, are traced throughout their courses, breaking through the confines of chronological chapters. Beginning about 2000 B.C. and terminating in the first years of the fourteenth century A.D., the literary and pictorial manifestations of the concept of hell surveyed in this thesis reveal the traditions and resources which were available to Dante and Giotto in refining the infernal topography.

Examiners:

[redacted]

Dr. John L. Osborne, Supervisor (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. S. Anthony Welch, Departmental Member (Department of History in Art)

[redacted]

Dr. Lloyd H. Howard, Outside Member (Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies)

[redacted]

Dr. John J. Tucker, External Examiner (Department of English)

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INTRODUCTION

Dante's *Inferno* has inspired many wonderful works of art, from Nardo di Cione's fresco of hell in the church of Sta. Maria Novella in Florence (c. 1350), through the splendid illustrations which accompany various editions of the text. Those of Botticelli, Blake, and Doré leap to mind,[1] but there are also very recent editions with contemporary illustrations.[2]

In an impressive study, Peter Brieger, Millard Meiss, and Charles Singleton examined the relationship of illustration to text and commentary in the first two centuries of illuminated editions of *The Divine Comedy*.[3] The power of Dante's infernal vision and of its various pictorial interpretations caused me to ponder what had preceded it. What were Dante's literary and visual sources? What medieval images of hell had provided models for Giotto's Last Judgment at Padua

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[1] Sandro Botticelli's illustrations for *The Divine Comedy* were produced for Lorenzo di Medici between 1492 and 1497. William Blake's illustrations remained incomplete upon his death in 1827. M. Gustave Doré's *Inferno* illustrations were published in 1901.

[2] For example: *The Divine Comedy*, Thomas G. Bergin, trans., Leonard Baskin, illustrator (New York, 1969); and *The Divine Comedy*, Tom Phillips, trans. and illustrator (London, 1985). Phillips also did a British television version of the *Inferno*.

[3] P. Brieger et al., *Illuminated Manuscripts of the Divine Comedy* (Princeton, 1969).

(1303-1310) and the earliest illustrations of the *Inferno*?[4] When did hell first appear in art? Curiosity about pre-Dante images of hell inspired this study of the evolution of the topography and iconography of hell from ancient literary concept to startling medieval visual image. While the *Inferno* plays only a very small part in this thesis, as the literary terminus in the evolution of a pictorial image, it has still, at the age of six hundred and eighty, been inspirational in the conception of this work.

The subject of pictorial hell imagery in the Middle Ages has not, to date, been the focus of a scholarly survey. Many works on related topics, however, contain useful descriptions or discussions of the context in which hell imagery appeared. Bouillet's early survey of the development of Last Judgment iconography, *Le Jugement dernier dans l'art aux douze premiers siècles*, provided some useful descriptions. More recent are Beat Brenk's surveys, *Tradition und Neuerung in der christlichen Kunst des ersten Jahrtausends: Studien zur Geschichte des Weltgerichtbildes*, and "Die Anfänge der byzantinischen Weltgerichtsdarstellung," in *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*. Although the treatment of hell imagery is limited and general, these works describe many important monuments and establish a format by which to discuss not only the Last Judgment segment of this thesis, but also the entire evolution of the iconography of hell. Anna Kartsonis' book *Anastasis:*

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[4] The earliest extant illuminated manuscripts of *The Divine Comedy* are: Florence, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. Palat. 313, 1330s; Florence, Biblioteca Laurenziana, ms. Strozzi 152, c. 1335; Milan, Biblioteca Trivulziana, ms. 1080, c. 1337.

The Making of an Image was invaluable in establishing the context in which the earliest images of the underworld were depicted. But apart from a few articles by Wilkins, Rothschild, and Yarza which deal with hell imagery in specific works of art, infernal iconography has been largely neglected.

Since Dante had consulted Virgil, it seemed appropriate to begin in the first chapter with the pre-Christian concept of hell in order to understand western civilization's most basic perceptions of the netherworld: its association with the grave, its subterranean location, darkness, mud, and fire. For this, Tromp's *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament* was immeasurably helpful. But also, for the first time, I had the pleasure of reading Homer, Plato, and Virgil, and took particular delight in the poetry of *The Odyssey*.

Chapter II surveys the medieval visions of hell which were recorded by ecclesiastics. *The Apocryphal New Testament*, edited by M. R. James, and Eileen Gardiner's *Visions of Heaven and Hell Before Dante* provided valuable translations of the visions. These, naturally, represent the view of hell which the Church wanted to convey. In showing the relationships between the important visions of hell from St. Peter's Apocalypse to the Vision of Tundale, I have attempted to establish the environment in which ideas and motifs of hell were exchanged and disseminated in the Middle Ages. With the rise of vernacular literature from the twelfth century on, the concepts and images of hell spread more quickly and to a wider audience. By the

thirteenth century secularized visions of hell, recorded or composed by laymen such as Dante, reflected the popular conception of hell.

The pictorial imagery of Christian hell is the focus of the subsequent three chapters. Chapter III considers the earliest appearances of, or references to, hell in Christian art. Since the first image of the underworld occurs in the trampled personification of Hades which appears in an eighth century Anastasis scene, the evolution of Anastasis iconography begins the chapter and establishes the ecclesiastical environment in which hell imagery begins to flourish.

The origins of Last Judgment and Apocalypse iconography are also discussed since it is in Last Judgment scenes, which frequently are part of Apocalypse cycles, that hell appears most often. The experimental nature of psalter illustrations, critical to the development of hell iconography, is discussed with emphasis on the influential Stuttgart and Utrecht Psalters.

The Romanesque period is considered in light of European politics and the Crusades. International contact throughout the eleventh and twelfth centuries brought about an exchange of artistic ideas and motifs. Predominant and most influential among them, within the context of hell imagery, are the English mouth of hell, the Byzantine Last Judgment, and the rise of monumental sculpture along the pilgrimage roads. The development of each of these is the subject of Chapter IV.

In the fifth chapter, a brief introduction sets the stage for the

thirteenth century northern European Gothic representations of hell. These are contrasted with the developments of the Last Judgment in Italy, where the classical art of ancient Rome had more influence than the northern Gothic.

The concluding chapter attempts to tie all the media, all the centuries, and all the regions together. The pivotal position of the Stuttgart Psalter is stressed. Certain motifs, like the blood-vomitting demon with bird's feet and cock's comb, continue to appear relatively unchanged from the ninth to thirteenth centuries. Others are transformed by external influences. The Conclusion tries to simplify the process of evolution by tracking common motifs through changes in location and iconography. The result is a colourful view of the grim side of Christianity with plenty of grist for the mills of Dante and Giotto.

I

PRE-CHRISTIAN CONCEPT OF HELL

Christian interest in Hell developed out of curiosity about Christ's descent into Hades during the time between his Entombment and Resurrection. The first Christian images of the underworld, therefore, are the gates of Hell or the trampled figure of Hades which appear in the earliest surviving scenes of the Anastasis, dating from the pontificate of Pope John VII (705-707).[1] Hell's literary history, however, predates its depiction by more than a thousand years and provides the framework for its pictorialization. Descriptions of Death and the Underworld throughout pre-Christian literature share many common features: the idea of descent to an underground location, darkness, mud, fire, the combination of extreme heat and cold, the concept of being swallowed by a voracious mouth, and the presence of demons, among others. From the Epic of Gilgamesh dated about 2000 B.C., to *The Aeneid* in the first century B.C., vague notions of darkness and mud evolved into a detailed and populated landscape.

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[1] J. Osborne, "The Painting of the Anastasis in the Lower Church of San Clemente, Rome: A Re-examination of the Evidence for the Location of the Tomb of Cyril," *Byzantion* 51 (1981), 261. Hereafter: Osborne. The earliest Anastasis scenes appear in Rome at S. Maria Antiqua (two doorway fresco panels) and at the Oratory of John VII in St. Peter's (part of a mosaic cycle now known only through drawings). The circumstances surrounding the invention of the Anastasis and its importance in the development of the iconography of Hell will be discussed in Chapter III.

THE LOCATION OF HELL

Basic to the idea of Hell is its subterranean location. The four thousand year old Sumerian version[2] of the myth of Ishtar refers to the goddess's journey to the realm of the dead as a "descent to the underworld." Mesopotamians conceived of the underworld as an immense subterranean circle surrounded by seven walls pierced by seven successive doors.[3] They envisioned its territory as beginning close to the earth's surface, although the souls of the dead resided in the lowest depths of the earth. The grave, understandably, was considered to be part of the infernal territory or a passage into it.[4] Entrance to the underworld, or Arallou, was believed to be at the end of a long journey to the west, and required the crossing of Khoubour, the infernal river.[5] In his book *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament*, Nicholas Tromp compares biblical texts with Ugaritic texts which date to the first half of the

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[2] The myth of Ishtar has been transmitted to us in both Sumerian and in Semitic Babylonian. The Semitic version survives in two recensions, the Nineveh and the Ashur recensions. The tablets excavated from the library of the Assyrian king Ashurbanipal (668-c.633 B.C.) in Nineveh, the later capital of the Assyrian empire, are dated to that time, while the tablet from Ashur is thought to be older. The Sumerian version of Ishtar's descent to the underworld, in which Ishtar is called Inanna, is inscribed on tablets excavated at Nippur which are dated to around 2000 B.C. A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels* (Chicago, 1949), 119-121. Hereafter: Heidel.

[3] J.-M. Aynard, "Le jugement des morts chez les Assyro-Babyloniens," *Le Jugement des Morts. Collection "Sources Orientales,"* IV, (Paris, 1961), 84.

[4] Heidel, 170.

[5] Aynard, *op. cit.*, 84.

fourteenth century B.C.[6] In both cases the souls of the dead were thought to descend to an underground residence. In the Ugaritic text, Baal, god of rain, sends his messengers to the underworld abode of Mot, god of death and drought: "...and go down to the charnel house of the nether world. Be counted among them that went down into the nether world" (U.T. 51:VIII:7-10).[7] The subterranean location of the underworld is associated with the grave in both the Ugaritic texts and the Old Testament:

> Then
> of a truth do thou set thy face unto a rock
> full of graves; lift up the rocks on thy two hands,
> ...and go down
> to...the netherworld,... (U.T. 67:V:11-15)[8]
>
> My breath is corrupt, my days are extinct, the graves are ready for me.
> ....
> And where is now my hope? as for my hope, who shall see it? They shall go down to the bars of the pit, when our rest together is in the dust. (Job 17:1, 15-16)[9]

In the Old Testament, among the many names given to the underworld, Sheol is the most common. Tromp defines Sheol as "the

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[6] Ugaritic texts found at Ras Shamra, whose language is similar to biblical Hebrew, have contributed to a better understanding of Old Testament texts. N. J. Tromp, *Primitive Conceptions of Death and the Nether World in the Old Testament* (Rome, 1969), 1. Hereafter: Tromp.

[7] *Ibid.*, 6.

[8] *Ibid.*, 8.

[9] The Book of Job is dated around 1520 B.C. *The Holy Bible* (The Oxford Self-Pronouncing Bible, King James Version), 8. Hereafter all citations of Biblical texts refer to the translation in the King James Version and all dates given for Biblical texts will be taken from the chronology on page 8 of *The Holy Bible*.

complete reign of Death, the abode of the dead from which nobody returns; it is partially identical with the grave and with the primeval ocean also."[10] Several passages in Old Testament books refer to the location of the underworld as deep in the earth and also mention descent into a pit.[11] J. Le Goff, in *The Birth of Purgatory*, mentions the similarity between the "pit of destruction" in Psalm 55:23 and the pit at the entrance to the underworld in Grimm's tale, Frau Hölle.[12]

The universe was thought to be divided into three parts, with heaven above among the stars, and hell below in the depths of the pit. Evidence that this concept existed possibly as early as the eleventh century B.C. is written in Psalm 77:18 (c. 1060-570 B.C.).[13] The Socratic idea of the universe, recorded in the fourth century by Plato in *Phaedo*, was that the earth was round and in the centre of the

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[10] Tromp, 133.

[11] For example: Numbers 16:30 (c. 1490-1451 B.C.), Isaiah 14:15 (c. 760-698 B.C.), Ezekiel 31:14-16 (c. 595-572 B.C.).

[12] Hölle is the German word for Hell. J. Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory* (Chicago, 1984), 26. Hereafter: Le Goff. The numbering of the verses in the Psalms varies in different versions of the Old Testament. Le Goff mentions the Grimm tale in connection with Psalm 55:24. In the King James (KJ) version the equivalent is Psalm 55:23. I shall consistently use the KJ notation and footnote any discrepancies.

[13] Tromp, 135. Tromp cites the translation of Psalm 77:19 (Ps. 77:18 KJ) in M. J. Dahood, *Psalms I* (Pss. 1-50) The Anchor Bible 16 (Garden City, N. Y., 1966), 109, which replaces "the earth trembled and shook" (KJ) with "the nether world trembled and shook," claiming a more literal translation which allows the interpretation of the underworld as the third realm. The universe is divided into the heavens, the world, and the earth (beneath the world) in Jeremiah 10:11-12 (c. 629-562 B.C.).

heavens. Human life existed in a few of the many hollows on the earth's surface, while below, those hollows were interconnected in a system of channels through which flowed water, fire and mud. One of the hollows was an especially large chasm with a tunnel leading to the deepest subterranean pit, called Tartarus, through which flowed all rivers, wind and air.[14] Relating the Tale of Er in *The Republic*, Plato explained the structure of the universe:

> ...they saw from above a line of light, straight as a column, extending right through the whole heaven and through the earth...they saw the ends of the chains of heaven let down from above: for this light is the belt of heaven, and holds together the circle of the universe.... From these ends is extended the spindle of Necessity, on which all the revolutions turn. (X:616)[15]

Hell, or the underworld, was considered the negative counterpart of heaven and earth. In the same sense that death is the opposite of life, the underworld was thought to provide negative experiences, such as pain and misery, rivers of fire and mud, and noxious air. In the Ugaritic texts, the name *'rs*, meaning chaos in a cosmological sense, is used for the underworld.[16] That severe illness often preceded death may account for the idea that the underworld was a place of agony. Most likely the idea of bubbling mud and fire and fumes comes from the many

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[14] Plato, *Phaedo*, trans. D. Gallop (Oxford,1975), 108E, p.63ff. Hereafter: *Phaedo*.

[15] *Idem.*, *The Republic*, trans. B. Jowett (New York, 1941), X:616, p.391. Hereafter: *Republic*.

[16] Tromp, 133.

active volcanic regions around the Mediterranean Sea.[17] The area around Lake Avernus near Naples, Italy, where Virgil's hero is believed to have descended to the underworld, is such a place still today, with vast areas seething and spewing lava from deep beneath the surface. Aeneas describes the entrance to the underworld as a "deep rugged cave, stupendous and yawning wide, protected by a lake of black water and the glooming forest," and goes on to describe the lake as so poisonous "no bird could wing a straight course without harm."[18] His description of the vast cavern into which he descended as having "a hundred mouthways and a hundred broad tunnels"[19] corresponds to the black and porous volcanic topography of that region.

From the Assyro-Babylonian myth of Ishtar to *The Aeneid*, the idea of descent to a subterranean realm of the dead is prevalent. In the myth of Ishtar, neither the route nor the means of descent are mentioned. By the time of Virgil, a detailed landscape has evolved.

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[17] For a brief discussion on locating the entrance to the underworld in volcanic regions, see Le Goff, 8-9.

[18] Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. W. F. Jackson Knight (Harmondsworth, 1956), VI:221-254, p.154. Hereafter: *Aeneid*.

[19] *Ibid.*, VI:21-57, p.148.

THE LANDSCAPE

Darkness

The earliest physical descriptions of hell are simply of darkness, mud, and dust. The story of Enkidou's dream of the underworld in The Epic of Gilgamesh, dated about 2000 B.C.,[20] and probably based on the myth of Ishtar's descent,[21] refers to "the house of darkness...the house whose occupants are bereft of light; Where dust is their food and clay their sustenance...(Where) they see no light and dwell in darkness."[22] The Book of Job (c. 1520 B.C.) emphasizes the gloom:

> Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death;
> A land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness. (Job 10: 21-22)

The Ishtar myth describes Ishtar's arrival at an underworld palace built of lapis lazuli and the seven gates through which she

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[20] In the seventh century B.C the Epic of Gilgamesh consisted of twelve tablets. It survives in fragments of several recensions in Semitic Baylonian (excavated at Nineveh, see fn.2), Old Babylonian (found among the ruins of ancient Sippar/modern Abu Habba), and in Sumerian (discovered at Nippur, Kish and Ur, see fn.2). The tablets inscribed in Old Babylonian are dated to the First Babylonian Dynasty (1790-1750 B.C) but the epic is believed to have been composed around 2000 B.C, while the originally independent episodes which comprise the epic are thought to have existed long before that date. Heidel, 1, 2, 15.

[21] *Ibid.*, 13, 14.

[22] The Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet VII, Column iv, 33-39, *Ibid.*, 60. "Clay" can also be translated as "mud," being interpreted in Aynard's French translation as "la boue." Aynard, *op. cit.*, 92. E. A. Wallis Budge, in his ***Babylonian Life and History***, translates: "...dust is their food, their meat mud," cited in P. Carus, ***The History of the Devil and the Idea of Evil*** (La Salle, Illinois, 1974), 42.

passed before reaching the court of the infernal rulers.[23] This scant description of the underworld is the earliest, and the only one for many centuries (except for the Egyptian hell), to imagine more than the dust and darkness of a grave-related hell. Even Homer, in the ninth century B.C., limits his imagination to "the dusky nation...whom endless night invades."[24]

The ancient Egyptian vision of hell, on the other hand, was well developed and highly refined. The Book of the Dead which records the rituals of the cult of Osiris[25] describes and illustrates an underworld of gates, houses, marshes and lakes of fire. Le Goff states that the Egyptian concept of hell was so specific that some sarcophagi bore maps of the underworld.[26] A series of invasions depleted the power of Egypt after the New Kingdom, perhaps explaining why this wealth of detail concerning the afterlife did not influence the European tradition until the Roman Empire united the Mediterranean countries. It was not until Virgil's *Aeneid* that such a precise topography was re-invented.

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[23] Heidel, 120.

[24] Homer, *The Odyssey*, trans. Alexander Pope (New York, 1920), XI, p.170. Hereafter: *Odyssey*.

[25] Osiris was the king of the underworld, conquerer of death, and source of immortality for all Egyptians. The spells and prayers of his cult, which was popular in New Kingdom Egypt (c. 1570-1070 B.C), were recorded in the Book of the Dead, which was written and illuminated on papyrus scrolls, and enclosed in tombs with the bodies of the deceased. *Gardner's Art Through the Ages*, H. de la Croix and R. G. Tansey, eds. (New York, 1986), 100. Hereafter: *Gardner's*.

[26] Le Goff, 19.

Fire

A hell of fire and the combined agony of heat and cold are threatened in the Old Testament: "Drought and heat consume the snow waters: so doth the grave those which have sinned," (Job 24:19); "For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell," (Deuteronomy 32:22).[27] These motifs begin to appear in western accounts more frequently around the fourth century B.C. and seem to coincide with the broadening of the idea of hell to include a landscape setting for the judgment and punishment of sinners. Plato, who lists various sins and their corresponding punishments in *Phaedo*, describes in detail the four special rivers of the underworld, one of which is Pyriphlegethon, the River of Burning Fire, which falls into a large region ablaze with fire and forms a large lake boiling with water and mud. It then winds, turbid and muddy through the earth, meeting the borders of the Acherusian Lake without mingling with its waters, and then coils underground to discharge deep down in Tartarus (it is from Pyriphlegethon that lava-streams blast fragments upon the earth).[28]

In discussing aspects of fire symbolism, Jacques Le Goff traces

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[27] Both Deut. 32:22 and Job 24:19 also imply the punishment of sinners. Among the distinct regions of Sheol, the lowest depths are reserved for souls of particular disgrace; that is, impure (unburied or uncircumcized) rather than guilty. *Ibid.*, 28. The book of Deuteronomy is dated c. 1451 B.C.

[28] The other three rivers are: Oceanus, the largest and outermost river circling the earth; Acheron, the River of Pain, which flows opposite to Oceanus; and Cocytus, the River of Wailing, which issues opposite and flows contrary to Pyriphlegethon, falling into a wild region of bluish-grey colour called the Stygian (the River of Hate) and forming a lake, the Styx, and eventually discharging opposite Pyriphlegethon deep in Tartarus. *Phaedo*, 112E-113C, p.67.

the complexities of its meanings to a single origin in the Indo-European notion of a divine or sacred fire.[29] The various attributes of fire, "at times...purifying, at other times...punitive or probative," found their way from India and Iran, through Greek and Roman mythology, into Judeo-Christian fire symbolism, eventually manifesting in the fires of Christian purgatory and hell.[30] In India, at the time of the appearance of the Upanishads (800-600 B.C.), the souls of the dead were believed to follow one of three paths, each of which began in fire, literally the flames of the funeral pyre. The wicked, after passing through fire, wind up in a dark and gloomy hell.[31] In the earlier Puranas,[32] seven hells provide torture over glowing coals, burning copper, and boiling oil, the terrible heat being the product of fire. In torturous contrast, the fourth of these hells, called Tamas (darkness), inflicts extreme cold, darkness, hunger and thirst.[33] In the Buddhist hells (8 principal and 128 subordinate hells), sinners were punished on beds of fire and floors of red-hot

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[29] Le Goff, 10.

[30] *Ibid.*, 10-11.

[31] *Ibid.*, 18.

[32] The Puranas are a collection of Vedic (pre-Brahman) hymns and myths, Brahmanistic in spirit, and dating before the Upanishads.

[33] E. J. Becker, *A Contribution to the Comparative Study of the Medieval Visions of Heaven and Hell, with Special Reference to the Middle English Versions* (Baltimore, 1899), 14. Hereafter: Becker.

irons.[34] Some of these infernal elements are thought by E. J. Becker to have been transmitted to Christian accounts of hell through the Jewish apocryphal Book of Enoch.[35] The vision of hell presented in Enoch includes a blazing fire, columns of fire in a deep abyss, a deep valley burning with fire through which rivers of fire flowed, and springs of water which turned to ice.[36] Hell in the Book of Enoch was divided into different regions to accommodate various categories of souls and its entrance was, like the Egyptian entrance to the underworld, far in the west. There was a high mountain and rocky cliffs, and four very deep cavities in which the souls of the dead were to gather until the day of judgment.[37] Guided by angels, Enoch proceeded from a house with blazing inhabitants, to a place "where storms, thunder, and the waters of life reside," through alternating regions of fire and darkness until he reached the "mountains of the shadows of winter...and the mouth of the abyss."[38]

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[34] *Ibid.*, 10-11. Buddhism began in India with the preaching of Buddha Sakyamuni (563-483 B.C.).

[35] Becker dates the Book of Enoch to c. 110 B.C. *Ibid.*, 22. Le Goff suggests an earlier date at the beginning of the Jewish apocalyptic period, slightly before 170 B.C. The Book of Enoch was probably written originally in Hebrew, although the most complete version which survives is in Ethiopian, based on a Greek original. Le Goff, 30.

[36] Becker, 22-25.

[37] Le Goff, 30-31.

[38] *Ibid.*, 30.

The Aeneid

As Ishtar was guided through the seven gates by the gatekeeper,[39] as the Egyptian souls were guided by Anubis[40], and as Enoch was guided by angels[41], Virgil's hero, Aeneas, also had a guide through the underworld, a priestess. His descent from Lake Avernus led him through a vestibule, or waiting room, "in front of the very Entrance Hall, in the very Jaws of Hades,"[42] where souls wait on the threshold. The giant elm in the centre is reminiscent of the sacred Banyan tree around which people gather in front of a Brahman temple. The centaurs, the Chimaera, Gorgons, the three-bodied Geryon, and other hybrid beasts were likely drawn from Indian and Egyptian mythologies.[43]

Aeneas proceeded toward the seething Abyss, "enormous and engulfing, choking forth all its sludge into Cocytus,"[44] where he met Charon, warden of the river crossing, who ferries across the pools of

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[39] Heidel, 120.

[40] J. Viaud, "Egyptian Mythology," *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* (London, 1968), 25.

[41] The winged personages whom Endikou encountered on his visit to the underworld may be the predecessors of Enoch's guiding angels as well as some of the composite creatures who inhabit Virgil's hell. The Gilgamesh Epic, Tablet VII, Column iv, 31-32, 38, Heidel, 60.

[42] *Aeneid*, VI:255-287, p.155.

[43] For a comprehensive study of the history of monsters see R. Wittkower, "The Marvels of the East," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942), 159-197. For half-human, half-animal creatures in the Egyptian Book of the Dead see the illustration in *Gardner's*, fig. 3-43.

[44] *Aeneid*, VI:288-322, p.156.

Cocytus and the marsh of Styx only souls who have had proper burial.[45] The crossing of an infernal river and the encounter with a monstrous boatman are features perhaps borrowed from the Mesopotamian hell,[46] and the terrible fate of the unburied dead is significant in both The Epic of Gilgamesh and *The Odyssey* of Homer.[47] On the other side of the river, Cerberus, the gigantic three-throated dog with snakes for a mane, guards the cave-entrance to the court of Minos. Beyond dwell the suicides, confined by nine encircling coils of Styx; further on stretch the Fields of Mourning, abode of the heart-broken; and still further are the fields where military heroes reside.[48]

At this point the road divides: one, to the right, leads the virtuous to Elysium; the other, to the left, leads evil souls to Tartarus. Looking to the left, Aeneas saw broad battlements and the sweeping white-hot flames and crashing boulders of Phlegethon, the Pyriphlegethon of Plato. The entrance to Tartarus is marked by a huge gate with adamantine columns and an iron tower in which sits the guardian, Tisiphone, who scourges the guilty and threatens them with

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[45] The unburied must roam the river banks for a hundred years. *Ibid.*, VI:323-353, p.157. Charon is convinced to ferry Aeneas only at the sight of the golden Wand of Destiny. *Ibid.*, VI:388-420, p.159.

[46] See above p.7, fn.5; also Heidel, 172.

[47] Enkidou discovered that the souls of the unburied are doomed to restless wandering as ghosts, and must appeal to the solicitude of the living. Le Goff, 25. Odysseus learned the same thing from Elpenor. *Odyssey*, XI, p.171.

[48] *Aeneid*, VI:420-487, p.159-161.

hideous snakes.[49] When the gates creaked open Aeneas saw the guardian of the entrance court, a monstrous fifty-throated hydra, and beyond, yawning Tartarus sloping downwards to the darkest depths.[50] Aeneas and his guide followed the path to the right and, passing through another gate, arrived at the Land of Joy in the Fortunate Woods, or Elysium, where the blessed reside. After a reunion with his father, Aeneas departed through the Gate of Ivory and returned to his ship.

Aeneas' passage through a series of gates recalls the seven gates through which Ishtar passed on her visit to the underworld, each gate guarded by a vigilant demon.[51] The concept of the underworld as a city complete with battlements, gates, and palaces occurs also in the Old Testament and is consistent with the idea that the underworld is the negative counterpart of the living world. Although Sheol is never explicitly called a city, numerous references to the gates of Sheol imply a metropolitan conceptualization.[52]

It is obvious that Virgil drew his vision of hell from many different sources. In his day, the major cults of the expansive Roman Empire were represented in Rome, and knowledge of their traditions

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[49] This creature recalls the Gorgon "with horrors arm'd, and curls of hissing snakes" from which Odysseus fled in fear. *Odyssey*, XI, p.174.

[50] *Aeneid*, VI:540-583, p.163-164.

[51] Heidel, 172.

[52] For example: Ps. 9:13; Ps. 107:18; Is. 38:10. These verses refer to the gates of death or the gates of the grave (KJ). Tromp translates them as the gates of Sheol. Tromp, 152.

would have been available to him. Just as Dante was to do in the fourteenth century, Virgil created a powerful image of hell which constitutes a summation of his knowledge of the various beliefs about the netherworld.[53]

The Mouth of Hell

The perception of the entrance to hell as a voracious mouth deserves attention since its depiction dominates hell illustrations in medieval British manuscripts. Literary references to the mouth of hell are numerous, occurring as early as the sixteenth century B.C. in the Egyptian Book of the Dead. At the entrance to Amenthe, the Egyptian underworld, sits a wide-throated monster, above which an inscription states, "This is the devourer of many who go into Amenthe..."[54] In the following century the Book of Numbers (1490-1451 B.C.) tells of the swallowing of sinners: "And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up..." (Num. 16:32). Tromp notes that the Hebrew verb *bl'* meaning "to swallow," is frequently used to characterize the way Sheol receives the dead.[55] In the context of the voracious mouth of hell, death sometimes appears in biblical texts in the guise of Hunger or the

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[53] The extent to which Virgil was familiar with such texts as The Epic of Gilgamesh or the Book of Enoch, for example, is beyond the scope of this thesis. He was certainly familiar with the Greek literature of Homer and Plato.

[54] Becker, 16.

[55] Tromp, 172.

Hungry One.[56] The most threatening image of the unavoidable mouth of hell is in the fourteenth century B.C. Ugaritic texts:

> Even as Mot has
> Jaws (reaching) to earth, lips to heaven,
> and a tongue to the stars, Baal
> will enter his stomach and go down into his mouth
> as the olive, the produce of the earth and the fruit
> of trees is swallowed.... (U.T. 67:II:1-6)[57]

The mouth of hell also figures in Plato's *The Republic* in the Tale of Er. When the very wicked attempted to return to the upper world through the mouth of the cavern, believing they had completed their punishment, "the mouth, instead of admitting them, gave a roar, whenever any of these incurable sinners...tried to ascend."[58] The Book of Enoch mentions "the mouth of the abyss." [59]

In *The Aeneid*, the hero encounters a vast cavern with "a hundred mouthways"[60] and further on, "the gateway-jaws of pungent Avernus."[61] Guided by the priestess, Aeneas arrived "in the very Jaws of Hades."[62]

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[56] To demonstrate this point, Tromp cites Dahood's translation (see above p.4, fn.13) of Psalm 33:18-19. Of particular significance is the last line, "to preserve their lives from the Hungry One," which Tromp feels is more consistent with the Israelite view of death than the ambiguous KJ version, "to keep them alive in famine." *Ibid.*, 109.

[57] *Ibid.*, 9.

[58] *Republic*, X:615, p.390.

[59] Le Goff, 30.

[60] *Aeneid*, VI:21-57, p.148.

[61] *Ibid.*, VI:187-220, p.153. Aeneas later refers to the cave as "yawning wide," and to the lake as "those black jaws." *Ibid.*, VI:221-254, p.154.

[62] *Ibid.*, VI:255-287, p.155.

Virgil also makes several metaphoric references to hell as a mouth.[63] These personifications of the underworld clearly are borrowed from the ancient traditions of the Near East and Egypt, and incorporated into Virgil's vision of hell.

JUDGMENT AND PUNISHMENT

Judgment of the soul of the deceased in the underworld is common to many religions. It is not a feature, however, of the two religions which inflict the most numerous and horrible punishments on their deceased, Brahmanism and Buddhism. Nor does judgment feature in the Old Testament which, by contrast, offers only three tortures in Sheol: the bed of vermin, thirst, and fire.[64] Tromp points out that although an equal lot in Sheol was thought to await all souls,[65] certain Old Testament passages suggest reward and punishment: "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner" (Proverbs 11:31).[66]

Judgment was an important aspect of the Egyptian underworld. The deceased was led into a judgment hall where his soul was weighed on

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[63] For example: "the ground bellowed," VI:255-287, p.155; "the Abyss...choking forth...into Cocytus," VI:288-322, p.156; and "Tartarus, yawning steeply downwards," VI:551-583, p.164.

[64] Le Goff, 28.

[65] Tromp, 43.

[66] Tromp cites Dahood's translation which more clearly distinguishes between the fates of the virtuous and the wicked. *Ibid.*, 42. See above p.14, fn 27.

scales. The scales of justice later became a prominent feature in the Christian hell. The fate of the soul was then decided by the enthroned Osiris.[67] Upon his descent into hell, Our-Nannou, the prince of Our and hero of a segment of the Gilgamesh Epic, was judged by Nergal, king of the underworld.[68] Ishtar was brought for judgment before Ereshkigal and the Anunnaki, the queen and the seven judges of the underworld, who sentenced her to death.[69] In *The Odyssey* and *The Aeneid*, Minos presides over the court, deciding the fates of the dead.[70] Even in the democratic view of Plato, who believed that souls can freely choose their destiny, freedom to choose was still subject to the intervention, or judgment, of the gods.[71] These underworld rulers are the predecessors of Satan.

In pre-Islamic Iran, the Zoroastrians believed that the dead awaited judgment in the kingdom of Yama.[72] The bridge of judgment was thought to lead from earth to heaven, passing over hell. According to the *Zend-Avesta*, the virtuous soul meets a shapely maiden on the bridge who accompanies it to paradise, while the wicked soul falls from the

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[67] *Gardner's*, 100, fig. 3-43.

[68] Le Goff, 25.

[69] Heidel, 120.

[70] *Odyssey*, XI, p.187; *Aeneid*, VI:421-453, p.160.

[71] Le Goff, 21.

[72] The Book of Enoch also requires the dead to wait for judgment, grouped together according to their degree of guilt or innocence. See above p.16, fn 37.

bridge into hell.[73]

The agonies suffered by the dead are numerous and varied. As mentioned above, fire is the ubiquitous torment.[74] Confinement or imprisonment, no doubt originally associated with the closeness of the grave, was one of the penalties of the Egyptian underworld. Related to that is the torture of entrapment in a snare which features in several accounts. Le Goff states that in the Gilgamesh Epic the underworld is the "place to which one goes when one is caught in the snares of the gods."[75] In the Old Testament the snare recurs: "The sorrows of hell compassed me about: the snares of death prevented me" (Psalms 18:5).[76] As Tromp indicates, the dragging of victims by nets and snares into the nether world is common to Accadian, Summerian, Egyptian, Vedic, and Persian literature.[77]

In the second hell of the Markandeya-Purana, souls suffer a combined torture; they are bound on a floor of burning copper and then

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[73] H. R. Patch, *The Other World According to Descriptions in Medieval Literature* (Cambridge, Mass., 1950), 8-9. Hereafter: Patch. The Zend-Avesta is a book of Persian mythology written during the Sassanian period (A.D. 224-729). P. Masson-Oursel and L. Morin, "Mythology of Ancient Persia," *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* (London, 1968), 310.

[74] See above p.14ff.

[75] Le Goff, 25.

[76] See also Pss. 2:3, 124:7, and 141:9-10.

[77] On this theme Tromp refers to M. Eliade, *Images and Symbols*, 124-152. Tromp, 172.

torn to pieces by animals.[78] Attacks by weapons or by animals, often liver-goring vultures, occur in the sixth and seventh Puranic hells,[79] in the first Buddhist hell,[80] in *The Odyssey*,[81] and in *The Aeneid*.[82] The combined fettering and flaying of the dead occurs in *The Republic*,[83] while in *The Aeneid* a similar torture is inflicted in which the sinner is hung and stretched out, sometimes on the spokes of a wheel,[84] sometimes exposed to the wind.[85] The torment of the tempest also figures in the Egyptian hell[86] and in the third and sixth hells of the Markandeya-Purana.[87]

The dead are sometimes tortured by hunger and thirst, as in the fourth Vedic hell[88] and in the Old Testament.[89] The Greek deity

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[78] Becker, 14.

[79] *Ibid.* A soul in the fourth Puranic hell rotates on a disk and is sawed apart head to foot by demons with black thread. In the sixth hell the wind drives the sword-blade leaves of the forest downward, forcing sinners onto the flaming floor. *Ibid.*

[80] *Ibid.*, 10.

[81] *Odyssey*, XI, p.187.

[82] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165.

[83] *Republic*, X:616, p.390.

[84] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165.

[85] *Ibid.*, VI:721-751, p.169.

[86] Becker, 16.

[87] *Ibid.*, 14.

[88] *Ibid.*

[89] For an example of thirst see Jeremiah 17:13 (c. 629-562 B.C.).

Tantalus, who invited the gods of Olympus to dine on the body of his son, was eternally punished by thirst and hunger.[90] Homer describes the torment of his thirst: "Ev'n in the circling floods refreshment craves, And pines with thirst amidst a sea of waves."[91] Virgil chooses to describe what Homer omitted: the sumptuous banquet which no hand is allowed to touch.[92] The combination of blood and tears appears in the fifth hell of the Markandeya-Purana[93] and in the fifth Buddhist hell.[94] A few centuries later everlasting sadness and tears torment sinners in the Hebrew Fourth Book of Ezra.[95]

The theme of rolling boulders also recurs. In *The Odyssey*, a Sisyphian shade is doomed forever to heave a boulder uphill, only for it to thunder down again.[96] Eight hundred years later, Virgil mentions the penalty of rolling a huge boulder.[97] In between the two, the third

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[90] F. Guirand, "Greek Mythology," *New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology* (London, 1968), 186.

[91] *Odyssey*, XI, p.187.

[92] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165.

[93] Becker, 14.

[94] *Ibid.*, 10.

[95] The Fourth Book of Ezra is an apocryphal text compiled of segments around 120 A.D. Although the Greek original is lost, several versions survive in Syriac, Arabic and Armenian. The Latin version is preserved in a number of manuscripts, the oldest of which dates to the ninth century. The nether world is described as consisting of seven ranks of the blessed and seven ranks of the damned. Le Goff, 31-32.

[96] *Odyssey*, XI, p.188.

[97] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165.

Buddhist hell offers a variation: the deceased is squeezed by hot iron rocks which roll from four sides.[98]

These and other tortures were suffered by the dead over the centuries in the various texts which discuss the nether world. Many of them are powerful images which endured in the popular imagination and which were carried over into the repertoire of Christian vision literature.

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[98] Becker, 10.

II

MEDIEVAL VISION LITERATURE

The development of Christian vision literature begins with New Testament and apocryphal texts, such as the Revelation of St. John and the Vision of St. Paul, and continues with numerous written accounts of purportedly genuine individual visions as recorded by a local bishop or abbot. Most of the visions begin with the seer falling into a trance and making his journey in the spirit while his body is believed to be ill or dying. Invariably he is led through the underworld by a guide, usually an angel or saint, and he often encounters relatives or friends. Descriptions of the infernal landscape in these visions rely extensively on pre-Christian literature and produce few variations or innovations in the scenery. Darkness and fire, treacherous rivers, and the occasional dark forest or mountain set the stage; the fiery river Phlegethon becomes the lake of fire and brimstone; the gods of antiquity become the demons of Christianity. It is, however, in the realm of torturous punishment that Christianity proves to be most inventive.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN VISIONS

The judgment of the dead is integral to Christian theology and eternal punishment in darkness and lakes of fire became the standard

threat to sinners. The Book of Matthew which describes the end of the world and the Last Judgment promises sinners the "gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 24:51) in addition to the usual "everlasting fire" (Matt. 25:41). Most of the horrors described in the Revelation of St. John[1] are inflicted upon the earth at the time of the Apocalypse. The underworld, however, is mentioned three times, in accounts of a smoke-belching bottomless pit (Rev. 9:2-3), a lake of fire and brimstone (Rev. 19:20), and the binding with chains and casting into the fire of the Devil and Satan (Rev. 20:1-2), all of which continue the pre-Christian tradition. As a vision itself, and reflecting specifically the Old Testament vision of Daniel (Dan. 10-12), the Revelation of St. John provided a scriptural source for later vision writers.

Second in popularity to the Revelation of St. John, perhaps because it emphasizes the torments of the damned, was St. Peter's Apocalypse. Dated to the early second century, this apocryphal text is an account of Peter's vision on the Mount of Olives in which the Apocalypse, the judgment of the souls, and the punishments of the damned are revealed to Peter upon Christ's right hand.[2]

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[1] The Revelation of St. John probably dates from the year A.D. 96, during the persecution of the Christians and John's exile in Patmos under the rule of Domitian. It was the last book taken into the Canon of the New Testament, and while for centuries the Greek Church hesitated to use it, the Western Church immediately accepted it and used it extensively as a message of consolation to the persecuted. F. Van der Meer, *Apocalypse. Visions from the Book of Revelation in Western Art* (London, 1978), 25-27. Hereafter: Van der Meer.

[2] The most complete surviving text is an Ethiopic version contained in one of the forms of the *Books of Clement*, a work purportedly dictated by Peter to Clement of Alexandria. Although originally

Many of the torments of the damned are borrowed from pre-Christian works, particularly from *The Aeneid*,[3] and are transmitted to later visions.[4] The importance of St. Peter's Apocalypse, however, lies in its invention of brutal new torments designed to suit specific sins.[5] Blasphemers will hang by their tongues over unquenchable fire, slanderers will gnaw their own tongues while red-hot irons burn their eyes, and false witnesses will have their lips cut off and fire will enter their mouths and entrails.[6] Women who plaited their hair to entice men to adultery will be suspended by their necks and hair; those

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written in Greek, a Greek fragment of the Apocalypse which remains, known as the Akhmim fragment, now in Cairo, was likely produced at a later date than the Ethiopic version. *The Apocryphal New Testament*, M. R. James, trans. (Oxford, 1953), 504-505; text, 505-521. Hereafter: *ANT*.

[3] For carnivorous beasts and birds (*ANT*, 515, 517) see above p.20, fn.80-83; for the adamantine bars of the entrance to hell (*ANT*, 512) and souls hanging on wheels of fire (*ANT*, 517) see *Aeneid*, VI:551-583, p.164, and VI:583-618, p.165, respectively. Reminiscent of the repetitive heaving of a boulder uphill in *The Odyssey* and *The Aeneid* (above p.21, fn.97,98) is the torture of those who must incessantly cast themselves down from a high place, only to be driven by devils back to the top of that height, from where the act must be repeated. (*ANT*, 516).

[4] For example, the fiery wheel appears in Redaction IV of the Vision of St. Paul and in the twelfth century St. Patrick's Purgatory. For the former, see D. D. R. Owen, *The Vision of Hell Infernal Journeys in Medieval French Literature* (Edinburgh and London, 1970), 4. Hereafter: Owen; for the latter, E. Gardiner, ed. *Visions of Heaven and Hell Before Dante* (New York, 1989), 141. Hereafter: Gardiner.

[5] That the punishment should fit the crime is the invention of Peter, but may have been inspired by the various regions of hell which contained different categories of souls in the Book of Enoch. Le Goff,30.

[6] *ANT*, 514-516. Red-hot irons, dismemberment, and flaming orifices are derived from Oriental sources. Becker, 10, 14.

men who lay with them will hang by their loins over fire.[7] Flesh-devouring beasts will spring from the milk that congeals as it flows from the breasts of those who slew their children.[8]

In relation to the suitability of punishment to crime, Peter's vision presents the first occurrences of suspension by various body parts (the part depends on the crime) and immersion to various and appropriate depths in a pit or river.[9] Also important in St. Peter's Apocalypse is the colour of garments worn by sinners: filthy rags for the uncharitable, garments of darkness for women who lost their virginity before marriage.[10]

THE EUROPEAN VISIONS

The variety and intensity of torments in Peter's vision seem to reflect an increasing contact with diverse religious beliefs, including Egyptian and Oriental, and an attempt by early Christians, through a synthesis of their knowledge of other religions, to establish a uniquely Christian hell.

The Vision of St. Paul

The Vision of St. Paul, a direct descendant of St. Peter's Apocalypse, was successful in spreading the early Christian concept of

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[7] *ANT*, 514.

[8] *Ibid.*, 515.

[9] Usurers are cast up to their knees in a pit of filth. *Ibid.*, 516.

[10] *Ibid.*, 516, 517, respectively.

hell throughout Europe and Britain. Although originally written in Greek in the third or fourth century,[11] a long Latin translation appeared by the early sixth century from which shorter redactions were produced from the ninth century on.[12] By the twelfth century these redactions were in wide circulation, translated into the vernacular languages of Europe; most translations were based on the particularly popular Latin Redaction IV.[13]

The tortures in the Vision of St. Paul parallel, with a few variations, those of Peter's vision. The additions are: specific directions to hell,[14] more severe punishment for clergy who do not fulfill their ministry,[15] and the pit with seven seals which is the

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[11] M. R. James dates it to the late fourth century, corresponding to the date of the preface which details the discovery of the book in Paul's house in Tarsus in 388. *Ibid.*, 525; text, 525-555. Owen considers the preface spurious and gives a probable date in the third century. Owen, 3. A date no later than the mid third century is suggested by A. Di Paolo Healy, ed. *The Old English Vision of St. Paul* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978), 19. Hereafter: Di Paolo Healy.

[12] Patch, 91. The manuscript (Paris B.N. nouv. acq. lat. 1631) on which James' *ANT* translation is based is the oldest extant manuscript, an eighth century long Latin text believed to be a copy of a Latin original dated between the fourth and sixth centuries. Di Paolo Healy, 20.

[13] The numbering system is based on the classification for Latin redactions developed by H. Brandes and H. T. Silverstein. Owen, 3. Attesting to the vision's special appeal in England are the twenty-one English versions among the total fifty-six extant Redaction mss. Di Paolo Healy, 20, fn.8.

[14] Paul was led toward the north (Chapter 32) from where he looked to the west toward the pit with seven seals (Chapter 41) and the worm that sleepeth not (Chapter 42). *ANT*, 542, 546-547.

[15] Chapter 35. *Ibid.*, 543.

negative counterpart of the book with seven seals in the Revelation of St. John (Rev. 5:1). Later, Redaction IV of the Vision of St. Paul adds fiery trees from which sinners are suspended, a bridge which all souls must cross, and a multi-coloured furnace with seven separate flames, surrounded by seven torments: snow, ice, fire, stench, blood, serpents, and thunderbolts.[16]

The Dialogues of Gregory the Great

The *Dialogues of Gregory the Great* (c. 590) recount the first Christian visions in which the seers are not saints, but average people.[17] Gregory understood that papal verification of an individual's vision would fulfill the need of believers for "authentic" testimony regarding the fate of the soul. Literary licence would ensure success: from Plato's Tale of Er[18] and the Vision of Thespesius[19] he adopted the apparent death format in which the visionary appears to be dead but returns to his body to narrate his experiences; also the infernal judge is reminiscent of Minos.[20]

Gregory introduced to Christian literature the Kinvad bridge of

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[16] A summary of Redaction IV is included in Owen, 3-5.

[17] Gregory the Great, *The Dialogues of Gregory the Great*, E. G. Gardner, ed. (London, 1911), IV, p.223-226. Hereafter: *Dialogues*.

[18] *Republic*, X:614, p.389.

[19] Recounted by a non-Christian Greek writer, Plutarch (A.D. 46-120), in *Moralia*, the Vision of Thespesius was well-known to medieval writers and includes many features which recur in later visions, including tortures in the forge of Vulcanus, immersion in lakes of liquid metals, and the apparent death of the visionary. Becker, 27-29, Owen, 33-34, and Patch, 81, respectively.

[20] *Aeneid*, VI:421-453, p.160.

Persian mythology, from which the blessed are delivered to heaven and the wicked fall into the abyss.[21] This version of the bridge is passed on to St. Boniface's account of the Vision of the Monk of Wenlock[22] and to the Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV).[23]

By the seventh century the Kinvad bridge appeared in several Persian texts where it broadened for the blessed and narrowed to razor width and sharpness for sinners.[24] This later form of the bridge was incorporated into Islam, as the Mohammedan bridge *al-Sirat*,[25] from where it was transmitted to Christian visions from the twelfth century on: the visions of Tundale, Alberic, St. Patrick's Purgatory, and Thurkill.

The Vision of Charles the Fat

Between Gregory's *Dialogues* and the twelfth century Vision of Alberic, the continental visions have little new to say about hell.[26]

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[21] The Kinvad bridge is the bridge described in the *Zend-Avesta*, above p.23-24, fn.73.

[22] This vision recorded in the tenth Epistle of Boniface is dated before 717. A timber forms a bridge over a river of flaming pitch; sinners slip and fall into the Tartarean stream and are submerged to levels according to their sins. Patch, 101.

[23] Paul's bridge spans a foul river of carnivorous fish in which sinners are immersed by appropriate degrees. Owen, 4.

[24] Patch includes a description of the bridge from the Pahlavi text, *Dâdistân-i Dînîk*. Patch, 9.

[25] Becker, 18.

[26] The visions of Wetti (Abbot of Reichenau) and of Charles the Fat (Charles I, King of Swabia and Holy Roman Emperor) were written as political propaganda. Wetti's vision, dated 824, aimed at monastic reform. Gardiner, 244-245. Charles used his vision, dated 885, as a prophecy after the fact in order to justify his loss of power. The Vision of Charles the Fat was recorded in the *Gesta Regis Anglorum* of William of Malmesbury (1095-1143), based on Hariulf's *Chronicle*, Book

The Vision of Charles the Fat presents the first appearance of the cauldron or cask, in which wicked kings and vassals are immersed to levels appropriate to their sins,[27] and which in later visions is multiplied and filled with pitch, brimstone, or molten metals to provide a greater variety of tortures.[28]

The Vision of Alberic

The Vision of Alberic of Settefrati, a monk at Monte Cassino, occurred in 1110, when he was ten years of age. Due to the alterations it suffered over the years, Alberic rewrote it between 1127 and 1137.[29] Alberic's vision marks a revival of the classical/early Christian tradition of vision literature. He very plainly drew on either the Vision of St. Paul or St. Peter's Apocalypse in the types and numbers of torments and the appropriateness of punishment to crime.[30] He

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III, Chapter 21. *Ibid.*, 247-249.

[27] *Ibid.*, 131. The cauldron is similar in concept to the furnace with seven flames and seven torments in the Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV) which may have appeared as early as the ninth century. It is unclear which was first, or whether one was influenced by the other.

[28] Molten metals appear in Charles' vision for the first time since the Vision of Thespesius' lakes of gold, lead, and iron. Becker, 28-29. Wicked church officials are dipped in a burning basin of metals and resin in Alberic's vision. Le Goff, 187. Many cauldrons filled with a variety of noxious substances appear in St. Patrick's Purgatory and in the Vision of Thurkill. Gardiner, 141, and 231, respectively.

[29] It is the second version which survives. Le Goff, 186.

[30] The source is likely Peter's vision, since the guide in Alberic's vision is St. Peter. Among the tortures influenced by Peter: women who did not suckle their infants were made to hang by their breasts in a valley of thorny shrubbery. *Ibid.*

included both the bridge of judgment and the ladder,[31] as well as chains of fire which bind the necks, hands, and feet of thieves and plunderers,[32] revealing his familiarity with previous vision literature. New in Alberic's vision is a vast field of thorny bushes through which runs a gigantic dragon ridden by a devil who, dressed like a knight and holding a great serpent in his hand, chases sinners and strikes them with the serpent.[33]

THE BRITISH VISIONS

The Venerable Bede

According to Becker, the visions recorded by The Venerable Bede in the eighth century linked the early European visions with those of Anglo-Saxon England and Ireland and, along with the Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV), had a great influence on subsequent vision literature in Britain.[34] Bede follows the format of the continental stories: the visionary loses consciousness and is led by a guide through the horrors

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[31] The bridge may have been derived from Boniface, the Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV), or directly from Gregory. The bridge motif is related to the heavenly ladder whose earliest appearance in Christian vision literature is in the Vision of Perpetua, recorded by Tertullian early in the third century. In that account a narrow ladder of gold leads to heaven; ascent is obstructed by hooks and knives, and at the foot of the ladder waits a huge dragon. Patch, 90. For the tradition of the ladder as a mystic symbol see J. R. Martin, *The Illustration of the Heavenly Ladder of John Climacus* (Princeton, 1954), 7.

[32] Fettering occurred earlier in Rev. 20:1-2; in St. Peter's Apocalypse, *ANT*, 516; and in Gregory's *Dialogues*, IV:36, p.225.

[33] Le Goff, 188.

[34] Becker, 52.

of hell.[35] The globes of black flames, full of souls, which rise and fall in Bede's account of the Vision of Drithelm[36] make only one earlier appearance, in the Vision of Thespesius,[37] possibly suggesting Bede's familiarity with Plutarch's *Moralia.* They appear again later in the Vision of the Monk of Evesham and the Italian visions of Alberic and Dante.[38] Also included in the Vision of Drithelm is the description of the fiery pit as the mouth of hell which may have been influenced by Gregory's account of a dying boy who called out in his delirium that he was being devoured, head first, by a serpent.[39] The hell mouth, or a related reference to being swallowed by infernal jaws, reappears in the visions of Alberic and Dante[40], in the ninth century Frankish vision of Charles the Fat[41], and in the British visions of the Monk of Evesham

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[35] This format is used in both the Vision of Furseus, the first English vision, and the Vision of Drithelm. The Venerable Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, J. Stevens, trans. (London, 1951), III:19, p.132-136, and V:12, p.241-246, respectively. Hereafter: Bede.

[36] *Ibid.*, V:12, p.242.

[37] Becker, 27.

[38] Respectively, Gardiner, 206, Le Goff, 186, and Dante Alighieri, *La Divina Commedia*, a cura di Natalino Sapegno. Vol. I *Inferno* (Firenze, 1955), XXVI:38-42. Hereafter: *Inferno.*

[39] Bede, V:12, p.245, and *Dialogues*, IV:37, p. 229, respectively.

[40] Alberic describes the dragon in the pit of hell as having a fiery throat that swallows souls. Le Goff, 187. In the *Inferno* Dante refers twice to the "maw" ("la settima foce" XIII:96, and "questa gola fera" XXIV:123) as well as to souls seized within the jaws of a valley ("e questo basti della prima valle sapere e di color che 'n sé assanna" XVIII:98-99).

[41] Dragons with fiery jaws try to swallow Charles. Gardiner, 131.

and Thurkill.[42]

Bede's invention of a torment which alternates heat and cold, tossing the sinner back and forth between dreadful flames on one side of a valley, and snow and hail on the other, might suggest his familiarity with the Book of Enoch, but might as well, or instead, represent a synthesis of the fire of the Mediterranean hell and the cold of the Norse hell[43]. This motif of alternating extremes was included in the later visions of St. Paul IV, Tundale, Evesham, and Thurkill.[44]

Anglo-Saxon Hell

Features of the Norse hell are a long voyage northward, descent underground,[45] the crossing of a dangerous river barrier, a bridge, a road through a dark forest, and often a craggy mountain or mist barrier.[46] The Anglo-Saxon hell developed from a union of disparate elements, predominantly Norse and Christian. Hel, named after the Norse goddess of the underworld, came to mean the realm of the dead.

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[42] *Ibid.*, 209, and 224, respectively.

[43] Cold and ice co-exist with fire in Mediterranean and Oriental accounts of hell but the dominant feature of the Mediterranean hell is fire (above p.10-11), while the dominant feature of the Norse "Niflheim" is cold. H. P. Bonner, *The Christian Hell from the First to the Twentieth Century* (London, 1913), 33.

[44] Owen, 4, and Gardiner, 156-157, 206, and 231, respectively. The Vision of Thurkill presents a variation on this by alternating sinners between cauldrons of snow and ice, pitch, sulphurous water, and black salt water.

[45] Patch, 61.

[46] *Ibid.*, 79.

Like Sheol, it was a dark, damp place deep under the earth. Nastrond, on the other hand, was a cold, foul place of torment and punishment which Becker suggests was conceived from the Christian concept of hell. They slowly merged until there was no distinction between them.[47] Based on the Anglo-Saxon poet Cynewulf and his school, the distinguishing features of the Anglo-Saxon hell are: its location in a deep subterranean abyss; a space which is both expansive and oppressive; fire is the principal torment with flames that give no light; cold fetters and fiery bonds, a cold wind; filth and stench; a river; serpents and dragons; and a Judas legend in which the apostle is tormented with fire on one side of his body and extreme cold on the other.[48]

The Vision of Tundale

The vision of the Irish knight Tundale was recorded in 1149 and became immensely popular.[49] It is lengthy and detailed; the compartments of the underworld are comprised of sinners who committed like crimes.[50] Included in the vision are the usual pits of fire, deep valleys, high mountains, and dreadful demons. There are also two bridges; one is a platform between two mountains from which sinners

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[47] Becker, 55.

[48] *Ibid.*, 57-62.

[49] Gardiner, 252-253.

[50] For example: murderers are tormented in a valley of fog and burning coals; spies and traitors are tossed from fire to ice on a large mountain. *Ibid.*, 155-156. The fog is derived from the Norse conception of hell.

fall into a deep, flaming, putrid valley; the other is long and narrow from which sharp iron nails protrude to slash the feet of those who cross, and under which soul-devouring beasts feast on those who fail.[51]

A long difficult journey precedes Tundale's encounter with a horrible beast larger than any mountain, which swallows the souls of the greedy.[52] In this vision is the first occurrence of self-inflicted injury; having been swallowed by the beast, enduring lions, serpents, heat, cold, fog, and gnashing of teeth within, Tundale tears his own cheeks in despair.[53]

Passing through the gate of death, Tundale is chopped to pieces by devils who throw the parts into the fire.[54] Later, the Prince of Shadows squeezes and dismembers souls with his one thousand immense hands.[55] Nearby, the genitals of fornicators, many of them priests and monks, are putrid and gushing with worms.[56] In the punishment of fornicators Tundale drew on St. Peter's vision, and surpassed the

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[51] Gardiner, 158, and 162, respectively. The second bridge is reminiscent of the heavenly ladder.

[52] Gardiner, 159.

[53] *Ibid.*, 161.

[54] *Ibid.*, 166.

[55] *Ibid.*, 178. Dismemberment also occurred in the Buddhist hell and St. Peter's Apocalypse. Above p.25, fn.6. From Tundale it is transmitted to the visions of the Monk of Evesham, Thurkill, and Dante. Gardiner, 209, 226, and *Inferno* XIII:127-129, and XXVIII:22-27, respectively.

[56] Gardiner, 166-167.

brutality of his predecessor.[57]

Tundale's vision appears to be directly influenced by the first century Vision of Thespesius with the inclusion of the forge of Vulcan. A multitude of souls is melted to liquid all together, then hammered into one mass while each is still alive.[58] Related to this is the theme of metamorphosis, which includes any torment, like the forge, in which the victim is transformed.[59]

A recurring torment in the British visions is the fire in which souls are tossed up like sparks and then fall down as ashes. This appears in the visions of Drithelm, Tundale, St. Patrick's Purgatory, and the Monk of Evesham.[60]

Before moving on to the Field of Joy, Tundale meets Lucifer, the Prince of Shadows who, sitting on a throne of iron over hot coals inflamed by bellows, dismembers souls who are bound with flaming iron

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[57] All the fornicators were devoured by a terrible immense beast, then vomitted into the surrounding frozen swamp. They all became pregnant by the beast and gave birth to serpents, men giving birth through their arms and breasts. *Ibid.*, 169.

[58] *Ibid.*, 172-173.

[59] Metamorphosis through torture first occurred in the Buddhist hell where dismembered souls were continuously reassembled in order to be torn apart again. Becker, 10. In the Vision of Thespesius souls are transformed by the anvils of the founders and again with each alternating dip in the lakes of metal. *Ibid.*, 29. From Tundale this theme passes to the visions of the Monk of Evesham and Thurkill and Dante's *Inferno*. Gardiner, 209, and 227, and *Inferno*, XXIV:100-105, and XXV:49-144, respectively.

[60] Bede, V:12, p.242, Gardiner, 175, 141, and 206, respectively.

bonds and inhales and exhales them into different parts of hell.[61]

St. Patrick's Purgatory

St. Patrick's Purgatory was founded c.445 by St. Patrick and still exists as a pilgrimage site near Limerick in Ireland.[62] Repentant sinners remained one day and night in the cave, wherein they saw the torments of the wicked in the afterlife.[63] Of the many accounts of visits to the site, that of the Knight Owen is most relevant here.[64]

Owen is dragged by demons through various infernal regions. Possibly of Anglo-Saxon origin is the violent whirlwind from the north.[65] The torment of souls which ascend like sparks from the flames[66] is a motif borrowed from the Vision of Tundale. All other infernal details point to St Peter's Apocalypse or, more likely, the Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV) as the exclusive source.

In the tradition of Peter and Paul are the souls chained in iron hanging over fires of brimstone, some upside down, some by hot iron hooks through their eyes and noses, others through ears and mouths, or

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[61] *Ibid.*, 178.

[62] *Ibid.*, 249.

[63] *Ibid.*, 136. The story of Patrick's founding of the site is given here, 135-136.

[64] Owen's vision was first written in 1153 or 1154. Subsequent versions were written by Hugh of Sawtry in 1186-90 or 1208-15, Roger of Wendover in his *Chronicle*, and Vincent of Beauvais (d.1264) in his *Speculum historiale*. Gardiner uses an English translation of Roger of Wendover's *Chronicle*. *Ibid.*, 249, 252.

[65] *Ibid.*, 141.

[66] *Ibid.*

through genitals and breasts.[67] Also from Peter and Paul are the torments of souls suspended from a hot iron wheel over fire, and others immersed to various levels in cauldrons of pitch and liquid metals.[68]

St. Patrick's Purgatory borrows the torment in which souls are fixed to spits and basted with liquid metals from Paul[69], and elaborates with the souls baked in ovens or fried in pans;[70] pan-fried body parts are later found in the visions of the Monk of Evesham and Thurkill.[71]

The Vision of the Monk of Evesham

This vision occurred in 1196 in England and was recorded in 1197 by Adam, brother of the monk, Edward.[72] The punishments which the Monk of Evesham relates are borrowed primarily from the Vision of Tundale.[73] Relatively new, however, is the implication that a stained or spotted garment is the indication of a sinner.[74] Varying degrees of scale-

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[67] *Ibid.*, 140.

[68] *Ibid.*, 140, and 141, respectively.

[69] In Paul's vision souls are fixed on a spit and torn apart by beasts. *ANT*, 545.

[70] Gardiner, 141.

[71] *Ibid.*, 205, and 227, respectively.

[72] The vision also appears in Roger of Wendover's *Chronicle* which Gardiner uses in translation. *Ibid.*, 254, 255.

[73] For example, torture by dimemberment, alternating heat and cold, and metamorphosis in the forge all seem to be directly influenced by Tundale's vision.

[74] In the realm of the blessed the monk refers to souls who had just completed their punishments and whose plain white garments were of an inferior whiteness, although without any blackness or stains, implying that the amount of black in the garment of a sinner indicates the degree of his guilt. *Ibid.*, 213.

like spotting on souls previously occurred in the Vision of Thespesius.[75] In the Vision of the Monk of Evesham a code is suggested in which white garments indicate a pure soul, black represents a wicked sinner, and varying degrees of spots identify the majority of souls who have committed minor sins and must endure punishment before joining the blessed. In the Vision of Thurkill this code is stated directly.[76]

The Vision of Thurkill

The vision of the English labourer Thurkill is dated 1206 and was recorded by both Ralph of Coggeshall and Roger of Wendover.[77] The bridge of stakes and thorns[78] is borrowed from the Vision of Tundale. The demonic rider of the Vision of Alberic here rides a black horse which is the transformed soul of a wicked nobleman.[79]

Among several new elements which appear in Thurkill's vision is a church called the Congregation of the Spirits, which is a pre-judgment waiting room for the recently deceased.[80] This recalls the vestibule through which Aeneas passed[81] as well as the ancient concept

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[75] Becker, 28. Between the first and twelfth centuries there were only a few references to white or black-clad or filthy rag-clad sinners in the visions of Peter, Paul, and Paul Redaction IV. *ANT*, 516-517, 544, and Owen, 4, respectively.

[76] Gardiner, 222-224.

[77] Gardiner uses an English translation of Roger of Wendover's *Chronicle*. *Ibid.*, 256.

[78] *Ibid.*, 222.

[79] *Ibid.*, 224-225.

[80] *Ibid.*, 221.

[81] Above p.17.

of the underworld as a city,[82] here complete with church. At the mouth of the pit of hell Thurkill encounters St. Paul and a devil standing on opposite sides of the scales of judgment.[83] Although the scales are featured in the underworld of ancient Egypt, it is more likely that the weighing of the souls has been transmitted through Islam,[84] along with the Middle Persian version of the bridge. Also new is the infernal theatre in which souls are called on to demonstrate the behaviour which brought them to this end, while they are jeered and ridiculed by an audience of demons.[85]

Dante's Inferno

Dante's *Divine Comedy* represents the summation of all medieval vision literature--popular legends, poems, and church records included --and for this reason the *Inferno* has been placed here as the last vision entry, rather than grouped with the European visions. Properly, the *Divine Comedy* does not belong in this category of recorded visions, being instead an allegorical poem. But since Dante drew on many elements from the visions discussed in this chapter, a section on the *Inferno* serves as a conclusion.

One of Dante's poetical models was the work of his master

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[82] Above p.19.

[83] Gardiner, 224.

[84] The judgment of the soul as described in the *Dâstân-i Menok-i Krat*, a ninth century Pahlavi or Middle Persian text, is translated in S. G. F. Brandon, *The Judgment of the Dead* (London, 1967), 158-160; weighing, 158.

[85] Gardiner, 227.

Brunetto Latini, *Il Tesoretto*, which was written between 1260 and 1263 during Latini's political exile in France. The allegorical framework of *Il Tesoretto*, based on the classical virtues and vices, was influenced by the French poem, *Songe d'Enfer*, written by Raoul de Houdenc between 1220 and 1225, as well as other contemporary French allegories. These works describe netherworld journeys, but due to their metaphorical structures they are not restricted by scriptural context. According to F. S. Smith, in the merging of the temporal and the eternal (the human seer enters the realm of the dead), the apocalyptic journey can be identified with the twelfth and thirteenth century concept of *renovatio*, or the restoration of a golden age of morality.[86] As such, the secularized apocalyptic voyage became a metaphor for man's existence and a "barometer for gauging the political and moral crises of the times."[87]

The use of 'genuine' visions for political propaganda had already begun in the ninth century with the visions of Abbot Wetti and Charles the Fat.[88] Throughout their course, the visions were always a tool in the service of Christian propaganda, to prepare souls for the imminent apocalypse. Dante was well aware of both the established literary

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[86] F. S. Smith, *Secular and Sacred Visionaries in the Late Middle Ages* (New York and London, 1986), 14.

[87] *Ibid.*

[88] Above p.34, fn.26. It is clear that vision writers borrowed from earlier visions so that even 'authentic' church records were structured to deliver the Christian threat of damnation and promise of salvation.

genre in which he was writing and the tradition of vision records from which he borrowed many features.

Dante's guide through the underworld is the poet Virgil; in this way Dante acknowledges his debt to his classical predecessor. Among the numerous features drawn from *The Aeneid*[89] are the savage forest, the giant towers of the gateway entrance to Dis, Cerberus, Minos, and Charon the boatman who transports Dante and Virgil across Acheron.[90]

In Canto II:32 Dante declares "Io non Enea, io non Paulo sono," probably also referring to his acquaintance with one of the twelfth or thirteenth century redactions of the Vision of St. Paul. From Paul's vision, the *Inferno* incorporates the torment of immersion in the stream of blood to varying degrees appropriate to the sinner's guilt.[91] In the tradition of St. Peter's Apocalypse and the originial version of Paul's vision is the torture of souls by dismemberment.[92] From the Vision of Tundale, or possibly directly from the Vision of Thespesius, comes the metamorphosis of sinners, in this case through a serpent's bite.[93] Influenced by the Norse tradition, Dante adopted the dense fog[94]

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[89] *Aeneid*, VI, p.147-174. Also above p.17-19, 21.

[90] *Inferno*, I:2-5, IX:36-54, VI:13-18, V:4-15, and III:82-120, respectively.

[91] *Ibid.*, XII:73-75.

[92] *Ibid.*, XIII:127-129, and XXVIII:22-27.

[93] *Ibid.*, XXIV:97-105.

[94] *Ibid.*, IX:6, and XXXI:34-37. Recent commentators on the *Inferno*, Sapegno (1955), Singleton (1968), and Di Salvo (1987) among them, do not discuss the origin of Dante's fog. It seems reasonable

and transformed Virgil's Cocytus into the vast, frozen kingdom of Lucifer.[95]

It goes without saying that the ubiquitous fire, rivers, darkness, deep valleys, dust, and slime, although not all present in every vision, survived the centuries; all are included in the *Inferno* along with many elements from Islamic literature, classical literature, and other visions.

The visions and poems mentioned above are among the most influential in the vast repertoire of vision literature. With increased contact between Europe, Britain, and the Orient from the twelfth century on, along with popular versions of the Apocalypse and translations into the vernacular languages of the visions and the Bible[96], the Christian concept of hell established itself in the medieval mind of Europe. As the literature developed, ever more eloquent and frightening, a pictorial tradition of hell was also emerging, beginning with simple flames and fetters, and evolving until it complemented the literature in all its horrific details.

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to assume, since Dante borrowed so much from Tundale, that the fog may have been transmitted from the Norse tradition via Tundale's vision. See Gardiner, 155.

[95] *Inferno*, XXXII:16-48, and XXXIV:28-67.

[96] In spite of the Church's interdiction against translations of the Bible, the first Anglo-Norman version of the Revelation of St. John appeared around 1150, numerous French translations of the Bible appeared in the thirteenth century, and a compilation of popular biblical passages, glosses, etc., called *Biblia historiale*, made its debut in the thirteenth century. Smith, *op. cit.*, 10, 13.

III

THE EARLIEST IMAGES OF HELL: THE 8TH TO 10TH CENTURIES

The intention of this chapter is to establish the context in which the earliest images of hell made their appearance in Christian Europe. As noted on page six, the earliest known images of hell are the scenes of the Anastasis which depict Christ trampling the figure of Hades in two wall-paintings in the church of S. Maria Antiqua and in the mosaic (no longer extant) in the Oratory of St. Peter's, all produced in Rome during the pontificate of John VII (705-707).[1]

According to A. Kartsonis in *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* it was the seventh century decision by the Orthodox Church to wield pictorial images of Christ's death and resurrection as weapons against the heretical Monophysites which inspired the invention of the Anastasis scene in the Byzantine east,[2] although no examples of it survive in Byzantine art before the ninth century.[3]

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[1] Above p.6, fn.1.

[2] For the use of visual imagery in defense of the Orthodox position as the inspiration for the invention of the Anastasis scene in the last quarter of the seventh century, see A. Kartsonis, *Anastasis: The Making of an Image* (Princeton, 1986), Chapter III, particularly pp.60-73, 80-81. Hereafter: Kartsonis.

[3] The earliest known Byzantine examples of the Anastasis appear in the Chludov Psalter (Moscow, State Historical Museum, ms. Add. Gr. 129, fols. 63r, 63v, and 82v) and in wall paintings of some early

The iconography of hell, however, did not develop from this single source alone. Scenes of the damned, either tormented by the flames of hell or caught in the snares of death, appear in the west in psalters and in Last Judgment scenes of the ninth century and in apocalyptic cycles of the tenth century. While these are later in date than the earliest Anastasis scenes, they represent the continuation of much older pictorial traditions. In any case, each of these traditions makes its own contribution to the development of an infernal topography.

THE ANASTASIS

Although the image of Christ trampling the devil in the underworld was a creation of the seventh century, the idea was conceived from a much earlier literary tradition. As D. D. R. Owen notes, the early Christian writers borrowed from their pagan predecessors and "were very ready to credit the Christian heroes with excursions beyond the bounds of the mortal world."[4] The underworld adventures of such heroes as Ishtar, Orpheus, Hercules, Odysseus, Er, and Enoch provided the basis for the descent into hell of Christian heroes. The Sibylline Oracles, which originated with Jewish Christians possibly as early as the second century, recounts the tale of Uriel who

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churches in Cappadocia; another is known to have been included in the decorative program of a church in Constantinople. Osborne, 259.

[4] Owen, 2.

broke down the gates of Hades.[5] The third century Christian Gnostic text, the *Pistis Sophia*, includes the the story of the fall of Sophia to the lowest world, from which she was delivered by the *soter*, or saviour.[6]

Christ's descent into hell and his defeat of Hades is not mentioned in New Testament accounts of the Passion. The concept of the *Descensus* arose as a solution to the problem of the salvation of virtuous souls who died before the coming of Christ. The chief literary source for this event is the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, also known as the *Acta Pilati*,[7] which, as a purportedly eye-witness account, was widely circulated and immensely popular in Europe by the late ninth century.[8] Variations on the theme appeared in the late seventh century in the Homily of Pseudo-Epiphanius and in a sermon

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[5] Sibylline Oracles, 230, in *ANT*, 522. According to M. R. James, the Sibylline Oracles was based on the Apocalypse of Peter and originally written in Greek in the late second or early third century.

[6] Patch, 83.

[7] The episode of the Harrowing of Hell is believed to be a later addition to the Gospel of Nicodemus. For the disputed origin and date of this addition, see J. A. MacCulloch, *The Harrowing of Hell* (Edinburgh, 1930), 153-155; for a brief comparison of the two Latin versions (A and B) and the Greek version, see pp. 159-160. Hereafter: MacCulloch. Osborne dates the addition of the *Descensus* to the seventh century, citing H. C. Kim, *The Gospel of Nicodemus* (Toronto, 1973), 1-2. Osborne, 259.

[8] Owen, 95. An illustrated cycle of the Gospel of Nicodemus is known to have existed in the west by the mid-eighth century. Kartsonis, 73.

allegedly written by Anastasius Sinaites.[9]

As the Latin version of the Nicodemus story goes, two sons of Simeon, resting among the dead in the abyss, witnessed Christ's descent into the underworld. As they subsequently reported to Nicodemus, the darkness was suddenly broken by a golden glow and purple royal light. John the Baptist arrived to herald the coming of Christ, and while Adam, the patriarchs, and the prophets rejoiced, Satan and Infernus (Hades) argued over their power to resist Christ. Christ commanded that the doors be opened; Infernus dismissed Satan and ordered the demons to secure the bars and bolts. Christ broke down the gates, trampled Infernus, seized Satan and delivered him to Infernus, to keep in place of Adam and his descendants, until the second coming. The savior then drew Adam and the saints, the sons of Simeon among them, to glory.[10]

Owen lists several western accounts of Christ's descent into the underworld which appeared in France between the fourth and tenth centuries;[11] most interesting is Hilary of Poitier's sermon, dating from the fourth century, which expands the episode to include such pagan elements as Phlegethon and Tartarus.[12] J. B. Russell lists several

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[9] The homily of Sinaites survives in Syriac and remains untranslated and unpublished. *Ibid.*, 64.

[10] In the Greek version Satan is bound with irons at his hands, feet, neck, and mouth. For a summary of the text see Owen, 7-9.

[11] Owen, 94.

[12] MacCulloch, 126.

English versions, written in the vernacular, dating between the seventh and eleventh centuries.[13] No doubt it is safe to assume that numerous accounts of Christ's heroic underworld victory appeared all over Christian Europe during these centuries.

While the inception of the Anastasis scene coincides with the flourishing of these apocryphal texts, it has been shown that the iconography of the scene was not actually based on such literary accounts as the Gospel of Nicodemus.[14] In the wall painting at the entrance to the Palatine ramp in Sta. Maria Antiqua (ill. 1), as well as in the two contemporary examples,[15] the main characters are Christ, Adam, and Hades,[16] and the composition of the figures, as Grabar has

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[13] J. B. Russell, *Lucifer. The Devil in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 1984), 135-136, fn.18. Hereafter: Russell (1984).

[14] Grabar points out the discrepancies between the image of the Anastasis and the text of the Gospel of Nicodemus. A. Grabar, *L'empereur dans l'art byzantin* (London, 1971), 246.

[15] For illustrations of the other two Anastasis scenes see Kartsonis: S. Maria Antiqua, Chapel of the Forty Martyrs, ill. 14b; Drawing by Grimaldi, St. Peter's Basilica, Oratory of Pope John VII (Biblio. Vat. cod. Barb. lat. 2733, fols. 90v-90r), ill. 15.

[16] This is not the first appearance of a devil or demon in Christian art. In the Rabbula Gospels (Florence, Biblioteca Medicea-Laurenziana, cod. Plut. I, 56), dated 586, is a marginal illustration of Christ casting out black figures from a pair of demoniacs. Illustrated in J. B. Russell, *Satan. The Early Christian Tradition* (Ithaca, 1981), 102. Earlier still is the portrayal of the devil in the mosaic scene of Christ separating the sheep from the goats in the nave of S. Apollinare Nuovo, Ravenna, dated c. 520. The devil appears in the guise of an angel who stands on Christ's left with the goats and is coloured blue, "the color of the lower air into which he has been thrust." Russell (1984), 24.

pointed out, is borrowed from Roman imperial iconography.[17] Christ, striding to his right and in profile, steps firmly with his right foot on the small, dark figure of Hades; this corresponds to depictions of imperial defeat of the enemy. Christ holds a scroll in his left hand while he grasps Adam's limp wrist in his right hand, raising Adam up out of an open sarcophagus; this is derived from the imperial image of the emperor *restitutor*, who "liberates" the conquered people. When Eve appears, as she does in ill. 1, and in most later examples, her arms are extended toward her liberator in a gesture of supplication, corresponding to the figures who represent conquered cities in imperial iconography. The trampled demon can be seen as a conflation of the two underworld princes, Satan and Hades, and thus represents a personification of Death in the classical tradition of personified deities.[18]

Two separate scenes in imperial iconography, the defeat and the liberation, were combined to create one scene of Christ's triumph over death, the Anastasis. In the eighth century examples which survive, nothing suggests a subterranean location; no darkness, flames, rivers, or gateways have been recruited from literary descriptions of the underworld. The Anastasis is strictly a formula to convey triumph and

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[17] Grabar (1971), 246-249. Also, *Idem.*, *Christian Iconography, A Study of its Origins* (Princeton, 1968), 126, ill. 301. Hereafter: Grabar (1968).

[18] Kartsonis, 73-75.

underworld. The Anastasis is strictly a formula to convey triumph and the promise of salvation through Christ, the victor.[19]

Experimentation with the formula continued through the ninth century. Topographic details begin to appear. In a fresco in St. Peter's, known only through drawings by Grimaldi,[20] and in the earlier of the two Anastasis panels in the lower church of S. Clemente in Rome,[21] Christ moves from the left toward the right, grasping Adam's wrist with his right hand. Adam and Eve emerge from a dark, cave-like hole in reference to the darkness, or *tenebrae*, of literary descriptions of the underworld since the Epic of Gilgamesh. Kartsonis suggests that in the west in the ninth century, the soteriological function of the Anastasis scene was emphasized by making the Raising of Adam the focus of the iconography, and that the use of the *tenebrae* to represent hell in these two examples was so convincing that the figure of Hades was deemed unnecessary; where Hades does appear, symbolizing the evil forces and the struggle that preceded Adam's rescue, his

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[19] Kartsonis interprets this formula as the Church's response to heretical groups. It is the result of (1) the theology established at the Sixth Ecumenical Council of 680 to deal with the matter of the dual nature of Christ, (2) the decision made at the Council of Trullo in 692 to apply this theology through the use of "material figurations," and (3) the systemization of it all by John of Damascus in his early eighth century *Orthodox Manual*. *Ibid.*, 73.

[20] The fresco probably dates from the pontificate of Formosus (891-896); Grimaldi's drawings are contained in Biblio. Vat. cod. Barb. lat. 2733, fols. 113v-114r. *Ibid.*, 82, ill. 16.

[21] S. Clemente, Lower Church, Anastasis I is dated to the pontificate of Leo IV (847-855). *Ibid.*, 82, ill. 17a.

figure plays a tertiary role in the composition.[22]

By the end of the ninth century, the raising of Adam from the *tenebrae* had been expanded to include infernal fire and *disiecta membra*, or skeletal remains, as in Anastasis II at S. Clemente (ill. 2). By the tenth century, a number of Adam's descendants, represented by the reviving mummies at Cimitile, had heightened the drama.[23] A tenth century miniature from the northern European Gospels of Abdinghof[24] dispenses with both the figure of Hades and the *tenebrae* to depict Christ dragging Adam and Eve from a field of flames.

According to Kartsonis, while the image of flames and skulls strewn in the *tenebrae* implies a western emphasis on the horrors of damnation, in Byzantine versions of the Anastasis the realm of Hades remained a neutral part of the underworld in accordance with the idea of resurrection as an awakening of the dead from a long sleep.[25] This neutrality apparently did not apply to psalter illustration where, Kartsonis points out, bold experimentation and meticulous exploration of the theme of Christ's death and resurrection were carried out in the

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[22] Kartsonis cites two examples: the later Anastasis II in the lower church of S. Clemente, Rome, c.870, and an early tenth century Anastasis in the Basilica dei Santi Martiri in Cimitile. *Ibid.*, 83.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] Westphalia, Kassel, Gospels of Abdinghof (Paderborn), ms. theol., fol. 60, illustrated in H. Swarzenski, ***Monuments of Romanesque Art. The Art of Church Treasures in North-Western Europe***, 2nd ed. (London, 1967), Pl. 49, fig. 109. Hereafter: Swarzenski.

[25] Kartsonis, 84.

margins.[26] An image which appears as a marginal illustration in the ninth century Chludov Psalter[27] comes closest in Byzantine Anastasis scenes to representing the underworld as a place of torment. Instead of the tenebrae, Adam (appearing very weak) and Eve emerge from a surface created by the lap of a gargantuan, and inverted, figure of Hades. Black, winged demons flee from the scene. Slightly more muscular than usual for a personification, the figure of Hades covers as much area as the entire aureole which surrounds the much smaller figure of Christ. Portrayed in this unusual manner, as the mirror image of the glory of Christ, Hades represents a very powerful, and apparently undefeated, counterpart to the paradise offered by Christ.[28]

A tenth century Exultet Roll[29] perhaps demonstrates an early

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[26] Kartsonis sees this as proof of Iconophile extremism. *Ibid*, 127.

[27] Chludov Psalter, fol. 63r, illustrated in *Ibid.*, ill. 44a.

[28] According to Kartsonis this type of Hades--fat, bald, dark, and dressed in a loincloth--is typical of marginalia in eastern Psalters. She sees him here as irrevocably defeated. *Ibid.*, 134. She does not mention the scale of the figure of Hades in relation to that of Christ, which would surely have constituted Manichean heresy. For a brief discussion of the Orthodox position which did not allow the depiction of any evil power which might diminish the power of Christ, see T. Brunius, "Enter the Devil," ***Riforma Religiosa e Arti nell'Epoca Carolingia*** 1 (1979), 148. An even larger figure of Hades appears in the Barberini Psalter (Biblio. Vat. cod. Barb. gr. 372) in a marginal illustration in which Christ frees Lazarus from his clutches. Illustrated in Russell (1984), 39.

[29] Exultet Rolls are wide parchment liturgical rolls named for the first word of the hymn sung on Holy Saturday after the blessing of the Paschal candle and before the blessing of the baptismal font: *Exultet iam angelica turba caelorum.* They were illustrated with very large pictures placed upside down in the text so as to appear upright to the

stage in the adaptation of the eastern theme of the Anastasis to a western iconographic tradition. In the earliest known roll,[30] the aspects of victory and resurrection remain separate, as in the Roman imperial tradition. The scene of Christ's triumph over Hades, the *Regis Victoria* (ill. 3), shows Christ, *contrapposto*, with torso leaning toward the left, looming over the figures of both Satan and Hades who crouch amidst the tall, red flames of hell, the shattered gates of their kingdom flung behind them. Here the underworld princes are not conflated into one anonymous classical deity. They are dark blue demons with horns, misshapen noses, and bared teeth; one has a beard, deformed hands, and is shackled at his neck and wrists.

This imagery begins to reflect the concept of hell as it had been presented in literary and biblical accounts.[31] The dreadful demons are so evocative of evil that Christ has needed a lance to conquer them.

In a separate scene of the Raising of Adam and Eve, the

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congregation when the deacon, while reading the text, let the roll fall forward over the lectern. The major production centres of the rolls between the tenth and twelfth centuries were Monte Cassino and Bari, in South Italy. M. Stokstad, ***Medieval Art*** (New York, 1986), 204.

[30] Rome, Biblio. Vat. Ex. Roll, cod. lat. 9820. This roll was produced at S. Vincenzo al Volturno between 981 and 987. The text and illustrations originally ran in the same direction but in the twelfth century the roll was cut up and the original text, the *Vetus Itala*, was erased. It was replaced by the Vulgate text which runs opposite to the pictures and the pieces were fastened together again in a different order. M. Avery, ***The Exultet Rolls of South Italy***, II (Princeton, 1936), 31-32.

[31] For the fire of hell see Deut. 32:22; Enoch, above p.11; Matt. 25:41. For hybrid demons see ***The Aeneid***; above pp. 17-19. For the binding of Satan and Hades see Rev. 20:1-2.

Resurrectio Mortuorum,[32] Christ, striding to the right, drags Adam and Eve from the same tall, red flames in a composition very similar to the *Regis Victoria*.

Since Greek artists are known to have worked in the monasteries of south Italy at this time, the Anastasis configuration in Exultet Roll cod. lat. 9820 may reflect an earlier stage in the eastern development of the iconography which preceeded the creation of a unified Anastasis scene. There would seem, however, to be more evidence to indicate simply a spirit of experimentation in different regions, in the tradition of ninth century psalters.

PSALTER ILLUSTRATIONS

The Book of Psalms (B.C. 1060-570) is a compilation of prayer-like verses, probably gathered from an oral tradition but historically attributed to David. The rich poetic language of the Psalms has inspired various visual interpretations. In *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages*, Otto Pächt states that the language of the psalter depends

> "on an extravagantly tireless use of metaphor, which renders visible essentially abstract concepts like the power, glory, magnitude, goodness, omniscience of the Creator, trust in God, or the sinfulness, iniquity, wickedness of evil; and it aims to make these concepts physically comprehensible....And in transferring the 'word picture' into the illustration intact, verbal imagery became visual imagery."[33]

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[32] Illustrated in Kartsonis, ill. 20b.

[33] O. Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages* (London and Oxford, 1986), 167. Hereafter: Pächt (1986).

The earliest surviving illuminated psalters are of the ninth century. The Stuttgart Psalter (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, cod. lat. 23), dated c. 820-830, has been attributed to either Saint-Germain-des-Prés or Amiens.[34] The illustrations are not marginalia as in the eastern psalters but complete scenes which fill about one-third of a page, interrupting the text once or twice on each folio. The relationship of these illustrations to the text has not been fully determined but it is Dodwell's opinion that they illustrate not the literal text of the psalter but some obscure commentaries on it.[35]

Be that as it may, the illustrations are often Christian interpretations of Old Testament themes, which in many cases also interpret the text literally. Folio 29v (ill. 4) which illustrates Psalm 24:7, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in," depicts Christ's descent into Hades.[36] Instead of broken pieces of the gates, as in the *Regis Victoria*, the Stuttgart Psalter presents one of the earliest western representations of the architecture of Hades. The arched gateway is barred as Christ rushes toward it with his cross-

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[34] C. R. Dodwell, *Painting in Europe 800-1200* (Harmondsworth, 1971), 42. Hereafter: Dodwell.

[35] *Ibid.*

[36] The connection between Ps. 24:7 and the *Descensus* had already been made by Athanasius, *Pat. Lat.* 26, col. 941, Pseudo-Jerome, *Pat. Lat.* 70, col. 174, and Cassiodorus, *Pat. Gr.* 27, col. 731, cited in E. T. De Wald, *The Stuttgart Psalter* (Princeton, 1930), 26. Hereafter: De Wald (1930).

staff raised. Hovering behind the gates, surrounded by flames are the naked, tortured figures of captive souls and the fleeing figures of two demons: one with dark wings, the other a dark figure with pointed ears, sharp, white teeth, and spiked hair.[37] A small, winged figure in the tympanum, certainly the personification of the gateway, lifts his head, as do the demons, in literal obeyance of the Psalm's command.

The resemblance of this composition of Christ defeating Hades to that of the Vatican Exultet Roll *Regis Victoria* has been discussed by Kartsonis.[38] The Stuttgart Psalter, or a similar codex, may have been a model for the Exultet Rolls.

Many of the characteristics of hell which are described in the pre-Christian literature and the medieval visions appear in the Stuttgart Psalter. Psalm 141:9-10, "Keep me from the snares which they have laid for me...," is depicted in fol. 156r by the spreading of a huge net. A fiery oven, kindled by the hand of God in fol. 25r illustrates Ps. 21:9, "Thou shalt make them as a fiery oven in the time of thine anger: the Lord shall swallow them up in his wrath, and the fire shall devour them." No attempt, yet, is made to pictorialize the swallowing or devouring.

Fol. 10v (ill. 5) which illustrates Ps. 9:17, "The wicked shall be turned into hell," portrays the fate of an evil nobleman who is

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[37] Unfortunately, all but one of the illustrated folia in the De Wald facsimile are black and white reproductions.

[38] She bases her comparison on Christ's use of the cross-staff as a weapon, which seems to have had its origin in the ninth century west. Kartsonis, 85-87.

chained by the neck and escorted to the fires of hell by two demons who resemble the ones in fol. 29v, except for the bird's feet and cock's comb of the leader. These demons are vomitting flames or blood or noxious fumes in the direction of the wicked soul. On the left, the damned huddle with a serpent in the flames. The seven ledges which contain them may represent seven cauldrons,[39] or the furnace with seven flames and seven torments described in Redaction IV of the Vision of St. Paul which was probably circulating in the ninth century.

Although the scales of justice do not appear in the vision literature until the Vision of Thurkill in England in 1206, twice in the Stuttgart Psalter, fol. 9v (Ps. 9:4) and fol. 166v (Ps. 67:4), Christ is portrayed as judge, deciding the fates of souls in the balance scales. Was there a fifth or sixth century Italo-Byzantine or Alexandrian model which included the scales? Or can the inventiveness of psalter illustrations simply be accounted for, as Pächt suggests above, in the artist's response to the poetic language of the Psalms?

The Utrecht Psalter (Utrecht, Univ. Libr. Script. Eccl. 484) was produced in Hautvillers, a workshop of the Reims school, under Archbishop Ebbo probably between 820 and 830.[40] Although contemporary with, and produced not far from the Stuttgart Psalter, the two appear to have little in common. The Utrecht Psalter is related to the

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[39] The first mention in vision literature of a cauldron in which noblemen were immersed was in the Vision of Charles the Fat in 885. Above p.34-35.

[40] J. Porcher, "Book Painting," in J. Hubert et al., *The Carolingian Renaissance* (New York, 1970), 98, 102.

"aristocratic" group of Greek psalters in which the illustrations are placed as prefaces to those psalms connected with the life of David.[41]

The compositions are made up of several episodes from the psalm, but seem to be arranged according to pictorial aesthetics and conventions rather than according to the sequence of the text. Nevertheless, just as in the Stuttgart Psalter, the episodes are interpreted in a New Testament context and, in many cases, the images are literal illustrations of the text.

There are several examples of literal 'quotations' from the text in fol. 79r (ill. 6) which illustrates Ps. 141. Among them are the central image of two demons tying the ends of a huge snare in which sinners are entangled (verse 10), and the lower left depiction of the huge head of Hades surrounded by corpses in response to verse 7, "Our bones are scattered at the grave's mouth."

Ps. 91 is illustrated on fol. 53v (ill. 7) of the Utrecht Psalter. Above the central figure of Christ-Logos, on his left-hand side near the moon, is a Medusa-like head of "pestilence" surrounded by tiny demons which personifies evil and illustrates verse 6, "the pestilence that walketh in darkness." Below Christ, on both the left and right, two warriors drive groups of people into pits, illustrating verse 7, "A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

Deep within the pits are two personifications identified by De

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[41] De Wald, *The Illustrations of the Utrecht Psalter* (Princeton, 1932), 3. Hereafter: De Wald (1932).

Wald; in the right pit is a reclining figure of Hades, in the left a snaky-locked head of Death.[42] While some of the components seem to 'quote' the text, the personifications of Death and Hades are not mentioned in the text of Ps. 91, but rather appear allegorically as the fate of Christ's enemies.[43] The personification of Hades which appears in the right-hand pit, however caricatured, was inspired by the figures of reclining classical deities. Two bodiless heads, one of Death in the left-hand pit on fol. 53v, the other of Hades with gaping mouth on fol. 79r, seem to constitute abbreviated forms of the personified deity, and as such, may represent an intermediary stage between the full classical model and the hell mouth image which comes to dominate hell imagery in eleventh century England.

In the Psalms the prevailing theme is that of the power of the Lord to deliver the faithful and to punish the wicked. This theme is particularly well-represented in the illustrations of Ps. 91 on fol. 53v and of the Canticle of Hannah (I Sam. 2:1-10) on fol. 84v in the Utrecht Psalter. In fol. 53v (ill. 7) a figure, identified by De Wald as the psalmist,[44] takes shelter within the Church on Christ's right hand, while Christ metes out the reward of the wicked who appear on his

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[42] *Ibid.*, 42.

[43] The illustrations to the Psalms in the Utrecht Psalter are thus neither strictly narrative, allegorical, nor literal. For the suggestion that the illustrations were intended as mnemonic devices see C. Gibson-Wood, "The *Utrecht Psalter* and the Art of Memory," ***RACAR*** XIV, 1-2 (1987), 9-15.

[44] De Wald (1932), 41.

left, and below him both right and left.[45] Christ, trampling the lion and the adder (verse 13),[46] is positioned at the apex of a strong triangular composition, and his very posture denotes victory over evil.

In fol. 84v (ill. 8), the top register of the illustration presents Christ in the centre, flanked on either side by three angels. At the extreme right and left sides of that register are two pairs of heads blowing wind toward the centre. According to De Wald's interpretation, below Christ, on his left, is the poor man on the throne of glory (verse 8), and on his right, the barren woman who bore seven children (verse 5). The centre of the composition is a large circle which encloses Hannah and the mighty kings with their broken bows at their feet (verse 4).[47] Below left and right are the fiery pits; on Christ's right the elect are being resurrected and taken into heaven; on his left the damned are cast into a fiery hell (verse 6).

Both of these examples emphasize the implication of judgment in the passages which they illumine. It seems apparent that fols. 53v and 84v are experimental stages in the evolution of an iconography for

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[45] The mounted hunter and his prey, lower centre, and the two figures who aim their bows at Christ, far left and right in the middle register, probably represent the threat of Islam, Christianity's strongest competitor in the ninth century. Hunting scenes were associated with Moslem power, the Arabs having adopted the ancient symbol of Sassanian kings.

[46] The earliest images of Christ trampling the beasts appear in the sixth century mosaics of S. Apollinare Nuovo and on an ivory diptych, now in Brussels, of eighth century Northumbrian origin. J. Beckwith, *Ivory Carvings in Early Medieval England* (London, 1972), 20-22. Hereafter: Beckwith (1972).

[47] De Wald (1932), 66.

Last Judgment scenes. In particular, the similarity of the composition in fol. 84v to eleventh century Byzantine Last Judgment scenes, such as that in Paris, B.N. ms. gr. 74, fol. 51v (ill. 22), is striking.

Because the Book of Psalms is a collection of prayers related only thematically, it likely presented a formidable challenge to the illuminators. In response, the artists brought all their resources to the task: techniques of narrative, symbolic, and literal illustration. At least within the limited context of hell imagery, the challenge of creating new compositions to give contemporary Christian meaning to Old Testament texts, explains the experimental nature of the illustrations. Moreover, the monastic functions of the psalter[48] imply that the majority of psalters were produced, not as Church treasures but as everyday textbooks with a short life expectancy. Therefore, in the illustration of the Psalms, the artists probably had considerably more freedom to work out the details of new iconographic formulae, such as the Anastasis and the Last Judgment, for later use in the more elaborate illustrated Bibles intended to grace cathedral altars or royal libraries.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

The Last Judgment is described in Matthew 24 and 25, and consists of three key elements: the *Adventus Domini* (Matt. 24:30-31; 25:31), the separation of the sheep from the goats (Matt. 25:32-33), and the

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[48] Psalters functioned as elementary reading texts, books of personal piety, and as liturgical texts. Gibson-Wood, *op. cit.*, 11.

promise of recompense (Matt. 25:34-46).

Auguste Bouillet traced the western development of the Last Judgment from fourth century Rome, beginning with paintings in the catacombs and the mosaic in S. Pudenziana.[49] These scenes of Christ enthroned, usually flanked by apostles and bestowing the gift of eternal peace symbolized by the crown of glory or celestial Jerusalem, imply judgment, not by any reference to the text of Matthew, but by their resemblance to Roman tribunal and *largitio* scenes.[50] The Barberini terra cotta plaque in the Dumbarton Oaks collection represents a sixth century Last Judgment based on Roman iconography. Christ, flanked by apostles, presides over the tribunal; a barrister's chancel separates the council from the litigants who raise their heads to look at the judge. At the judge's feet are the objects of recompense: on his left a whip; on his right two bags inscribed with the monogram of Christ. The whip represents the threat of flaying as punishment for the wicked.

Also of the sixth century is the mosaic in S. Apollinare Nuovo which perhaps is the earliest western illustration of the text of Matthew 25:32-33.[51] Apart from the blue colouring, nothing in this image suggests the fate of those rejected by Christ. As Brenk points

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[49] A. Bouillet, *Le Jugement dernier dans l'art aux douze premiers siècles* (Paris, 1894), 7-9. Hereafter: Bouillet. The wall painting in the catacomb of Domitilla and the mosaic in S. Pudenziana are illustrated in Grabar (1968), ills. 112 and 172.

[50] This relationship is discussed, particularly in the context of the Barberini terra cotta plaque, by both Bouillet, 11, and Grabar (1968), 44, ill. 112-116.

[51] Above p.53, fn.16.

out, this early Christian representation of the Matthew parable portrays the Last Judgment as a bucolic event, having adapted to the testimony of Matthew the widely disseminated symbol of Christ as shepherd among his flock.[52] Brenk argues that judgment scenes were rare in the first centuries of the Christian era when funerary art favoured the Old Testament scene of Jonah and the whale for its emphasis on salvation and the promise of Paradise.[53] By the ninth century, however, the emphasis was on the polarity of good and evil.[54]

Representative of this transition is the eighth century Irish Gospel Book of St. Gall in which the Last Judgment scene[55] has combined the Roman tradition with the text of Matthew. Christ is framed in the centre of the upper register flanked by two trumpetting angels (Matt. 24:31). In the lower register are the twelve apostles arranged in two symmetrical rows on either side of Christ, all looking up towards him, as the litigants had looked toward the judge on the Barberini plaque.

The Book of Kells' scene of the Temptation of Christ[56] emphasizes

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[52] B. Brenk, *Tradition und Neuerung in der christlichen Kunst des ersten Jahrhunderts, Studien zur Geschichte des Weltgerichtsbildes* (Vienna, 1966), 75. Hereafter: Brenk (1966).

[53] *Ibid.*, 74.

[54] *Ibid.*, 130.

[55] St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, cod. 51, fol. 267, illustrated in *Ibid.*, Abb. 17.

[56] Codex Cenannensis, Dublin, Trinity College Library, ms. 58 (A.I.6), fol. 202v, illustrated in *Ibid.*, Abb. 75. The Book of Kells is generally dated from the late eighth to the early ninth century. See M. Rickert, *Painting in Britain: the Middle Ages* (Harmondsworth, 1954), 21-22, fn.62. Hereafter: Rickert. For a tenth century date see

the polarization of good and evil in a composition clearly based on one of judgment. Christ, with angels hovering over his head, seats his council of apostles on his right side while he bargains with a dark, winged devil on his left. Below this scene, crammed into the framework like a decorative motif, the saints and the sinners face each other on either side of a divider, like the sheep and the goats.

From the ninth century survive two Byzantine illustrations of the Last Judgment. One, in the Vatican Cosmas Indicopleustes,[57] depicts Christ enthroned as judge in a mandorla centred above two registers of angels and apostles; the resurrection of the dead takes place in the lowest, narrowest register where the busts of the dead emerge as if from a subterranean location. The other, in the *Sacra Parallela* of John of Damascus,[58] is a similar composition depicting Christ enthroned with only the upper portion of the mandorla visible. Directly below Christ are two angels; below them the elect are contained within the bejewelled walls of heavenly Jerusalem. At the bottom is a representation of the wicked burning in the tall, red flames of hell, together with the black figure of Satan who is encoiled by a blue-grey

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T. Brunius, *op. cit.*, 149-150.

[57] Rome, Vat. Biblio. cod. gr. 699, fol. 89r, illustrated in Kartsonis, fig. 18.

[58] Paris, B.N. cod. gr. 923, fol. 68v, illustrated in *Ibid.*, fig. 55. For a full description of this miniature, including the identification of the saints in the third register, see K. Weitzmann, *The Miniatures of the Sacra Parallela. Parisinus Graecus 923* (Princeton, 1979), 169-170, ill. 441. Hereafter: Weitzmann (1979).

serpent and holds in his right hand a hook for catching his victims.[59]

Both of these manuscripts are copies of earlier texts. The Last Judgment in the Cosmas Indicopleustes seems to remain true to its earlier model by emphasizing the promise of eternal salvation, while the scene in the *Sacra Parallela* reflects the ninth century trend toward the polarization of good and evil. As Weitzmann notes, the miniature cannot be completely explained by either the homily of John Chrysostom to which the image is attached, nor by the text of Matthew to which the iconography is more closely related.[60] The artist of the *Sacra Parallela* Last Judgment scene was clearly influenced by sources beyond the texts and Weitzmann has suggested an archetype in the monumental arts.[61] The faces of the damned with their large, haunting eyes, and the dark figure of Satan with the serpent, all huddling together in the flames, strongly resemble those figures in the Stuttgart Psalter, fol. 10v and 29v, and suggest a common inspiration.

The eighth and ninth century examples of the Last Judgment all share a similar vertical composition which plainly stresses the hierarchy of the cosmos from the top down: the divine, the holy, the human, and in the case of the *Sacra Parallela*, the damned. Another example of this hieratical composition is in the ninth century

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[59] It is difficult to make out these details in the reproduction, so I have relied on Weitzmann's description. *Ibid.*, 170. The hook is the first pictorial image of a weapon used to torture souls in hell although there are many literary references. Above, p.25, 36, fn. 31.

[60] *Ibid.*

[61] *Ibid.*

decoration of portal "O" of the church of St. Gall, where the saints appear under the trumpetting angels and the throne of Christ.[62] Until the *Sacra Parallela* this formula stressed only the *Adventus Domini* (Matt. 24:30-31) and the promise of salvation, and ignored Matthew 25.

According to Bouillet, Bishop Guy of Auxerre reconstructed a portal of his cathedral around 940, and decorated it with sculpture representing paradise on one side and hell on the other.[63] The separation of good and evil on the right and left sides of Christ emphasizes Matthew 25:32-33 and had already appeared in the S. Apollinare Nuovo mosaic. Experimentation with this arrangement occurs in the Book of Kells' Temptation, and in fol. 53v and 84v of the Utrecht Psalter. Fol. 84v (ill. 8) combines both the vertical and horizontal systems of polarization, approaching what was to become the standard iconography of Last Judgment scenes in the eleventh century.[64]

The Last Judgment scene (ill. 9) which appears on an ivory plaque belonging to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London is reputed to be of Anglo-Saxon origin and dated c. 800.[65] It too combines the vertical and horizontal separation of the elect and the damned. Christ enthroned in a mandorla is flanked by trumpetting angels whose sound

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[62] Bouillet, 12.

[63] Bouillet, 13. This sculpture is no longer extant.

[64] Above, p.66.

[65] London, Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 253.67. The date and origin were established by A. Goldschmidt, ***Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karolingischen und sächsischen Kaiser*** (Berlin, 1914), I, no. 178, Pl. LXXXIII, cited in Brenk (1966), 118, fn.14.

signals the rising of the dead from their tombs (Matt. 24:31). The scrolls which unroll from Christ's hands meet two sarcophagi at right angles, appearing like raised lids of the coffins. The left scroll is inscribed with a pre-Vulgate text of Matthew 25:34.[66]

Below Christ, on either side, the dead are resuscitated by doves which symbolize souls returning into the mouths of the resurrected.[67] Directly beneath Christ's feet, between the groups of sarcophagi, is a lively angel standing on a crescent moon and appearing to bless the resurrected souls.

In the bottom register, on the left, an angel escorts the blessed through the gateway to paradise. On the right is the most elaborate image of hell so far conceived. The architecture of the underworld includes domed towers to mark the entrance and a crescent-shaped wall[68] to enclose the huddling, naked sinners. In the lower right corner a gigantic head of Hades opens wide his jaws to devour the damned souls one by one.

There is no known model for this Last Judgment scene. In comparison with the examples discussed herein, it presents a very

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[66] *Ibid.*, 119.

[67] Birds flying toward Christ to signify resurrection occurs on crosses in Ireland at Clonmacnois and Durrow. Beckwith (1972), 22.

[68] Brenk interprets the crescent as a cave. Brenk (1966), 119. This identification corresponds to Virgil's description of the entrances to the underworld and to Tartarus. Above, p.11 and 18.

advanced iconography for the year 800, if one is to accept that date.[69] Assuming that the Victoria and Albert Anglo-Saxon ivory predates both the Stuttgart and the Utrecht Psalters, it represents not only the earliest image of the architecture associated with Hades, but also the first disembodied head of Hades. Moreover, it presents the first image of the gaping mouth of hell swallowing the wicked.

The monstrous maw is thought to have evolved from the mixture of Leviathan, the Old Testament sea monster (Job 41), with the whale which swallowed Jonah.[70] Caiger-Smith states that catacomb paintings in which the whale resembles a dragon with gaping mouth evolved into the image of the gigantic jaws.[71] It may well be that the dragon is a persistent remnant of Jonah and the Whale scenes from Late Antique funerary art. Indeed, it is a dragon which Gregory the Great describes in his sixth century account of a dying boy's vision,[72] and it is such a whale-type dragon which hungers in hell for its next victim on folio 10v of the

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[69] Brenk does not dispute the date and attributes the composition to a variety of unknown sources. Brenk (1966), 120. Beckwith supports this date based on style and border decoration as compared with a list of sculptures dated to the second half of the eighth century. Beckwith (1972), 24-25. For the identification of the plaque as a Carolingian ivory of the early ninth century see A. Caiger-Smith, *English Medieval Mural Paintings* (Oxford, 1963), 36. For the mention of the existence of a carving on the reverse side of the ivory and the opinion that the Last Judgment is composed of motifs derived from several famous and disparate works, thus constituting a modern pastiche, see D. Denny, "The Last Judgment Tympanum at Autun," *Speculum* 57 (1982), 536, fn.8. Hereafter: Denny (1982).

[70] R. Hughes, *Heaven and Hell in Western Art* (London, 1968), 175.

[71] Caiger-Smith, *op. cit.*, 36.

[72] Above p.37, fn.39.

Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 5) .

The dismembered heads, however, on the Victoria and Albert ivory carving and on folio 79r of the Utrecht Psalter (ill. 6) are of human form, not hybrid beast, and cannot be construed as having evolved from the dragon. They are, as previously noted, abbreviated forms of the classical personified deity.

It seems, therefore, that two separate traditions, both filtering through the Old Testament, had become associated with the fate of the soul and were perhaps interchangeable. The dragons with fiery jaws which appear in Charles the Fat's ninth century vision and Alberic's twelfth century vision[73] reflect the enduring association of Jonah's descent into the belly of the whale with Christ's descent into hell,[74] which in turn is the basis of the tours of hell in the medieval visions. In England, Bede's eighth century account of the Vision of Drithelm, describing the fiery pit of hell as a mouth,[75] not as a dragon, follows the tradition of the ancient anthropomorphic concept of the voracious maw.[76]

The early date of the ivory plaque suggests that the pictorial image of the insatiable maw may have originated in Anglo-Saxon England based on Bede's description. On the other hand, images of the

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[73] Above p.37, fn.40-41.

[74] Matthew 12:40.

[75] Bede, V:12, p.245.

[76] Above, p.20ff.

separated head of the underworld deity may have existed in early Christian Rome or in early Carolingian art and may have provided the model for the English version.

The Church in England had strong ties with Rome: missionaries from Rome, beginning with Augustine in 597, had brought manuscripts, art objects, and relics to England. Benedict Biscop, Abbot of Wearmouth in Northumbria, made several trips to Rome between 669 and 680 to collect furniture, vestments, pictures, books and relics for the monasteries at Wearmouth and Jarrow.[77] Considering the classical style of the Victoria and Albert plaque, and the absence of the linear, decorative style of Anglo-Saxon art, it is likely that the ivory plaque and its related sculptures were copied from imported Roman models.

THE APOCALYPSE

Christian Apocalypse imagery is based on the New Testament book of the Revelation of St. John the Divine.[78] The unpopularity of this book in certain regions, particularly in Syria where it is believed the tradition of illustrating the Gospels first began in the sixth century, may have delayed the development of an illustrated cycle to accompany its text.[79] Nevertheless, isolated images inspired by the Apocalypse, such as the Alpha and Omega (Rev. 21:6), the four Evangelist symbols

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[77] Rickert, 9-10.

[78] Above p.29, fn.1.

[79] M. R. James, *The Apocalypse in Art* (London, 1931), 29. Hereafter: James.

(Rev. 4:7), and the Adoration of the Lamb (Rev. 5:6-14), appeared between the second and fifth centuries in Rome.[80]

According to Bede, Benedict Biscop brought from Rome in 680 an Apocalypse cycle for the decoration of the north wall of his church of St. Peter which included images of "the perils of the last judgment."[81] Although no traces of any seventh century Apocalypse cycles survive, Bede's evidence indicates that such a cycle was procurable in Rome at that time.

The earliest surviving cycle is preserved in the Trier codex,[82] which is the first of a group of Carolingian Apocalypse manuscripts believed to represent the Roman tradition.[83] Since judgment is an important element in the text of Revelation (19:2,11,15; 20:12; 21:6-8), Last Judgment scenes appear in all of these manuscripts and become part of the standard repertoire of Apocalypse cycles. A scene of the

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[80] James cites the earliest examples. *Ibid.*, 31-32.

[81] "The Lives of the Holy Abbots of Weremouth and Jarrow," in Bede, 353.

[82] The Trier Apocalypse (Trier, Stadtbibliothek ms. 31) is dated to the first half of the ninth century and is thought to have been produced at Tours, since the original text, deleted and replaced around the twelfth century, was in a semi-uncial script peculiar to the Tours scriptorium. Van der Meer, 93.

[83] Related to the Trier codex are: Cambrai (Bibliothèque municipale ms. 386), French, tenth century, believed to be a copy of Trier; Paris (B.N. ms. nouv. acq. lat. 1132), French, late ninth or early tenth century; Valenciennes (Bibliothèque municipale ms. 99), German, ninth century, identical to Paris 1132; Bamberg (Staatsbibliothek ms. bibl. 140), German, eleventh century. For details of this relationship see James, 37; van der Meer, 40; and G. Vezin, *L'apocalypse et la fin des temps* (Paris, 1973), 62-65.

Last Judgment in the Trier Apocalypse (ill. 10), appears to combine the iconography of traditional Last Judgment scenes with details which illustrate the text of Revelation. Christ is enthroned and flanked by angels who present him with tablet books of an antique type (with the stylus inserted);[84] the celestial Jerusalem is on his far right side. This corresponds to the early type of Judgment scenes described by Bouillet.

A group of naked souls stands directly beneath Christ, illustrating Rev. 20:12, "And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." While this group is reminiscent of the litigants in the Barberini plaque, they turn and gesture, not toward Christ the judge, but toward St. John, acting as intercessor, on the far left.

In the lowest register on the left, two angels stand together. The one on the left gestures to the left corner in which a single diagonal line marks the edge of the sea;[85] the one on the right makes

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[84] James, 36.

[85] While the single diagonal line across the lower left corner does not in any obvious manner represent the sea, the corresponding scene in the more detailed Cambrai Apocalypse (fol. 67) clearly designates the sea by wavy lines, and indicates hell by tall, red flames instead of the figure of Hades. Illustrated in P. Klein, "La tradición pictórica de los Beatos," *Actas del Simposio para el Estudio de los Códices del <<Comentario al Apocalipsis>> de Beato de Liébana, Madrid, 1976* (Madrid, 1978-1980) III, 75, fig. 32. Hereafter: Entries of the proceedings of this conference will be followed by *Actas del Simposio....*

a sign toward the dismembered figure to the right of him, in the direction of Hades. These figures illustrate Rev. 20:13, "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them."

In the lower right corner an angel pushes the damned toward the tall, dark, robed figure of Hades who emerges from the picture frame. Leading this group of sinners is a fettered animal-headed figure, perhaps representing the bound figure of Satan (Rev. 20:2), but having a closer resemblance to the hybrid beasts described in *The Aeneid.*[86] Although the monsters have a different appearance, the composition of this scene belongs to the tradition which produced the hell scenes in the Stuttgart Psalter (ills. 4 and 5).

Other scenes from the Trier Apocalypse are described by James.[87] The Defeat of the Beast (fol. 64r) which illustrates Rev. 19:19 depicts flesh-devouring birds, the mouth of the pit as a well-head, and an angel with a key to lock the chains attached to the dragon's neck. In fol. 65r which illustrates Rev. 20:1, the angel thrusts the tail of the beast down the well-mouth. In the scene of the Final Defeat (fol. 66r), the lake of fire (Rev. 19, 20) is depicted and four streams of fire fall on ten men.

Of the pictorial details in the Trier Apocalypse which do not directly illustrate the text of Revelation, many correspond to Virgil's

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[86] Above, p.17, fn.43.

[87] James, 34-37; a full description of the manuscript is in the notes, 82-92.

description of the underworld. The well-mouth of hell (fol. 64r, 65r) and the bust of the colossal personification of earth (Tellus) with head tilted back to swallow the water vomited by the dragon (fol. 39r) in reference to Rev. 12:13-18, are related to the numerous descriptions in *The Aeneid* of the entrance to the underworld as a mouth.[88] Birds feasting on the heads of men are reminiscent of the liver-goring vultures,[89] and the four streams of fire correspond to the four rivers of hell first described by Plato and adopted by Virgil.[90] The three devils which sit on the towers of the city of Babylon (fol.57) recall the tower entrance of Tartarus in which sits the guardian, Tisiphone.[91] While it cannot be assumed that the artist of the Trier Apocalypse drew these details directly from the text of *The Aeneid*, the correspondance reinforces the argument that the Trier codex was based on a Roman original of the sixth century, and that the Roman concept of the underworld was still influenced by *The Aeneid*.

In the chaos which followed the disintegration of the Carolingian empire, Otto the Great (962-973) re-established stability in western Europe and founded the Ottonian empire which preserved and advanced the cultural tradition begun by Charlemagne. The Bamberg Apocalypse (Staatsbibliothek ms. bibl. 140) was made around the year 1000 for

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[88] Above p.21-22.

[89] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165.

[90] Above p.14, fn.28; p.17-18.

[91] *Aeneid*, VI:551-583, p.164.

Henry II, last of the Ottonian line, for the cathedral of the bishopric of Bamberg, and is believed to have been illuminated in a Rhineland workshop, probably at Trier or Echternach.[92] While it is related to the earlier group of Carolingian manuscripts, it lacks the classical traits of that recension. Colour plays a more important role than previously. The ground of the miniatures is divided into two or three different coloured bands, usually with gold leaf filling the top register, grey or pink in the atmospheric zone, and green to represent the earth. As van der Meer describes the expressive figures who enact the drama against such a sparse, elegant backdrop:

> ...all eyes are silently filled with horror, or, on the side of the just, with baffled adoration....Not a single pupil remains in the middle of the eye; every eye looks askance....The whole pantomime is played by the eyes, the hands, the feet, the wings and the ends of the draperies.[93]

Awe-struck faces and long, gesturing fingers are evident in the Last Judgment scene (ill. 11). Christ, supporting a large cross, is flanked by angels and apostles. Beneath him, two archangels unroll Christ's message: to the just on the left, "*venite benedic(ti) patr(is)...*" from Matthew 25:34;[94] to the damned on the right, "*disc(edite) a me maledicti...*" from Matthew 25:41. Beneath the feet of the angels are the animated figures of the reviving dead, rising from

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[92] Van der Meer, 103.

[93] *Ibid.*

[94] A pre-Vulgate version of the same passage appears on the corresponding scroll on the Victoria and Albert ivory. Above p.67, fn.66.

their coffins. In the lower left corner is the figure of St. John; in the lower right, the reclining, fettered figure of Hades, with muscular body and spiked hair similar to the devils of the Stuttgart Psalter.

The bands of colour and the spacious emptiness of the background zones is more apparent in the two scenes on fol. 51v in which Satan and the winged and horned beast are chained together and cast into the roaring blaze of hell, in the upper register by an angel, in the lower one by a demon.[95] The compositions and figure-types in this folio are almost identical to those of the Stuttgart Psalter fol. 10v and 29v.

The most colourful and inventive Apocalypse illustrations originated south of the Pyrenées. Beatus of Liébana was a Benedictine monk in the remote mountainous region of Asturia in northern Spain. In his Commentary on the Apocalypse, the third edition of which was published about A.D.785, Beatus included many previous interpretations by such commentators as Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, and Isidore of Seville, and added Jerome's commentary on the Book of Daniel.[96] At this time most of the Iberian peninsula was dominated by Islam and some Christian leaders were espousing the theory that Christ had been born human and was later 'adopted' by God. Beatus led the Christian resistance against the infidel with his Commentary which identifies Mohammed as the Antichrist and the Adoptionist heretics as the citizens of Babylon.

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[95] Illustrated in Van der Meer, 105, ill. 70.

[96] Van der Meer, 113.

The introduction to Beatus' Commentary was illustrated with several peculiarly Spanish images, such as a labyrinth page, and a Cross of Covadonga (symbol of the *Reconquista*), along with the approximately eighty illustrations which accompanied the Apocalypse and thirteen more which accompanied the prophecy of Daniel.[97] Inserted among the Apocalypse illustrations are several motifs which refer to the struggle for the reconquest of Spain from Moslem rule,[98] a cause which was associated with the purging of the earth at the Last Judgment. The Apocalypse became the most important book in Spain[99] and many copies of the Beatus Commentary were produced through the thirteenth century.

The earliest surviving manuscripts belong to the tenth century and were produced in various monastic scriptoria in the Christian strongholds of León and Castile in the north of Spain.[100] These bold,

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[97] The reconstruction of the original cycle is attributed to Wilhelm Neuss. *Ibid.*

[98] For example, the depiction of the Whore of Babylon as a Moslem princess in the mid-tenth century Morgan Beatus (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library ms. 644) fol.194v. Illustrated in J. Williams, ***Early Spanish Manuscript Illumination*** (New York, 1977), Pl. 19a. Hereafter: Williams.

[99] There was also an important Spanish Bible tradition but the Gospel Book, so prominent in the rest of the Christian world, was never adopted in Spain. Evangelist portraits were included in the introduction to Beatus' Commentary, presumably to give the Apocalypse the authority associated elsewhere with the Gospels. *Ibid.*, 64.

[100] Eight manuscripts and two fragments survive from the tenth century. For a list of all extant Beatus manuscripts see R. Emmerson and S. Lewis, "Census and Bibliography of Medieval Manuscripts Containing Apocalypse Illustrations, ca. 800-1500," Part I, ***Traditio*** 40 (1984), 347-379.

powerful visualizations of the Book of Revelation, with their intensity of colour, decorative patterns, and primitive figures, reflect a variety of influences including Late Antique, Carolingian, Insular, Byzantine, and Islamic.[101] They are usually full- and sometimes double-page illustrations which are divided into several registers by bright bands of colours, predominantly yellow, red, and blue. Human figures are portrayed as colourful little bundles or cocoons with heads and feet protruding. The compositions are generally symmetrical and often employ a circular motif. Colourful interlace patterns commonly enframe the miniatures.

The Morgan Beatus contains perhaps the earliest cycle of illustrations.[102] The Last Judgment scene (ill. 12) is a double-page composition which divides the judgment on the left folio from the judged on the right. On the left Christ is enthroned in a dark blue circular mandorla with twelve seated judges grouped in pairs in the registers below.[103] They are in the act of judging huddling bundles of souls. On the right, according to the inscription, are those "who have

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[101] A few examples of these influences are given on the first page of J. G. Beckwith, "Islamic Influences on Beatus Apocalyse Manuscripts," *Actas del Simposio...*, II, 57. Volume II contains ten articles dealing with the sources of and influences on the Beatus miniatures.

[102] The illustrations are dated a few decades later than the text which is dated by inscription to 922 or 926. Williams, 64.

[103] The inscription identifies them as "those who judge and rule and who are not judged;" this is based on Book V of Beatus' Commentary, rather than Book XII which accompanies the illustration, and is inspired by Matthew XIX. Williams, 81.

been judged, condemned and united."[104]

Those who have been united, presumably in hell, are to be found in the lower right register in a section equal in size to that of Christ in his mandorla which covers the width of two colour bands. In the overall composition hell is the equal and opposite of the heavenly realm. A thick wall of checkerboard squares encloses the domain of the damned but at the entrance there is no gate, just a well-like opening. Inside, amidst the red strokes of flames on a red ground, the condemned souls appear to float, naked, in various contorted positions suggesting their torments.

In the scene of the Woman Clothed with the Sun and the Dragon (fol. 152v-153r) which spreads across a double-page and illustrates Revelation XII,[105] the lower right corner is also occupied by a depiction of the underworld. While there is no wall or gate or even a well-mouth entrance, the lowest register is red with darker red strokes for flames, and contains floating, twisted, naked bodies, and the large, bloated, black figure of Hades bound and chained in reference to Revelation XX. Two angels in the blue band above cast souls into the flames below, while a third commands the chain of the captive.

In the Morgan Beatus the depiction of hell is comprised of basically the same elements as appear in the Stuttgart Psalter and the

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[104] *Ibid.*

[105] Illustrated in *Ibid.*, Pl. 15-16.

Bamberg Apocalypse: a large, black figure of Hades, the naked souls of the damned, the red flames, and the angels who enforce God's will. The composition, however, is derived from a different tradition in which the naked inhabitants of the underworld appear to float, in the manner of the corpses floating beneath Noah's ark in the Flood scene in the Ashburnham Pentateuch,[106] a manuscript which is believed to have originated in North Africa or southern Spain around the seventh century.[107]

The Gerona Beatus (Gerona, Archivo de la Catedral ms. 7), dated A.D. 975, includes a series of Christological scenes in the introduction, among which is the *Descensus* (ill. 13). This most unusual image seems to represent a cross-section of the earth and the underworld.

The large circle probably represents the earth, at the centre of which is the well-mouth entrance to hell. Christ can be seen at the edge of the well-mouth, raising Adam from a dark-blue, domed space beneath the earth. This darkness reflects the ancient concept of the underworld as a place of darkness, and is possibly the equivalent of the *tenebrae* which has been noted in some ninth century Roman Anastasis

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[106] Paris, B.N. nouv. acq. lat. 2334, fol. 9. Illustrated in C. Nordenfalk, *Early Medieval Book Illumination* (New York, 1988), 22. Hereafter: Nordenfalk.

[107] *Ibid.*, 23.

scenes.[108] In light of the Islamic influences on the Beatus manuscripts, it may also be a reference to the Zoroastrian kingdom of Yama, in which souls were believed to await judgment.

While Christ raises Adam, four other naked souls appeal to his mercy. The tablets of the book of life, containing the names of the righteous, stand to the left of the Anastasis scene. Yarza has identified these as the broken doors of Hades[109] but their resemblance to the tablets depicted in the Trier Apocalypse[110] (ill. 10) and the fact that they are not flung askew suggests otherwise. The blue columns which wind upward and beyond the circumference of the circle have been identified as ventilation chimneys by Nordenfalk[111] and, by Yarza, as representing the doorways into hell which, when opened by Mohammed, spewed forth smoke and fumes.[112]

The largest portion of the cross-section is devoted to hell, a muddy-brown area outlined on its upper edge by three arches or domes which obscure the lower edge of the earth's circle. The fine red lines of infernal flames cover the entire area and leap beyond the upper edge

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[108] Above p.50. Yarza believes this space to represent Limbo, the resting place of the virtuous who died before the time of Christ. J. Yarza, "El *Descensus ad Inferos* del Beato de Gerona y la Escatalogía Musulmana," *Boletín del Seminario de Estudios de Arte y Arqueología* 43 (1977), 139. Hereafter: Yarza (1977).

[109] *Ibid.*, 137.

[110] Above p.77, fn.84.

[111] Nordenfalk, 92.

[112] Yarza (1977), 142.

into the blue darkness. At the bottom in the centre is the large, black figure of Hades with spiked hair and large white eyes and teeth, again reminiscent of the demons of the Stuttgart Psalter. In this case, Hades is enthroned (although the throne is not visible) and entwined by blue serpents. A similar black demon on the upper left of the hell register drags a soul down into the flames. More blue serpents attack the damned who are lined up on the lower left. On the right of Hades are three souls lying upside down, representing either those thrown aside by Hades, or perhaps those who have been swallowed and then regurgitated by the two-headed dragon perched on the archway above. The position of these figures in the lowermost right-hand corner of the composition suggests the introduction of a new iconographic element: the inverted corpse perhaps as symbol of the ultimate destruction of the wicked soul. Further experimentation with this symbol can be seen on folio 105 of the Beatus of San Millán de la Cogolla in which the heads of wicked souls have been dismembered; they are inverted and arranged in rows among flames above the caged and fettered figure of the bloated Hades.[113]

Among the Christian hell images of the eighth to tenth centuries, the Gerona Beatus fol. 17 displays the most detailed topography of the underworld. The Spanish imagination created these extraordinary

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[113] El Escorial, Biblioteca del Monasterio ms. &.II.5, late tenth or early eleventh century. Illustrated in J. Yarza, "Diablo e infierno en la miniatura de los Beatus," *Actas del Simposio* III, 148, fig. 1. The arrangement of the heads in rows above the figure of Hades indicates the early influence of the Byzantine Last Judgment.

apocalyptic visions combining influences from Islam, Byzantium, and Rome. In turn, the Spanish influence was soon felt in the sculpted church portals of southern France and the pilgrimage routes.

IV

THE 11TH AND 12TH CENTURIES: THE ROMANESQUE PERIOD

At the outset of the eleventh century the Ottonian dynasty ruled the Holy Roman Empire[1] and the rest of Europe consisted of small feudal kingdoms. By the twelfth century France and Spain had also established centralized royal authority and all of Europe owed allegiance to the papacy in Rome. The unifying force in Europe was Christianity and the increasing power of the church was due to the momentum of the monastic reform movement which began around 1050. The Great Reform attempted to purge the Church of corruption[2] and in its attempts eventually brought the papacy into a mighty conflict with secular rulers.[3]

The artistic revival known as the Romanesque[4] was contemporary

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[1] Under Ottonian rule, the Holy Roman Empire consisted roughly of modern-day Germany and northern Italy.

[2] Particularly simony (the buying of ecclesiastical offices) and lay investiture (the investing of a churchman with the symbols of office by a secular ruler). B. McGinn, *Visions of the End* (New York, 1979), 94. Hereafter: McGinn.

[3] For a brief history of the Great Reform and the collision of papacy and empire see: C. W. Hollister, *Medieval Europe. A Short History*, 5th ed. (New York, 1982), 215-239. Hereafter: Hollister; and E. Peters, *Europe and the Middle Ages* (New Jersey, 1983), 152-156, 159-161. Hereafter: Peters.

[4] Due to regional differences the chronological limits of the Romanesque period can only be roughly defined as 1050-1150 with approximately 50 years on either side for the rise and decline. G.

with, and inspired by, the same fervent Christian zeal as the reform movement. Romanesque art was predominantly religious in purpose and content and while it was rooted in the art of classical Rome, it was also open to artistic influences from its own local traditions and from as far as Spain and Byzantium, influences which were increasingly exchanged during the Crusades of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The Crusades, as Bernard McGinn has noted, stimulated the revival of apocalyptic themes.[5] As a result, apocalyptic interpretations were applied to the conflict over the Great Reform in the writings of leading twelfth century scholars.[6] The changing political and religious climate in Europe was also reflected in the art of the Romanesque period. Apocalyptic imagery appeared more frequently and in greater, more imaginative detail. Crucial to the evolution of a topography of hell are three major artistic developments of the Romanesque period: the proliferation of hell-mouth imagery in England, the standardization of the Byzantine Last Judgment scene, and the rise of monumental sculpture in the twelfth century.

Zarnecki, *Romanesque Art* (New York, 1971), 5. Hereafter: Zarnecki (1971).

[5] "Jerusalem became a concrete historical place as well as an apocalyptic ideal, and changes that affected the political situation of the city were bound to suggest apocalyptic implications after 1100." McGinn, 89.

[6] McGinn includes excerpts from the works of Rupert of Deutz, Otto of Freising, and Gerhoh of Reichersberg, among others. *Ibid.*, 95-102.

ENGLAND: THE MOUTH OF HELL

Frequent Viking attacks on the kingdoms of Anglo-Saxon England in the ninth century had interrupted the artistic and scholarly Christian tradition which had produced the Book of Kells and the writings of the Venerable Bede. By 878 most of northeastern England was under Danish Viking rule, known as Danelaw.[7] The revival of the English church and the patronage of learning and the arts began with the victory of Alfred the Great (871-899) over the Danes in 879.[8]

In addition to the florescence of Old English vernacular literature, the tenth century saw the revitalization of manuscript production at scriptoria at Canterbury and Winchester where the classicizing influence of Carolingian manuscript illumination mingled with the indigenous linear style of Anglo-Saxon art. The influence of the Reims school became particularly noticeable when, late in the tenth century, the Utrecht Psalter was brought to Canterbury.[9]

Anglo-Saxon artists made three copies of the Utrecht Psalter, remaining faithful in the earliest copy[10] to the iconography, composition, and dynamic linearism of the original. However, they simplified and abstracted the structure of individual forms in favour of decorative pattern, and replaced the uniform brown ink of the

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[7] Peters, 116.

[8] *Ibid.*, 118. Also Hollister, 114-117.

[9] Rickert, 45.

[10] For a colour illustration of London, British Library, ms. Harley 603, fol. 6v, see Pächt (1986), Pl. XVIII.

original with several different coloured inks. This polychromatic drawing and arbitrary colouring, possibly derived from the art of embroidery, became a specialty of Anglo-Saxon illuminators.[11]

As noted in Chapter III, the earliest surviving pictorial image of hell as a ravenous mouth is in Anglo-Saxon art. Even before the Great Reform stirred apocalyptic notions on the continent, the English had a more than passing fascination with hell.[12] In a *Liber Vitae* (British Museum, Stowe ms. 944) produced at Winchester around 1020 a highly theatrical Last Judgment appears on folio 7 (ill. 14). In the upper register St. Peter welcomes the blessed to heaven[13] which is represented as a city with gates and towers, and which is ruled by Christ who appears in a mandorla above. In the middle register St. Peter fights over the fate of a soul by striking a demon's face with his huge key. In the lowest register an angel locks the gate behind an enormous demon who pulls the damned by the hair and casts them into the gaping mouth of hell. The angel with the keys to lock up Satan was

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[11] Nordenfalk, 105-106.

[12] Above p.36-45. With the proliferation of hell mouth scenes from the eleventh century onward, one can presume that the tenth century, too, had had its share, renewing the tradition of the ninth century Victoria and Albert ivory plaque after the Viking interruption. Haney notes that the pains of hell were vividly described in the prayers, sermons, and poetry of the Anglo-Saxon period, citing among other sources J. Galpern's Ph.D. thesis (University of California, 1977), "The shape of hell in Anglo-Saxon art." K. E. Haney, *The Winchester Psalter: an Iconographic Study* (Leicester, 1986), 22, fn.60. Hereafter: Haney.

[13] This motif was otherwise unknown in western art but commonly occurs in the lower left region of Byzantine Last Judgment scenes. Denny, (1982), 533, fn.6.

inspired by Revelation 20:1-3 and had previously appeared in the Trier Apocalypse (folio 64r). The mouth belongs to the dismembered head of a hybrid beast in the tradition of Leviathan and Jonah's whale,[14] but with its head tilted back, soft, wrinkled, and non-threatening, it may still be related to the anthropomorphic tradition of classical deities, and was perhaps influenced by the tilted head of Tellus in the Trier Apocalypse.[15]

Likewise, the huge jaws of hell in the Anastasis scene on folio 14r of the British Museum's Cotton ms. Tiberius C. VI (ill. 15) appear to be toothless and benign, like that of a yawning old dog. There is, nevertheless, no doubt about its symbolism. A giant but fatherly figure of Christ in elegant, fluttering robes reaches down to raise Adam, Eve, and numerous others from the great maw of the underworld. Under Christ's feet is the twisted and fettered figure of Hades whose face also resembles that of a dog, but with sharp teeth and claws and a wild mane. A winged dragon crouches beneath the writhing Hades. The canine appearance of the mouth of hell, and especially of the personification of Hades, may be related to the jaws of the wolf which, in an Anglo-Saxon myth, devoured the god Odin. The wolf's great jaws were broken by Odin's son Vidar, who was later identified with Christ.[16]

The contraposition of good and evil is emphasized in both of

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[14] Above p.73-74.

[15] Above p.79. Illustrated in Van der Meer, 97, ill. 61.

[16] M. Schapiro, "Cain's Jaw-Bone that Did the First Murder," *Late Antique, Early Christian and Medieval Art*, 257, fn.66.

these images. In the *Liber Vitae* the extremes of heaven and hell are separated only by the judgment. The Tiberius C. VI illustration sharply contrasts the gentle goodness of Christ the Saviour with the harsh, angry beasts of hell.

A particularly expressive and frightening secular image of hell occurs in one of three known copies of the Marvels of the East, a travel book describing imaginery and exotic lands.[17] "Mambres at the Mouth of Hell" (ill. 16) is not the typical coloured-line drawing of Anglo-Saxon artists but rather a fully-painted line drawing in which colour is used arbitrarily. The background is green; the menacing rocky outcrop is red; the interior of the mouth of hell is purple; and the terrifying monster who lunges at the hero while stuffing his mouth with souls is iron-grey with red-ringed eyes.[18]

The fist of red rocks and the horrid hairy monster come together on either side of Mambres to form the clenched jaws of Hades. The hell mouth motif is reinforced by the savage face of the monster. In this case the dismembered head of the classical deity has recovered his body but has been transformed into a cruel, hideous, hungry beast. Within the dark, purple, subterranean abyss, the souls of the damned are licked by the wavy lines of flames and are fettered by serpents and

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[17] M. R. James' book *Marvels of the East* (Oxford, 1929) reproduces the three known copies. Cited in T. D. Kendrick, *Late Saxon and Viking Art* (London, 1974), 26. See also Wittkower, *op. cit.* The copy referred to here, London, British Museum, Cotton ms. Tiberius B. V, was produced at Winchester c. 1025.

[18] Only a black and white reproduction was available. The colours are noted in Kendrick, *op. cit.*, 26.

devoured by wild beasts. This image recalls the features of the Anglo-Saxon hell as described by Cynewulf and his school.[19] The suffering souls are spotted in varying degrees of black and white. This motif appears well in advance of the code suggested in the vision of the Monk of Evesham of 1196 for the identification of the severity of a sinner's crimes.[20] It also indicates that secular imagery was rooted in local tradition and was generally less conservative in its depictions of hell than was the Church.

Five drawings of hell are among the illustrations of the *Caedmonian Genesis* (Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Junius 11), a metrical paraphrase of the Vulgate text written in the vernacular.[21] Two scenes of the Fall of the Rebellious Angels depict the entrance to hell as a gigantic head with large, gaping mouth tilted back in the manner of Tellus in the Trier Apocalypse. One of these open-mawed, dismembered heads, rather than having human features, has the stylized appearance of a large basin in which a fettered Satan is roasting in flames

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[19] Above, p.39.

[20] Above p.43-44.

[21] The 2936 line poem was written in two parts: the first, Genesis A (ll. 1-234, 852-2936), is a late seventh or early eighth century text; the second, Genesis B (ll. 235-851) was interpolated into A no earlier than the ninth century. The only extant illustrated manuscript is of the eleventh century and was never completed. T. H. Ohlgren, "The Illustrations of the *Caedmonian Genesis*: Literary Criticism Through Art," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 3 (1972), 201-202.

surrounded by floating, twisted demons.[22] The other (ill. 17), of similar shape but more beastly, has sharp teeth and a grotesque face with heavy-lidded eye and wrinkled snout.

A castle wall extends from its lower jaw along the bottom of the picture, joining with the back of its head to form a courtyard which encloses a tailed figure of Satan who is bound and stretched over flames. Contorted demons float around Satan and another tailed figure carrying a flail emerges from a furnace in the corner tower of the castle wall. The upper portion of this illustration depicts the semi-dome of heaven which encloses Christ and six of his angels. Between the semi-dome, which is decorated with six stars, and the gaping maw below are several naked, winged figures in a variety of positions.

Of the other three hell images in the *Caedmonian Genesis*, one is a dark, subterranean cave in which Satan is bound and surrounded by his fiends;[23] another (fol. 20)[24] illustrates the Temptation of Eve in which the lower half of the picture reveals a castle enclosure in which Satan is bound and stretched over fire, and from which he sends his messenger to Eden in the guise of a beautiful angel; and the third (fol. 17)[25] shows the duality of the cosmos, with Satan and his followers confined

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[22] Illustrated in C. Kennedy, *The Caedmon Poems* (Massachusetts, 1965), 199. Kennedy does not indicate the folio numbers of the illustrations.

[23] Illustrated in *Ibid.*, 213.

[24] Illustrated in Ohlgren, *op. cit.*, fig. 1.

[25] Illustrated in *Ibid.*, fig. 6.

within a walled enclosure beneath the scene of Christ enthroned and flanked by seraphim, all within the towers of a Saxon castle.

The emphasis on hell imagery in the recounting of the Genesis story indicates a concern with apocalyptic themes and the growing western tendency to polarize good and evil. Experimentation with various artistic sources can be seen in the details of traditional Saxon architecture and the Carolingian type of Satan.[26]

Surprisingly, several features in the drawings of the *Caedmonian Genesis* recall the hell scenes in the Morgan Beatus. The crenellated castle walls which enclose Satan are reminiscent of the checkerboard walls surrounding hell in the Morgan Last Judgment scene (ill. 12). The floating, naked figures of the damned in the Morgan manuscript have sprouted wings and wield weapons of torture in the *Caedmonian Genesis.* The posture of Satan, bound and stretched to roast over flames, occurs with minor differences in both manuscripts,[27] as does the device with which Satan is shackled at wrists and ankles. Even the stars along the semi-dome of heaven (ill. 17) recall the numerous bright stars in the scene of the Woman Clothed with the Sun and the Dragon in the Morgan Beatus.[28]

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[26] The Carolingian influence in the *Caedmonian Genesis* is noticeable in the depiction of Satan as a classical deity (folio 17 and Kennedy, 213).

[27] In the Morgan Beatus (fol. 152v-153r) the devil is painted black and is suspended with his back to the flames. In folia 16 and 20 of the *Caedmonian Genesis* the devil is defined by a simple brown outline and is suspended with his chest toward the flames.

[28] Above p.84, fn.105.

While there is no evidence that an early Spanish Beatus manuscript made its way to England in the eleventh century,[29] nevertheless the possiblity of direct contact between England and Spain, through the crusades against Islam or the pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela,[30] is strengthened by the similarity of two other illustrations. The illustration of the Building of the Tower of Babel in Aelfric's Paraphrase of the Pentateuch and Joshua[31] is remarkably similar to that of the Tower of Távara in the Távara Apocalypse.[32] Although Margaret Rickert attributes the intricate detail and love of pattern in the Tower of Babel illustration to the English tradition,[33] the composition, the colourful tilework, the checkerboard brickwork, the ladders and doorways, and the depiction of people at work, are almost identical to the Spanish illustration and suggest more than a coincidental relationship. Slightly later in date, but further indicating a Spanish-English connection, is the fact that the Martyrdom and Burial of St. Thomas of Canterbury, who was murdered in 1170 and

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[29] The only extant Beatus manuscript in an English collection is the British Library ms. Add. 11695, produced at Santo Domingo de Silos in the late eleventh or early twelfth century. It was taken to England by Joseph Bonaparte and acquired by the British Museum in 1840. Emmerson and Lewis, *op. cit., Traditio* 40 (1984), 357.

[30] Peters, 148-149; Hollister, 177-178, 197-198.

[31] London, British Museum, Cotton ms. Claudius B. IV, fol. 19, Canterbury, second quarter of the eleventh century, illustrated in Nordenfalk, 107.

[32] Madrid, Archivo Histórico Nacional, ms. 1097B, fol. 139, San Salvador de Távara, A.D. 970, illustrated in *Ibid.*, 91.

[33] Rickert, 47.

canonized in 1173, is depicted in a mural dated before 1200 in Santa María de Tarrasa near Barcelona.[34]

The Norman Conquest of England in 1066 interrupted the evolution of English art but did not suppress its indigenous characteristics.[35] Since Norman art itself had been largely influenced by the Anglo-Saxon tradition, its impact on English illumination was minimal. The Norman contributions were the introduction of the inhabited scroll initial[36] and the implementation of Church reform which opened English art to further continental influences.[37]

The Harrowing of Hell scene (ill. 18) in an English psalter of the late twelfth century (Oxford, Bodleian Library, ms. Douce 293) betrays the influence of Ottonian art in the separation of the picture into separate bands of colour, the empty background, the elongated figures, and the drapery treatment.[38] But the mouth of hell is

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[34] Illustrated in O. Demus and M. Hirmer, *Romanesque Mural Painting* (London, 1970), 483, Pl. 219.

[35] F. Wormald, *The Survival of Anglo-Saxon Illumination after the Norman Conquest* (London, 1944).

[36] The Late Antique type of narrative cycle employed by Anglo-Saxon artists was interrupted and temporarily replaced by the Norman inhabited initial. Narrative cycles revived around 1120 and the first steps were taken toward a completely illustrated edition of the Bible. O. Pächt, *The Rise of Pictorial Narrative in Twelfth Century England* (Oxford, 1962), 12-13.

[37] The reorganization of the Church, which included the importation of abbots from all over the continent, is described in C. M. Kauffmann, *Romanesque Manuscripts 1066-1190* (London, 1975), 12.

[38] See the Bamberg Apocalypse, folia 51v and 53r (ill. 11). Above p.80-81, fn.95.

retained, along with the decorative border from the Anglo-Saxon tradition. The head of the beast has been streamlined, and is more serpentine with short, sharp teeth and a large, glistening, beady eye, in the tradition of the infernal dragon which appears in the Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 5).

Depictions of the horrors of hell, including the insatiable maw, became increasingly detailed throughout the twelfth century as a result of cultural exchange, heightened apocalyptic notions brought on by the crusades, and the formalization of beliefs among lay society achieved through Church reform. This parallels the twelfth century interest in vision literature, particularly in England,[39] and the rise of vernacular literature.

A twelfth century mural which covered the entire west wall of the nave at Chaldon Church, Surrey, (ill. 19) depicts many of the instruments of judgment and types of torture which had previously only appeared in literature or psalter illustrations. Known as The Ladder of Salvation, the picture is divided into four sections by a horizontal band of decoration and a ladder which leads to Christ within a mandorla at the top centre. In the upper left a large demon tries to tip the scales which determine the fate of a soul. Opposite, on the right, Christ tramples the fettered figure of Hades underfoot and forces the

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[39] Redaction IV of the Vision of St. Paul was in wide circulation by the twelfth century. Above p.32, fn.13. Of the many new visions recorded in the twelfth century, the most influential were English: the Vision of Tundale, St. Patrick's Purgatory, and Vision of the Monk of Evesham. Above p.39-44.

holy cross into his mouth; with his right hand he draws Adam and the others from the flames. The scales of justice and the use of the cross as a weapon had appeared earlier in the Stuttgart Psalter.[40] The combination of the cross as weapon and the mouth of hell occurs also in the English psalter, Bodleian Douce 293 (ill. 18).

In the lower left quadrant, a cauldron full of souls boils over a large fire while demons stir and prod. To the left, a demon lying on his back bites the feet of three girls who were too fond of dancing. To the right, a dog bites the hand of a woman who fed dogs with food she should have given to the poor. Next to the ladder a huge demon picks off the tainted souls as they try to climb upward.[41]

In the compartment opposite, the spiky bridge of judgment makes its pictorial debut, probably inspired by the descriptions in Redaction IV of the Vision of St. Paul or in the Vision of the Monk of Wenlock.[42] According to Bonner, the five souls who attempt to cross are carrying the attributes of their trade or social class. Beneath the bridge, a usurer sits in the flames swallowing or vomiting gold coins. On either side of him couples are tempted by demons into illicit affections.[43] Few souls reach the top rungs of the heavenly ladder leading to salvation.

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[40] Above p.61, fn.38.

[41] The identification of these tortures with specific sins is noted in Bonner, *op. cit.*, 26-27.

[42] Above p.33-34.

[43] Bonner, *op. cit.*, 26-27.

More tortures and more colourful demons appear in the Winchester Psalter of the mid-twelfth century in which several illustrated folia are devoted to the depiction of the elect and the damned at the time of the Last Judgment. Folio 38[44] shows a variety of demons fighting over unfortunate souls. Some demons have fur, others scales; some have tails and clawed feet, others are horned and spotted and have grotesque faces. The women of the upper register, one of whom rides upon the shoulders of a demon, the other who is tossed and prodded by demons and bitten by a winged dragon, are suffering for unchastity.[45] In the bottom register a sinner is about to have his hand amputated while others are bitten, prodded, or immersed in a cauldron. According to Haney, the chopping off of hands is a sentence found in contemporary English law.[46]

In the upper register of fol. 24[47] an Anastasis scene portrays the raising of Adam and Eve and a multitude of others from the jaws of Hades. In this instance, Christ attends to salvation while leaving his assistant, the Archangel Michael, to prod the fettered, spotted, beastly figures of Satan and Hades with a lance. Michael's role in this scene seems to be an allusion to his triumph over the Apocalyptic

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[44] London, British Museum, Cotton ms. Nero C. IV, illustrated in F. Wormald, *The Winchester Psalter* (London, 1973), fig. 41.

[45] Haney, 128.

[46] *Ibid.*, 128, fn.366.

[47] Illustrated in E. G. Millar, *English Illuminated Manuscripts from the Tenth to the Thirteenth Century* (Paris and Brussels, 1926), Pl. 44.

beast in Revelation 12:3-9.

The monstrous head which personifies hell, although tilted back and toothless, is covered in a decorative pattern of scales to emphasize its evil nature. The hell mouth has become increasingly serpentine, slowly transformed from human form into a reptilian dragon mouth. It attains terrifying beauty in folio 39 of the Winchester Psalter (ill. 20). The dismembered head of the beast is at once at its most gruesome and its most decorative. The ophidian head of fol.24 has become a two-faced ferocious dragon whose ears and mane sprout more monstrous heads and whose common maw bares many teeth and several sharp fangs.

The devourer of sinners, once the handsome head of a personified deity, and perhaps also a descendent of Jonah's whale, has been transformed into the apocalyptic beast from the sea "having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy" (Rev. 13:1). Pictures of the dragon, particulary associated with the Woman Clothed with the Sun (Rev. 12), were plentiful in Spain where the Book of Revelation was the most important religious text. The practice of illustrating the Apocalypse spread along the pilgrimage routes and examples of the dragon with seven heads can be found in French and Italian paintings of the Romanesque period.[48]

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[48] For example: the fresco of the Woman and the Dragon in the porch at Saint-Savin-Sur-Gartempe, c. 1100; and the fresco of St. Michael's Triumph over the Dragon (Rev. 12:7-9) in the nave of San Pietro al Monte at Civate. Both illustrated in A. Grabar and C. Nordenfalk, *Romanesque Painting from the Eleventh to the Thirteenth Century* (New York, 1958), 91 and 24 (detail) respectively. For an illustration of

The lower jaws of the Winchester Psalter dragon also sprout beastly heads with long fangs which form the hinges of the gate controlled by the archangel Michael who stands outside the picture frame. As Kristine Haney so poetically describes the figure of Michael, "he pirouettes with the elegance of a ballerina, sealing [the snarling devils] away with a deft flick of the wrist."[49] By contrast, the enclosed sinners, among them kings, queens, and clergy, display a great variety of clumsy postures. Some are bound, some are inverted, some have been dismembered, others mutilated. They are as densely packed within the voracious jaws as *caprichos* within an inhabited initial, and Nordenfalk has described the composition as "a Romanesque initial letter carried to its most monstrous limit--a super-initial!"[50]

No doubt the various postures represent punishments for specific sins as described in the vision literature. While it is impossible to match the images to specific texts, the infernal chaos common to all the visions is evident in the pressing, bumping, throbbing, and crushing of corpses in the claustral gullet of the insatiable beast.

Among the scenes depicted in stone along the frieze of the façade of Lincoln Cathedral are several devoted to the torments of hell.[51] The

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the entire scene at Civate see Demus and Hirmer, *op. cit.*, Pl. 17.

[49] Haney, 35.

[50] Grabar and Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, 156. An inhabited initial with *caprichos* is illustrated on the same page.

[51] Lincoln Cathedral was damaged by fire in 1141. It was restored under Bishop Alexander (1123-1148) although the decoration may have continued for another twenty years. G. Zarnecki, "Romanesque Sculpture

mouth of hell appears twice. One appearance is in the context of the parable of Dives and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-26), which suggests a Byzantine influence since the figures of Lazarus in the bosom of Abraham and the rich man in hell are regular features of the Byzantine Last Judgment.[52] Following the scene of the Feast of Dives and his two companions, the next stone panel depicts the scene of the Death of Lazarus in a narrow register above the scene of the reward of Dives. For their greed and lack of charity the rich man and his dinner companions dive into the open jaws of hell, prodded by a demon.[53] Sinners diving into the jaws also occur in the bottom register of the *Liber Vitae* (ill. 14). The mouth is tilted back following the type established by the *Liber Vitae* and Tiberius C. VI (ill. 15).

The other occurrence of the maw at Lincoln Cathedral is in the scene of the Harrowing of Hell (ill. 21). Christ, with a figure behind him,[54] tramples the fettered and defeated figure of Hades while Adam and

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at Lincoln Cathedral," *Studies in Romanesque Sculpture* (London, 1979) XV, 1-2. Hereafter: Zarnecki (1979).

[52] Dives and Lazarus are discussed in the context of the Byzantine Last Judgment, below, p.110, fn.65, and p.114.

[53] Illustrated in Zarnecki (1979), Pl. 15a.

[54] Zarnecki identifies this figure as John the Baptist, based on Byzantine models, for example the eleventh century mosaic of the Anastasis at Daphni. Zarnecki (1979), 10. The appearance of the archangel Michael in the identical position in the Winchester Psalter (fol. 24), and Michael's association with the battling of the dragon in Revelation 12 and with the locking of the wicked in hell in the *Liber Vitae* and the Winchester Psalter suggest to me that the stone figure behind Christ at Lincoln is Michael. Although Zarnecki is sure that the figure is not an angel, the fragments of stone at the figure's back may indeed have been wings.

the others are resurrected from the mouth of hell. The gigantic mouth is clearly related to the Winchester Psalter mirror-image jaws (ill. 20). While the beastly image appears to be a frontal face placed on its side, each side of the face could independently represent the mouth in profile as it is most often depicted, and as it appears in the scene of Dives' demise.

Four scenes of the torments of hell follow the Harrowing of Hell in succession from right to left. The last two of these Zarnecki believes illustrate the punishments for adultery and other sexual sins.[55] In one of them the giant figure of Hades, apparently (for erosion of the stone makes it difficult to discern) seated on a throne of serpents in Byzantine fashion, wraps his legs around two souls while he pulls their hair upwards in his fists. Hair-pulling previously appeared in the hell scenes of the *Liber Vitae* of New Minster (ill. 14) and the Winchester Psalter. In the other scene winged dragons bite the genitals of presumed fornicators while another beast claws at their bellies, recalling images from medieval vision literature.

The international exchange of artistic influences which characterizes the Romanesque was already at work in England in the early eleventh century and increased throughout the twelfth. As previously noted, the English mouth of hell had relatives in Carolingian art and the basic concept dates back to classical Rome. But only in England did it become a regular iconographic feature.

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[55] *Ibid.*, 10, and Pl. 17.

Whatever pictorial elements the English chose to appropriate from continental models, they were adapted to the hell mouth image. If the mouth of hell was not an English invention, it certainly became an English trademark.

THE BYZANTINE LAST JUDGMENT

Like its counterpart in the west, the Byzantine interpretation of the Last Judgment was based on the biblical description in Matthew 24 and 25. Its development, however, was molded by the fourth century Homilies of St. Ephraem Syrus.[56] The Homilies include frequent allusions to other biblical texts such as the Psalms, Mark 13, Luke 16, and particularly Revelation 20.[57] St. Ephraem is responsible for the expatiation of such biblical descriptions as the animals of the earth and the sea giving up their dead at the sound of the trumpets, and the empty throne, or *etimasia.*[58] Such images later became distinctive pictorial features of the eastern Last Judgment.

The early pictorial development of the Byzantine Last Judgment

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[56] Jónsdóttir credits G. Voss, ***Das jüngste Gericht in der bildenden Kunst des frühen Mittelalters*** (Leipzig, 1884), 64-75, with having discovered St. Ephraem's influence, cited in S. Jónsdóttir, ***An Eleventh Century Byzantine Last Judgment in Iceland*** (Reykjavík, 1959), 15. Hereafter: Jónsdóttir.

[57] Springer matches various elements with their sources. A. Springer, "Das jüngste Gericht," ***Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft*** 7 (1884), 376.

[58] *Ibid.* The *etimasia* refers to Ps. 9:7, "he hath prepared his throne for judgment." The origin of the *etimasia* is discussed by O. M. Dalton, ***Byzantine Art and Archaeology*** (New York, 1961), 666. Hereafter: Dalton.

showed little sign of St. Ephraem's influence.[59] Interest in St. Ephraem's Homilies must have been revived during the post-Iconoclast church reform which standardized the Byzantine liturgy and feast cycle. The Last Judgment scheme reached maturity in the mid-eleventh century and perhaps, as Kurt Weitzmann speculates,[60] was designed to decorate the west wall of a church. Several examples of the Byzantine Last Judgment survive from the eleventh and twelfth centuries on walls, panels, and in manuscripts, none of them identical, but all of them presumably based on a common archetype. Of those which survive, only the Paris Grec 74 manuscript and two icons from Sinai were actually rendered in the east.

In the manuscript Grec 74 (Paris, Bibliothèque National ms. gr. 74), produced in Constantinople around the mid-eleventh century, two scenes of the Judgment are encountered. One, based on the text of Mark 13:26 (fol. 93v), is poor in detail.[61] The other, based on the Matthew text (fol. 51v), may be the earliest surviving illustration of the fully-realized Byzantine Last Judgment (ill. 22).

Several scenes are placed in four loosely-defined horizontal registers. At the top centre is Christ enthroned within a mandorla,

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[59] For example, the ninth century *Sacra Parallela* and Vatican Cosmos Indicopleustes. Above p.69-70.

[60] K. Weitzmann, *The Icon. Holy Images--Sixth to Fourteenth Century* (New York, 1978), 84.

[61] Brenk refers to the illustration in H. Omont, *Evangiles avec peintures byzantines du XIe siècle* (Paris, 1908), Pl. 81, cited in B. Brenk, "Die Anfänge der Byzantinischen Weltgerichtsdarstellung," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 57 (1964), 107.

immediately flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist, forming the *Deesis*.[62] On either side of the *Deesis* are six apostles, and behind this group stands a host of angels.

From beneath the mandorla flows a river of fire flanked by two wheels (below the guardian cherubim), in reference to Daniel 7:9-10. At the time of Daniel (c. 607-534 B.C.) the river of fire may not have been associated with punishment.[63] But certainly by the second century B.C. the rivers of fire in the Babylonian Talmud and the apocryphal Books of Enoch all suggest a hell of retribution.[64] With the formalization of the Byzantine Last Judgment in folio 51v of the Grec 74 manuscript, the fiery river spills out from under Christ, flows past the *etimasia* in the centre of the second register, and spews into hell on the left side of Christ. This fiery compartment forms the right side of the third register.

In the second register, to the left of the empty throne, on Christ's right hand, stand two groups of the elect, facing the throne with arms outstretched in prayer. To their left is an angel rolling up the heavens (Rev. 6:14). To the right of the empty throne, at the sound of the trumpetting angel, "death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them" (Rev. 20:13). Some are disgorged by wild beasts; those who rise from coffins are robed in spotted garments indicating

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[62] The ninth century Byzantine imperial origin of the *Deesis* is discussed by Dalton, 664-666.

[63] M. Himmelfarb, *Tours of Hell* (Philadelphia, 1983), 111.

[64] *Ibid.*; and above p.16.

their sins.

In the third register on the left are another two groups of blessed souls; the total four groups are divided according to ecclesiastical and societal rank. To the far left, within a delineated segment, is the scene of the beasts of the sea giving up their dead (Rev. 20:13). On the right side of the register, amidst the flames, the damned are tormented by black demons and pushed by angels toward the mouth of the beast. The dark, bearded figure of Hades sits, with Antichrist in his lap,[65] atop the hybrid dragon which devours the sinners. At the far left of this blazing compartment is the naked figure of the rich man from the parable of Lazarus (Luke 16:19-26).[66]

In the centre of the bottom register the archangel Michael weighs souls in the balance scale while black, winged demons attempt to tilt it in their favour. Immediately left of the scales of justice a group of clergy entreat St. Peter to allow them through the gates of paradise. Within the gateway stands a cherubim. To the left, in paradise, the Virgin is enthroned between two palms. Furthest left,

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[65] The figure in the lap of Hades has alternately been identified as the rich man (as a counter figure to Lazarus) or Judas. Longhurst cites the sources of the various opinions. M. H. Longhurst, "A Byzantine Ivory Panel for South Kensington," *Burlington Magazine* 19 (1926), 43, fn.6-8.

[66] This figure is identified by Keck as the repentant thief proceeding towards paradise from his place amongst the damned. A. S. Keck, "A Group of Italo-Byzantine Ivories," *Art Bulletin* 12 (1930), 161, fn.31. Jónsdóttir identifies him as the rich man since the figure is identical, but for its slightly more upright position, to those figures of the rich man which appear in flames among the torments of hell in Icon no. 2, the Torcello mosaic, and the Victoria and Albert ivory. Jónsdóttir, 20. See below p.114.

Abraham sits with the beggar Lazarus in his bosom (Luke 16:22), surrounded by children.

Hell's torments are on the bottom right, that is, Christ's left, in correspondence with Matthew 25:41. There are six arched compartments, each representing one of the punishments wrought upon sinners. In two compartments, naked figures are shown to the waist; in three are skulls in darkness; and in one section are heads, probably representing all that can be seen of bodies immersed to the neck in fire. In all there are seven sections of the underworld in this picture, perhaps alluding to the pit with seven seals or the furnace with seven flames and seven torments described in the Vision of St. Paul.[67]

Of the two Sinai icons, the one labelled no.2 by Selma Jónsdóttir[68] (ill. 23) is the better preserved. Its depiction of hell differs slightly from that in Grec 74. The scenes of the animals of the land and sea giving up their dead at the command of the trumpet have been moved to the very lowest right corner of the panel. It seems that the sea creature which disgorges its dead duplicates the soul-devouring dragon at the entrance to hell. The artist even repeats the rider, although in the form of a sword-wielding warrior. This may have been influenced by Alberic's vision of the serpent-wielding knight

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[67] Above p.32-33.

[68] Jónsdóttir's icons no.1 and no.2 (fig. 5 and 6) were first published by Sotiriou in *Icones du Mont Sinaï* I (Athens, 1956) as no.150 and no.151, cited in Jónsdóttir, 16, fn.12.

riding a dragon.

In spite of their variations, these two eastern examples represent the standard Byzantine Last Judgment scene. The surviving examples produced in Byzantine territories in the west during this period are a wall painting in the church of S. Angelo in Formis in south Italy, a mosaic in the church at Torcello near Venice, a tempera panel painting (Rome, Vatican Museum, no. 526), and an ivory panel from Venice (London, Victoria and Albert Museum, A.24-1926).[69] Jónsdóttir discusses the similarities and differences between all of the eleventh and twelfth century Byzantine Last Judgment scenes.[70]

It is worth noting here the increased symmetry and compartmentalization of the western versions. Certain themes in the Grec 74 miniature are positioned in diagonal contrast.[71] In both the Grec 74 miniature and Icon no.2 the segments are arranged loosely in registers without dividing lines. In the Torcello mosaic (ill. 24, 25), which is the only western example complete with all the Byzantine elements, each horizontal band is carefully delineated and the symmetry of the overall composition is striking.[72]

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[69] The panels are illustrated in *Ibid.*, ill. 7 and 4, respectively.

[70] *Ibid.*, 15-25.

[71] For instance: Hades with Antichrist on his lap opposite Abraham with Lazarus; the curled tail of the dragon opposite the rolled up sky; and the shapes of the sections in which the sea and the earth give up their dead.

[72] The two scenes of the resurrection of the dead announced by trumpetting angels share an identical configuration opposite each other in the third register. The demons who tilt the scales are larger than

All of this group of western Byzantine Last Judgment scenes adhere to the convention which divides their compositions into strict horizontal bands and disposes their scenes symmetrically to the right and left of Christ, in the manner of Torcello. Since they all, except for the Torcello mosaic, omit various Byzantine elements, the concern for symmetry and horizontal division can be taken as a western trait, undoubtedly imposed to emphasize the polarity of good and evil.

Among these Byzantine Last Judgment scenes, east and west, the depiction of hell shows the greatest variation. In the two Venetian versions, the Torcello mosaic and the Victoria and Albert ivory,[73] the dragon on which Hades sits in the Grec 74 has been replaced by a throne of serpents whose hybrid heads reach out to devour the damned. Also in the Torcello mosaic, the sinners, among them kings and clergy, are tormented by demons and immersed in the lake of fire so that only their heads and shoulders are portrayed (ill. 25).

Below the Hades scene in the icon, the mosaic, and the ivory, the rich man appears in a fiery compartment among hell's torments. In the Torcello mosaic he shares the space with two other naked figures who are immersed to their loins in the fire. In the next compartment

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in the Grec 74 and therefore balance, in size and posture, the figure of the archangel Michael. The fiery realm of Hades covers two registers in the lower right corner, opposite the double register containing the blessed above and paradise below. The figures of Hades with Antichrist and Abraham with Lazarus, while not directly opposite each other in the same horizontal band, are nevertheless diagonally apposed within the double register compartments of hell and paradise.

[73] The ivory is thought to have been modelled after the Torcello mosaic which is dated c. 1100. Keck, *op. cit.*, 161-162.

to the right are four naked figures in the darkness; two of them gnaw their hands. Again to the right is another compartment containing figures immersed to the waist in water; the figure visible in illustration 25 is blue and also gnaws on his hand. The gnawing of hands and the immersion of sinners to appropriate depths in a pit or river are derived from St. Peter's Apocalypse.[74]

In the three examples in which the rich man appears in one of the chambers of torment, the repentant thief also appears on the opposite side of the register, inside the gates of paradise, dressed in a loin cloth and carrying a cross.[75] Since the repentant thief does not appear in paradise in the earlier Grec 74 miniature, it is conceivable that the figure which appears in that picture (ill. 22) on the left side of Hades' fiery realm, was indeed intended to represent the repentant thief. Perhaps the thief originally resided in hell and was re-identified as the rich man in order to counterbalance the figure of the poor man, Lazarus, who resides in paradise; on the ivory, at least, these figures are at extreme opposites. Moreover, in placing the repentant thief inside the gates of paradise, rather than *en route*, the message of the Last Judgment and the promise of redemption are strengthened. This conception fits neatly within the bipolar nature of Romanesque art.

An even stronger western influence can be recognized in the Last

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[74] Above p.26.

[75] The representation of the repentant thief in art results from the Gospel of Nicodemus. Dalton, 670.

Judgment scenes produced in south Italy. The fresco of S. Angelo in Formis, dated to the late eleventh or twelfth century (ill. 26),[76] does not slavishly copy its Byzantine model. Many elements, including the large, dominating figure of Christ in a mandorla, are taken from western Last Judgment scenes from after the year 1000.[77] Neither does the depiction of hell follow the Byzantine tradition. In the lower right corner, black demons hurl the damned into a boiling pit. A couple, awaiting this doom, look back in terror and regret.

Of a most unusual shape is the panel in the Vatican Museum, dating from the last quarter of the eleventh century. It is painted in tempera on canvas which has been affixed to a panel of chestnut in the form of a disc set on a rectangular predella.[78] The composition of the Last Judgment appears in five horizontal bands.[79]

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[76] The frescoes were painted over a century and specific dates cannot be ascertained. Grabar and Nordenfalk, *op. cit.*, 33-38.

[77] For example, the Last Judgment scenes in Sankt Michael at Burgfelden (1075-1100) and in Michaelskapelle, Sankt Georg at Reichenau (c. 1100), both illustrated in Demus and Hirmer, *op. cit.*, Pl. 241.

[78] The disc is more than two metres in diameter and the predella measures sixty by one hundred forty centimetres. It is thought to have been made to fit an architectural form, possibly in an abbey church. Y. Batard, "Les fresques de Castel Sant'Elia et le *Jugement dernier* de la Pinacothèque Vaticane," *Cahiers de Civilization Médiévale* 1 (1958), 174-175. Hereafter: Batard. It may also have been intended as a symbolic representation of the *orbis universus* in which the Last Judgment unfolds. D. Redig de Campos, "Eine unbekannte Darstellung des jüngste Gerichts aus dem elften Jahrhundert," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 5 (1936), 125.

[79] The first register features Christ enthroned with globe and sceptre, flanked by cherubim and angels. The second register depicts Christ as judge of the tribunal, after Roman imperial models. In the third register are several scenes influenced by the Homilies of St.

The fourth register depicts the resurrection of the dead and the fifth, being the predella, is divided between heaven and hell (ill. 27). The remnants of imperial Rome are reflected in the personifications of the earth and the sea which give up their dead; they are half-nude female figures riding a white bull and a sea monster and holding up small nude figures representing the dead who rise from their bosoms.[80] At the left, the birds, fish, and animals surrender the bones and skulls of their dead for restitution. On the right, souls of black and white raiment, indicating guilt or innocence, rise from their tombs which are flanked by trumpetting angels.

In the predella, a jewelled towering gateway separates heaven from hell. Within the gates of paradise is the Virgin surrounded by saints; beneath her, beseeching entry, are two donor figures. On the right side of the predella, two angels prod the damned in a dark cavern reminiscent of the *tenebrae* of ninth century Roman Anastasis scenes.[81] A third angel leads a fettered sinner[82] toward the darkness. Within the abyss, inscriptions indicate the crimes for which each soul has been punished: among them, one who spoke against his father and mother, a perjuror, a murderer, harlots (one of whom is about to lose her head to a serpent), and women who chattered in church against the order of

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Ephraem Syrus. Batard, 175.

[80] *Ibid.*, 176.

[81] Above p.55. Perhaps also in this eleventh century panel, the use of the *tenebrae* to represent hell precludes the presence of Hades.

[82] The binding of sinners is a western trait. Dalton, 670.

St. Paul (I Corinthians 14:34-35).[83] This, too, may reflect the influence of St. Peter's Apocalypse which first designed torments to suit specific sins. Or, and this applies also to the gnawing of hands and the immersion of sinners at Torcello, the indication of specific sins may have been derived from the Vision of St. Paul which paralleled St. Peter's Apocalypse in many aspects but which was more widely known in the vernacular languages of Europe by the twelfth century.[84]

In the truest examples of the standard Byzantine Last Judgment, Paris Grec 74 folio 51v, Sinai Icon no.2, and the Torcello mosaic (ill. 22-25), the important topographic elements of the Byzantine conception of hell are apparent: the river of fire leading to the flaming realm of Hades, the dragon or the serpent throne of Hades, the Antichrist on his lap, the weighing of souls, the separate compartments for a variety of hell's torments, the appearance of the rich man among the flames, the gnawing of hands and immersion of sinners to appropriate depths in fire, and the darkness, worms, and *disiecta membra* long associated with the underworld. The Byzantine Last Judgment was altered by European influences and local traditions (especially in south Italy), but its influence spread through Europe along the Crusade routes and altered the western conception of the Last Judgment.

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[83] Batard, 177.

[84] Above p.32.

SCULPTURE OF THE PILGRIMAGE ROUTES

The Late Antique art of sculpture did not survive the barbarian invasions of the sixth and seventh centuries. While small-scale decorative sculpture had seen a brief revival during the Carolingian era, it was the expansion of church building during the Great Reform which inspired the renaissance of large-scale architectural sculpture. It is particularly the monumental sculpture of southern France that typifies the Romanesque exchange of iconographic images and ideas.

The earliest attempts at architectural sculpture were confined to capitals carved by stonemasons. By the end of the eleventh century the art of sculpture had developed to the point of requiring specialists, and the furniture-makers and sculptors of decorative ornaments in ivory and wood turned their hands to monumental stone sculpture, benefitting from the earlier experiments of the stonemasons.[85]

During the twelfth century the main field of sculpture became the church portal and the dominant theme carved upon it was the Second Coming. The portals of Vézelay (Burgundy) and Moissac (Languedoc) are the earliest, dated around 1125.[86] In the succeeding portals at Beaulieu, Conques, and Autun the Last Judgment replaces the Second Coming. Beaulieu's Last Judgment (c. 1130-1135), derived from

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[85] For the evolution from capitals to portals see Zarnecki (1971), 58-59.

[86] M. F. Hearn, *Romanesque Sculpture. The Revival of Monumental Stone Sculpture in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Ithaca, 1981), 169. Hereafter: Hearn.

Moissac,[87] is based on the Second Coming of Christ as it is told in Matthew 24:30-31 and does not depict the horrors of hell.

The inspiration for a monumental treatment of the Last Judgment in stone may have been provided by the grand murals at Torcello and S. Angelo in Formis. Byzantine influence is certainly evident in the tympanum over the entrance to the cathedral of St. Lazare at Autun, which has been dated between 1125 and 1135.[88] Don Denny has discussed this in detail and has suggested that the model for the Autun sculpture was a Byzantine work similar to the Last Judgment scene in the manuscript Paris Grec 74 (ill. 22).[89] For example, the weighing of the souls makes its earliest large-scale appearance in a western Last Judgment scene (ill. 28) and the intriguing device of hanging the scales from a cloud appears in only one earlier known example, Sinai Icon no.1.[90]

Denny's explanation of the rearrangement of Byzantine elements

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[87] The artists of the Beaulieu Last Judgment were of the school of sculptors who carved the tympanum of Moissac and the capitals of La Daurade at Toulouse. E. Mâle, *Religious Art in France: the Twelfth Century* (Princeton, 1978), 180.

[88] D. Grivot and G. Zarnecki, *Gislebertus Sculptor of Autun* (New York, 1961), 11. Hereafter: Grivot and Zarnecki.

[89] Denny also proposes that the practice of decorating church portals with the Last Judgment was associated with the *judicium dei*, or trial by physical ordeal. Ecclesiastical courts were held in front of churches and cathedrals, conceivably beneath the Last Judgment image, up until the thirteenth century when the trial by ordeal was replaced by trial according to Roman law. D. Denny (1982), 542-545.

[90] *Ibid.*, 533. Above p.110, fn.68.

at Autun[91] accords with the evolution of the western Last Judgment between the eighth and tenth centuries.[92] The elect and the damned are roughly divided to the right and left sides of Christ. With the general resurrection appearing on the lintel, the judgment in the centre, and the fulfillment of the judgment in the heavenly realm in the top register, Denny points out that "the movement upward implies a potential chronological sequence as well as ascending degrees of spirituality."[93]

A procession of resurrected souls extends the full length of the lintel. On Christ's left are the doomed whose postures indicate their regret. Some cover their faces and weep while others fall on their knees to pray. A miser with his purse around his neck is attacked by a serpent and appears to scream; snakes bite the breasts of an adulterous woman. Another figure, the only one viewed frontally, is clasped at the neck by a giant pair of hands. The next to last figure on the right is thought by Grivot and Zarnecki to represent a Jew holding a Eucharistic Host and a knife.[94] The inscription along the top of the lintel over these figures on Christ's left reads, "*Terreat hic terror quos terreus alligat error nam fore sic verum notat hic horror*

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[91] Denny (1982), 538-39.

[92] Above p.71.

[93] Denny (1982), 540.

[94] The miser, the adulteress, and the Jew have been identified by, and illustrated in close-up detail in, Grivot and Zarnecki, 26-27 and Pl. R (p.54-55).

specierum."[95] The horror would have been all the more vivid when seen painted in its original polychrome.[96]

Compositionally, the procession of figures along the lintel was derived directly from Vézelay.[97] The inspiration for depicting on the lintel resurrected souls in procession toward judgment may have come from a Spanish Beatus manuscript, for example the Last Judgment scene in the Morgan Beatus (ill. 12). Emile Mâle has discussed the influence of the Spanish Apocalypse manuscripts on the sculptural decoration of portals in southern France and cites several examples of churches which he believed at one time were in possession of a Beatus manuscript which was used as a model.[98] There is, however, a long tradition in western art of depicting the resurrected in procession beneath the Last Judgment. In Ottonian art, for example, on the east wall of the chuch of Sankt Michael at Burgfelden (c. 1075-1100) and on the east wall of Michaelskapelle in the church of Sankt Georg at Oberzell auf der Reichenau (c. 1100), the dead are depicted in various postures rising from their coffins.[99] This tradition dates back to the earliest

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[95] "Here let fear strike those whom earthly error binds, for their fate is shown by the horror of these figures." *Ibid.*, 26.

[96] Sculpture at Cluny had also been painted. *Ibid.*, 27, fn.2. All the great portals were painted in polychrome. Hearn, 190.

[97] The iconographic similarity between Autun and Vézelay stems from a common source which is assumed to be Cluny (now destroyed). Cluny is thought to have been the most important source of the iconography of the capitals at Autun. Grivot and Zarnecki, 159.

[98] E. Mâle, *op. cit.*, 5-18.

[99] Above p.115, fn.77.

judgment scenes in the west, those of the Vatican Cosmas Indicopleustes and the Barberini terra cotta plaque.[100]

In the scene of judgment elongated skeletal demons, one with a three-headed serpent wound round its legs, try to tilt the scales in their favour. Virtue prevails and the scales tilt on the side of Michael and a soul is seen above, ascending to heaven. To the lower right of the judgment is a continuation of the procession of the damned. The demon beside the scales tugs on the hair of the unfortunate soul at the head of the line. Approaching the scales, these figures know their fates. A woman, stooped over with her hand to her head, and with a serpent sucking at her breast, is prodded by a demon who reaches out from inside the mouth of a serpentine beast. The demon's other hand pulls on the chain which strangles the next three figures who are bound together at the neck. In the far right corner is a trumpetting angel.

Above this procession, tucked into the far right curved edge of the tympanum is a curious and horrific scene. A demon with long, stringy legs and a serpent's head turns his back on the rest of the tympanum scenes in order to face the frame. He seems to support his weight against the back of another demon holding a frog who is involved with the judgment scene. One leg, his left, has been placed in an opening which appears to be a well-mouth or cauldron. Lines indicating

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[100] Above p.67-69.

flames are etched into the surface of the cauldron.[101] A tower, slightly askew as it follows the curved edge, protrudes above the cauldron and recalls Virgil's tower gateway to Tartarus. The demon who guards the entrance has come a long way from Tisiphone; with hissing mouth agape, he stacks two souls, apparently a male upon a female, on his left thigh, and with a firm grip is about to slide them down along his thigh toward his knee, whereupon they will fall off head first into the cauldron. The lower of these two victims, being the one slightly ahead, covers her face with her hands. The feet of the previous wretches are visible just above the lip of the cauldron.

Immediately beneath the flame-licked cauldron is the roof and façade of a basilica as seen in aerial perspective. Adding to the confusion of this configuration is the figure of the taunting demon emerging from the jaws of the infernal dragon, which in turn emerges from the side of the building as if leaning out of a window. While Grivot and Zarnecki refer to the building as the gates of hell, architecturally a basilica is not a gateway and should be understood as the negative counterpart of the Church and as the pictorial balance of the architecture of the heavenly domain in the opposite corner of the tympanum. In close-up detail, however, lines on the roof of the basilica simulate hinges and suggest perhaps that the roof itself represents the gateway.[102] By employing this curious perspective, the

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[101] The frog and the flames are clearly discernible in a close-up detail illustrated in Grivot and Zarnecki, Pl. L (p.46-47).

[102] *Ibid.*, Pl. K (p.45).

artist has conveyed all of these messages in one symbol.

Similarly, the flame-licked pot may represent both the well-mouth and the cauldron, incorporating the tradition of the well-mouth entrance to hell inspired by the Trier Apocalypse[103] and adopted in Spanish manuscripts,[104] with the infernal tradition of tormenting sinners in a boiling cauldron. The cauldron or fiery oven first appeared in the Stuttgart Psalter and became popular in English art.[105] Gislebertus, the sculptor of St. Lazare, has skilfully combined the two, entrance and punishment, into one image. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, Autun's hell scene is a puzzling mixture of underworld entrances.

In the hell imagery at Autun, only the weighing of the souls was derived from the Byzantine tradition. The other motifs are connected with previous western hell scenes. For example, the elegant figures of German art, such as those in the Bamberg Apocalypse,[106] may have inspired the elongated, expressive figures of the judgment scene. The

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[103] Above p.78, fn.87.

[104] For example, the Morgan Beatus and the Gerona Beatus, above p.83-85, and ills. 12 and 13.

[105] The cauldron appears in the Stuttgart Psalter fol. 10v (ill. 5 and above p.62, fn.39). In England it appears in the Chaldon Church mural (above p.100-101), the Winchester Psalter fol. 38 (above p.102, fn.43), and in the Last Judgment scene on the Masters Plaque (champlevé enamel on copper gilt, c. 1150-1160), London, Victoria and Albert Museum M.209-1925, illustrated in Swarzenski, Pl. 146, fig. 325.

[106] Above p.80-81. Zarnecki believes the sculpture of Burgundy, including Cluny and Autun, to be indebted to German art, particularly the sculpture of Werden, Regensburg, and Merseburg from the second half of the eleventh century. Zarnecki (1971), 71, 81.

insatiable maw of the dragon was either derived from the tradition of the Stuttgart Psalter or from the tradition of English hell mouths, and its association with the architecture of hell recalls the Victoria and Albert ivory plaque (ill. 9) and the *Caedmonian Genesis* (ill. 17). The influence of the Winchester Psalter jaws can be seen in one of the capitals of St. Lazare.[107]

Other sources of the iconography of Autun's hell perhaps lie in the theology of the abbots of the great monastery at Cluny.[108] According to M. F. Hearn some themes and motifs in the portal decoration of churches connected with Cluny, St. Lazare among them, refer to causes sponsored by Cluny, the pilgrimages to Santiago de Compostela and Jerusalem for example.[109] As Hearn points out, it was ecclesiastical patronage which decided the programs of church decoration.[110] Therefore the messages conveyed by these programs often reflect the particular interests of the abbot or monastic order which sponsored them. Another example which expresses one of the issues of Cluniac reform can be seen on a capital at Autun which depicts the Fall

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[107] Illustrated in Grivot and Zarnecki, Pl. 57.

[108] Portal iconography has its roots in Cluniac theology according to Yves Christe, *Les grands portails romans: Etudes sur l'iconologie des Théophanes romanes* (Geneva, 1969), 54-55.

[109] On the lintel of the Autun portal, to the left of Christ's feet, are two figures identified as pilgrims by the badges on their clothing, one a cross referring to Jerusalem, the other a scallop shell referring to Compostela. Cluniac theology dictated that the pilgrim be given special advantage when approaching judgment. Hearn, 180.

[110] *Ibid.*, 186.

of Simon Magus in terrifying imagery.[111] The identification of this inverted figure as Simon Magus suggests that several other figures who appear upside down in Romanesque hell imagery represent those who practised simony.

The earliest example of inverted souls in hell is in the Gerona Beatus folio 17 (ill. 13) dated c. 975. For this early date in reconquest Spain it is difficult to determine whether the inverted corpses were intended to represent those who had tried to buy ecclesiastical power, but certainly the Church's struggles over the Adoptionist heresy[112] would imply that other corruptions existed as well.

In English art there are also examples of the inverted corpse. Within the jaws of the hell on folio 39r of the mid-twelfth century Winchester Psalter (ill. 20) a king wearing a gold crown appears upside down, quite possibly guilty of simony. In the scene of the Fall of Angels in the *Caedmonian Genesis* (ill. 17), the falling angel on the far right above the snout of the beast is nearly identical to the figure of Simon on the Autun capital. Except for Simon's clothing and the disposition of his wings and lower legs, he would appear to have been modelled after just such a figure. Could the eleventh century illustration of a fallen angel in the Genesis story have been intended

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[111] Grivot and Zarnecki, Pl. 38a, 38b. Simony, the buying of ecclesiastical offices, was named after Simon Magus who allegedly tried to buy power from St. Peter. Peters, 155.

[112] Above p.82.

to represent the fall of Simon Magus *and* carry the message of contemporary monastic reform? It seems unlikely in pre-conquest English art, but it is not inconceivable that the figure of the angel was adopted to the anti-simonist message in the twelfth century.

On the topic of iconographic sources at Autun, Grivot and Zarnecki have also suggested that the Last Judgment scene may have been indebted to contemporary drama. Noting that playwrights of the Church presented terrifying eschatological dramas upon the stage, they speculate that a stage production of the Last Judgment may have provided Gislebertus with still another visual model for the tympanum of St. Lazare.[113]

The tympanum of the church of Ste. Foy at Conques, descended from Moissac, Beaulieu, and Souillac, was carved around 1150.[114] It is divided into three registers: in the top register are four angels in a radial pattern; in the central register Christ, at the centre, is flanked by two decorative panels which separate him from the crowded scenes of the elect and the damned; in the bottom register heaven and hell are disposed on the right and left sides of Christ as in Byzantine Last Judgment scenes.[115]

The hell imagery at Conques, however, is not based on a Byzantine

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[113] Grivot and Zarnecki, 160.

[114] Recent opinions on the dating of Conques are listed in D. Denny, "The Date of the Conques Last Judgment and its Compositional Analogues," *Art Bulletin* 66 (1984), 7, fn.1. Hereafter: Denny (1984).

[115] Illustrated in *Ibid.*, ill. 1.

model. Whereas in the Byzantine Last Judgment the damned are grouped in orderly compartments, the scenes of hell at Conques are chaotic masses of tormented souls. In the far right of the central register of the tympanum (ill. 29) are two vertical sections divided into sub-registers describing the torments of the damned. A congested mass of demons wielding clubs and flails trample, beat, bite, and inflict horrible pains on the souls of sinners. In the corner, along the curve of the tympanum frame, rests a bottle, perhaps of poison, beside which a demon pulls at the beard of his victim, perhaps coaxing him to drink. In the scene below, all the figures are skeletons; one is tied by his feet and hauled up by a pulley.

Don Denny has compared these sculptures with the illustrations of hell in folia 38 and 39 of the Winchester Psalter and has concluded that the central register of the tympanum of Ste. Foy was derived from an English model, probably a manuscript closely related to the Winchester Psalter.[116]

In the bottom register, heaven and hell are separated from the scenes above by an architectural motif resembling two shallow-pitched roofs. Beneath the roof on the left is the orderly arcade within which reside pairs of blessed saints. Abraham sits beneath the central arch in the spandrels of which heavenly Jerusalem is depicted.

In the central section of the lowest register are the scenes of

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[116] He notes that the central register is divided into five upright rectangular units like a series of self-contained full-page illustrations in a manuscript. Denny (1984), 9-14. For the Winchester Psalter illustrations see above p.102-103 and ill. 20.

the resurrection, the judgment, and the gates of heaven and hell (ill. 30). Above the rooflines of heaven and hell the dead rise from their coffins and are greeted by angels and demons respectively. Between the two groups, directly beneath Christ's feet, the souls are weighed in the scales by an angel and a large, crouching demon. Just below the judgment are the gates of heaven, left, and hell, right. St. Peter greets the blessed who crowd at his door; one figure exchanges glances with the demon on the opposite side. This demon, who leads the condemned into the mouth of hell, is of the type descended from the Stuttgart Psalter (ills. 4 and 5) with large, pointed ears, spiky hair like a cock's comb, and clawed bird's feet. This type also appears in the south spandrel of the western portal of San Salvador at Leire, Navarra, in Spain,[117] and has its counterparts in French Romanesque painting.[118] The jaws of hell are those of a beast, in the tradition of the dragon which evolved from the whale of Jonah via the Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 5) and Byzantine Last Judgment scenes (ill. 22). These differ from the jaws depicted in English art which became increasingly serpentine and opened upward, head tilted back.

Denny notes that the Conques hell-mouth is unlike that in the Winchester Psalter and is related to Burgundian examples of the maw

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[117] Illustrated in A. K. Porter, *Romanesque Sculpture of the Pilgimage Roads* (New York, 1966), II, Pl. 714. Hereafter: Porter.

[118] Such a demon leads the damned into hell in a painting on the south wall of the nave of St. Jacques-des-Guérets, c. 1150, illustrated in P.-H. Michel, *Romanesque Wall Paintings in France* (London, 1950), ill. 62.

such as that at Autun and St. Paul-de-Varax.[119] Another mouth of hell appears on the tympanum of the north portal of l'Eglise de Perse at Espalion.[120] At St. Paul-de-Varax the hell scenes comprise part of the frieze along the western façade, south of the central portal.[121] Although their heads have been destroyed, and one appears to have wings, the demons who lead the damned toward the mouth of the beast are identical to the demon at the Conques hell-mouth.

Inside the compartment of hell are numerous figures being tortured over fire. Immediately inside the gate a figure is pulled head down, stomped on, and prodded with a fork. In the centre the figure of Hades sits, entwined in serpents, resting his feet upon a man reclining in the flames. To the right, a miser is hanged with his wallet around his neck. The same subject appears on capitals at Santiago de Compostella, Autun, and Saulieu.[122] Beneath the demon who pulls the hangman's rope, another demon puts something in the mouth of a soul who is immersed to his waist in fire. The soul may be guilty of usury for which his sustenance would be gold coins. Again to the right, a figure, perhaps an adulteress, sits on the shoulders and pulls the hair of a soul immersed to his neck in flames.

In the wedge between the roofline and the middle register,

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[119] Denny (1984), 9, fn.13.

[120] Porter, II, Pl. 402.

[121] St. Paul-de-Varax is dated slightly later than Vézelay (1120-1132) by A. K. Porter, I, 122, ills. 89-90.

[122] Denny (1984), 9, fn.12.

extending between the shoulders of two demons, is a spit onto which a figure is bound face down to roast over the flames. This motif has two possible sources. The figure of Hades roasting on a spit appears in several tenth century Spanish Beatus manuscripts,[123] among them the Beatus of Valcavado (Valladolid, Biblioteca de la Universidad, ms. 433, folio 174v) where the roasting figure faces downward as at Conques,[124] and a later example occurs in the Silos Beatus (London, British Library, ms. Add. 11695, folio 58).[125]

The motif also occurs in the eleventh century English manuscript, the *Caedmonian Genesis*, on folia 16 and 20, where the figure, presumably Satan, is skewered face down.[126] A manuscript of either Spanish or English origin must have been the model for this image on the tympanum of Ste. Foy.

Evidence for the influence of a Spanish manuscript may be found in the figure of Hades in the centre of the hell scene at Conques. He is of a type whose earliest appearance is in the Stuttgart Psalter. Within the inferno on folio 10v (ill. 5), the whale-type dragon sits in front of a group of sinners with spiky hair, large staring eyes, and bared, white teeth. On folio 29v (ill. 4), Hades is depicted as the

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[123] For example, the Morgan Beatus fol. 152v-153r (above p.84-85, fn.105) and the Gerona Beatus fol. 171v-172r (illustrated in Klein, *op. cit.*, III, 81, fig. 38) where the figure roasts facing upward.

[124] Illustrated in Yarza, *op. cit.* (1978-1980), III, 151, fig. 5.

[125] Late eleventh or early twelfth century, illustrated in *Ibid.*, III, 149, fig. 3.

[126] Above p.97, fn.26.

same type of figure, only dark in colour, and without a dragon.

This type of devil was transmitted to Spain in the tenth century. In the Gerona Beatus folio 17 (ill. 13) Hades is seated frontally, all black, with spiky hair, large, glaring eyes, and a wide mouth exposing large teeth. The dragon of the Stuttgart Psalter has been replaced by or transformed into the serpents which wind round the legs of Hades. This is exactly the image of Hades on the Conques tympanum.

It is also the image which appears in the Last Judgment scene in the ninth century Byzantine manuscript, the *Sacra Parallela*.[127] The image of Hades seated on an invisible throne with serpents wound round his knees is connected with other Byzantine images, such as Hades riding the back of the serpent-dragon (ill. 22) and Hades seated on the serpent throne (ill. 24). The image of Satan in the Last Judgment scene in the floor mosaic at Otranto in south Italy[128] suggests that the Hades of the *Sacra Parallela* may have been transmitted to Conques via Byzantine Italy. The figure of Satan at Otranto has spiky hair, large eyes, but instead of a toothy grin, flames shoot from his mouth.[129] He is seated frontally, not on a dragon, but on a serpent with several heads which also coils round his ankle.

While it is impossible to identify all the sources of Romanesque hell imagery, it is clear that ideas and images were being exchanged

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[127] Above p.65-70, fn.58.

[128] Illustrated in W. Haug, *Das Mosaik von Otranto* (1977), ill. 20, 23 (detail).

[129] This is the interpretation of Bouillet, 29.

throughout Europe during this period of monastic reform. The mouth of hell dominates English hell imagery and influenced continental art. It, in turn, was influenced by the Byzantine Last Judgment and Spanish manuscripts. Sculpture, revived on a grand scale, was influenced by all of these. It is in this spirit of an international expansion of knowledge and cultural exchange that the thirteenth century began.

V

THE TOPOGRAPHY OF HELL IN THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

With relative political stability in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, particularly due to the centralized power of the monarchies in England and France and to the pervasive authority of the papacy, there was a burst of population, wealth, and general confidence in Europe. This was a period of tremendous urban growth which witnessed the rise of the middle class and the establishment of politically powerful craft guilds to protect artisans, merchants, and professionals.

The first universities were founded in the great cities of Europe. Oxford, Paris, and Bologna thronged with students and Christianity encountered philosophy in the "scholastic" method of proving religious dogma through systematic disputation.[1]

As a result of the Great Reform movement and the development of canon law in the twelfth century, administrative and legal matters had become the focus of papal activity by the thirteenth century. In reponse to criticism of its wealth and legislative emphasis, the Church sanctioned the new mendicant orders of St. Francis of Assisi and St.

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[1] For a brief account of the rise of universities and scholasticism see Peters, 181-184; and *Gardner's*, 373.

Dominic, who brought religion out of the monasteries and into the streets.[2]

There was also a new social order in the cities and aristocratic courts. The establishment of a code of chivalry which defined and idealized the gentlemanly conduct of the pious knight, and the increasing veneration of the noblewoman as the object of "courtly love," are reflected in contemporary minstrel songs and romance literature, such as the legends of King Arthur, The Romance of the Rose of 1235, and Dante's *La Vita Nuova* of 1292.[3]

As blind faith gave way to reason, the dramatic and animated imagery of the Romanesque yielded to the static and elegant naturalism of the Gothic. In the context of hell imagery, the iconographic elements of the Romanesque period continued to appear relatively unchanged. The Gothic style, however, reflects a change in attitude. While Romanesque art had threatened hell, the Gothic promised the hope of salvation.[4]

This new attitude can be seen in the Trinity Apocalypse (Cambridge, Trinity College, ms. R.16.2), an English manuscript thought to have been made for Queen Eleanor, wife of Henry III Plantagenet,

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[2] For the rise of papal authority and the beginnings of the mendicant orders in the thirteenth century see Peters, 189-192.

[3] *Ibid.*, 229-236.

[4] Forrest Smith discusses the theme of *renovatio* and the dualistic view of time and history in thirteenth century apocalypticism: the corruption of the present vs. the promise of an age to come which will restore the golden age of the past. Smith, 23.

between 1220 and 1250.[5] According to Van der Meer, this is the earliest surviving significant apocalypse cycle to appear in England since Benedict Biscop brought such a cycle from Rome to Northumbria[6] and its success initiated a vogue for illustrated apocalypses in the Anglo-Norman court which lasted through the fourteenth century. Its text is in the language of the court, Anglo-French, with a gloss by Berengaudus.[7] Its miniatures, by the hands of three or four different court artists, were painted on gold and coloured grounds with the backgrounds and draperies patterned in the arabesques, dots, and fleur-de-lys of French art.[8] Its scenes are composed like stage sets and the drama of the text of Revelation is presented as theatre.

The Last Judgment scene (ill. 31) is clearly indebted to the Winchester Psalter (ill. 20). In the bottom register the damned and the demons frolick in the space above the gaping maw. The figure in the upper left corner, riding the shoulders of a demon, holds up one corner of the sheet of flames which provides the backdrop to the choreography. While the grotesque naked souls and the spotted beastly

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[5] Van der Meer contradicts himself on the date of the manuscript, offering 1242-1250 on page 153, and 1220-1230 on page 169. For a date c. 1230 see Rickert, 120; for a date no later than 1250 see James, 51.

[6] Van der Meer, 168-169; and above p.76, fn.81. An Anglo-Norman Apocalypse dated c. 1100, although containing only one illustration, suggests the possibility of a long tradition of apocalypse cycles predating that of Queen Eleanor. See M. A. Michael, "An Illustrated Apocalypse Manuscript at Longleat House," *Burlington Magazine* 126 (1984), 340-343.

[7] James, 51.

[8] Rickert, 120.

demons strongly resemble the figures in the Winchester Psalter image, the jostling contortions of the Romanesque hell have been transformed into a theatrical affectation of horror.

In the audience above is Christ enthroned, showing the stigmata. On his left are two registers depicting the sea and the jaws of Hades giving up their naked dead. On his right in the upper register are three angels with the instruments of the Passion. In the lower register is a procession led by St. Peter followed by St. Dominic, St. Francis, queen Eleanor, a Benedictine monk, and another young lady.[9]

Contemporary figures, including the patron herself, have taken the traditional place of the apostles and intercessors. Similar groups, the queen always among them, replace Michael and the angels in the scene of the Defeat of the Beast on folio 14v, and join the Great Multitude before the Throne on folio 7v.[10] Queen Eleanor has placed herself among God's elect, cheerfully fighting the beast and worshipping the lamb. There is no horror; pink-cheeked faces and winsome decoration soften the brutality of hell and promise salvation for the righteous.

Even before Gislebertus at Autun, artists began signing their works. One of the earliest works signed by an English illuminator is a Last Judgment leaf from a manuscript produced in Oxford between 1230

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[9] The saints are identified by their costumes, Van der Meer, 160.

[10] Illustrated in *Ibid.*, ill. 105 and 104 respectively.

and 1240 (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum, ms. 330, fol. 3).[11] The components of the Last Judgment are set in separate roundels.[12] Christ appears in the centre in a Gothic pointed aureole, and the left and right roundels are cut off into semi-circles by the border of the page. It is in the semi-roundel on the lower right edge that the artist has painted himself among the damned on his way to hell. He carries a banner which states "W. de Brailes *me fecit.*"[13] In the semi-roundel which rises from the bottom edge of the page is the mouth of hell, its wide grin, as in the Trinity Apocalypse, providing the stage for the procession of condemned souls. There is no chaos in this scene; kings and clergy queue up to be tossed, flailed, and torn apart by three huge, hairy, grotesque monsters. While the decorative qualities are similar to the Trinity Apocalypse, there is still a strong element of the horror of hell, unless of course it was considered amusing for the artist to depict himself on the road to everlasting doom.

A Spanish Beatus manuscript of the early thirteenth century (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. nouv. acq. lat. 2290) borrows the wide, upward-gaping hell mouth from English art and the decorative patterns of French costumes (ill. 32). Rosy cheeks are represented by

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[11] Illustrated in N. J. Morgan, *Early Gothic Manuscripts (I) 1190–1250* (Oxford, 1982), fig. 238.

[12] Rickert has suggested that the drawings in roundels in the Guthlac Roll (London, British Museum, Harley ms. Y6) dated c. 1200, were intended as designs for stained glass. Rickert, 111. If so, it is likely that the roundel format in the Fitzwilliam ms. 330 is also related to stained glass design.

[13] Rickert reads the inscription as "... *qui me fecit.*" *Ibid.*, 114.

distinctly round red spots which were a standard convention in Romanesque art. They appear, for example, in the mural at S. Angelo in Formis in south Italy (ill.26) and in the Last Judgment fresco from Sta. María de Tahull, now in the Barcelona Museum, dated c. 1123.[14]

The damned of the Paris Beatus are tied together by their necks in a long, chain-like procession which is led by a hybrid monster. Within the jaws, in the lower half of the illustration, a group of naked souls huddles in the flames on the left, while on the right, bodies are attached to the spokes of a giant wheel which hacks them up as it turns. This is the first appearance in art of the wheel as an instrument of torture. It occurred previously in *The Aeneid* and in the visions of Peter and Paul,[15] although not as a device for dismembering. In spite of this gruesome torture and the stoop of the guilt-laden kings at the front of the procession, there is a sense of pageantry in the decorative patterns of the costumes and beastly scales which is, no doubt, the result of contact with the Anglo-Norman school.

A mural in the Old Cathedral in Salamanca, Spain, dated c. 1262,[16] depicts a Last Judgment scene fashioned after a Byzantine model. Fire pours out from under the *etimasia* and fills the area beneath and to the right of the empty throne. In the conflagration beneath the throne are

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[14] Illustrated in C. L. Kuhn, *Romanesque Mural Painting of Catalonia* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1930), Pl. X, fig. 2, and Pl. XII, fig. 3.

[15] *Aeneid*, VI:583-618, p.165; and Gardiner, 140, respectively.

[16] Illustrated in Le Goff, ill. 2.

seven irregularly shaped openings in which the damned suffer their torments, recalling the arched compartments of hell in the Paris Grec 74 manuscript (ill. 22). In the lower right corner of the painting a procession of souls is pushed and prodded through the flames toward another, much larger, compartment over which an immense dragon presides. The beast claws at his victims as they file past. The Gothic sensibility was not as pervasive in the Mediterranean regions as it was in northern Europe. In this mid-thirteenth century Spanish fresco, the emphasis is still on the threat of damnation.

Another procession, in sculpted stone, appears on the façade of Reims Cathedral, dated 1225 to 1290.[17] Even in the decoration of a High Gothic cathedral a Romanesque theme prevails, although the style is more stately than, for example, that of the twelfth century Autun tympanum procession (ill. 28). The souls of the Reims procession, from royal and ecclesiastical ranks as in the Paris Beatus leaf, are chained together as a group and led by a grotesque hybrid demon toward a huge boiling cauldron set over leaping flames. The cauldron previously appeared in the mural at Chaldon Church, Surrey (ill. 19) and in the Winchester Psalter folio 38,[18] and was suggested as early as the Stuttgart Psalter.[19]

Also recalling the Stuttgart Psalter are the blood-vomitting

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[17] Illustrated in Hughes, *op. cit.*, 187 (top).

[18] Above p.102, fn. 44.

[19] Above, p.62, fn.39.

demons in the fresco in the church of St. Julien at Brioude, France, dated to the early thirteenth century (ill. 33). One dark, the other lighter coloured, both with bird's feet and beaks, and spiky hair like cocks' combs, they are nearly identical to the two spewing demons who lead the nobleman to the furnaces in folio 10v of the Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 5). At Brioude they fight over a small naked victim whose arms have already been severed.

These examples clearly show that the iconography of hell in the thirteenth century still depended on regional traditions and on the influences which travelled along familiar pilgrimage and trade routes. Innovations occurred in the Anglo-Norman Apocalypses to which were added the dimension of theatre, and in the Spanish Beatus Apocalypse, now in Paris, where the limb-cleaving wheel first appeared. As M. R. James laments, with the exception of Dürer's revolutionary woodcuts of the Apocalypse, issued in 1498, the tradition of magnificently illustrated apocalypse cycles declined in importance and popularity after the brilliance of the Anglo-Norman Apocalypse cycles of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[20] It was in the Last Judgment that further innovations in the topography of hell continued to be made into the Renaissance period, and those innovations were due to the influences of Dante's *Inferno* and the revival of a classical and naturalistic style in Italian art.

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[20] James, 30.

ITALY: THE LAST JUDGMENT

In the twelfth century the cities of Tuscany had established independent republics free from domination by either bishops or feudal landlords. The struggle for power continued, however, in the thirteenth century between the Ghibellines, who allied themselves with the Hohenstaufen aristocracy, and the Guelfs, who were allied with the papacy.[21]

Towards the end of the thirteenth century no comprehensive narrative schemes existed in Tuscany. Among the factors which Eve Borsook lists as having contributed to the impetus for the production of the great Tuscan mural schemes are the widespread building activity sponsored by the Church and the Commune, and the new humane approach of clerical teaching which required visual aids.[22] And wealthy laymen, who could now be rewarded for their financial support of the church with burial inside the church walls, patronized the building and decoration of chapels.[23] In addition, the repair and imitation of early Christian mural schemes in Rome inspired a similar revival in Tuscany.[24]

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[21] R. W. Corrie, "The Political Meaning of Coppo di Marcovaldo's Madonna and Child in Siena," *Gesta* XXIX, 1 (1990), 62.

[22] Between 1280 and 1320 new city halls and cathedrals were built in Florence and Siena and the Mendicant Orders commissioned the building of large churches in every Tuscan city. E. Borsook, ***The Mural Painters of Tuscany from Cimabue to Andrea del Sarto***, 2nd ed. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980, xviii. Hereafter: Borsook.

[23] *Ibid.*

[24] *Ibid.*

Florence Baptistery

The last truly medieval image of hell is in the Last Judgment scene in the mosaic cycle which covers the octagonal cupola of the Florence Baptistery.[25] Borsook does not offer a date for the mosaic but states that its production followed the fashion established in Rome for reviving antiquity. The mention of Cavallini's work in this regard implies a date for the Florence Baptistery mosaic contemporary with, or later than, Cavallini.[26] Rothschild and Wilkins loosely date the mosaic between 1125 and 1300.[27] Dunford suggests a date around 1300 for a section of the vault which includes the scenes of the Visitation and St. John as a Boy in the Desert.[28] Frederick Hartt assigns the Last Judgment to the second half of the thirteenth century based on its attribution to Coppo di Marcovaldo who was active between the late 1250s and the early 1270s,[29] thereby suggesting a date in advance of the

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[25] A view of the entire vault is illustrated in *Ibid.*, fig. 3. The Last Judgment covers three faces of the octagon on the west side of the vault.

[26] Cavallini repainted the ruined walls of several Roman churches in the antique style during the last decades of the thirteenth century. *Ibid.*, xxii.

[27] E. F. Rothschild and E. H. Wilkins, "Hell in the Florentine Baptistery Mosaic and in Giotto's Paduan Fresco," *Art Studies* 6 (1928), 33, fn.2. Hereafter: Rothschild and Wilkins.

[28] P. A. Dunford, "A Suggestion for the Dating of the Baptistery Mosaics at Florence," *Burlington Magazine* 116 (Feb. 1974), 96-98.

[29] Hartt credits C. L. Ragghianti, *Pittura del dugento a Firenze* (Florence, 1957) with a persuasive attribution to Coppo. F. Hartt, *History of Italian Renaissance Art*, 2nd ed. (New York, 1979), 46. Hereafter: Hartt. Rebecca Corrie's current work on Coppo di Marcovaldo also agrees with Ragghianti's attribution. Corrie, *op. cit.*, 69, fn.6.

formulation and dissemination of the new Roman trend.

It has been generally acknowledged that the Last Judgment in the Florence Baptistery mosaic is of the Byzantine type (ill. 34). But it does not strictly follow a Byzantine model; in many features it resembles the westernized Last Judgment fresco at S. Angelo in Formis (ill. 26).[30] Christ appears in the central face of the Last Judgment mosaic enthroned within a mandorla. The figures of Christ are almost identical in both the mosaic and the fresco, showing the stigmata and dominating the entire program. Neither the *etimasia* nor the stream of fire appear in either the mosaic or the fresco. In both, on either side of Christ, the scenes are divided horizontally into registers; at S. Angelo in Formis there are four registers, at Florence only three. In the upper register of both, right and left, is a host of angels in nearly identical dance-like postures. The second register in both is reserved for the row of seated apostles; in Florence the Virgin and St. John the Baptist join the apostles, flanking Christ and creating a *Deesis*.[31] The third register at S. Angelo in Formis depicts high ranking groups of the righteous on the left and the wicked on the right.

In the bottom register, typically, both the fresco and the mosaic display heaven on the left and hell on the right. The Baptistery scene

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[30] Above p.115. Illustrated in Jónsdóttir, ill. 8.

[31] The *Deesis* group is common in Byzantine art and appears in the Paris Grec 74 manuscript, both Sinai icons, the Torcello mosaic, and the Victoria and Albert ivory.

of heaven, however, more closely resembles the true Byzantine examples. A crowd of blessed souls awaits entry at the gate to paradise. An angel, rather than the usual figure of St. Peter, unlocks the gate; inside are three Old Testament prophets enthroned with the souls of the elect in their laps. This is similar, although not identical, to the depiction of heaven in the Paris Grec 74 manuscript, folio 51v (ill. 22); the omission of the Virgin from the ranks of heaven in the Baptistery mosaic is the greatest divergence.

Beneath Christ, along the lower edge of the central face of the Florence Baptistery Last Judgment scene, the resurrected souls rise from their tombs, not in the tradition of Byzantine Last Judgments, but following, as does the large dominating figure of Christ, the tradition of western iconography beginning with Burgfelden and Reichenau.[32]

The scene of hell in the bottom register of the right face combines many elements from many sources. It is not the orderly compartmented hell of Byzantine art, but a scene of anguish and chaos reminiscent of the Winchester Psalter Mouth of Hell (ill. 20) and the tympanum sculpture of Conques (ill. 29). Here again it resembles the fresco at S. Angelo in Formis in the turmoil which contrasts the ordered formality of the rest of the Last Judgment scene, and in the figures of demons lifting and tossing sinners into pits.

The topography of hell in the Baptistery mosaic consists of four mountains, the first of which is made up of a crowd of sinners (ill.

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[32] Above p.121.

35); the others are craggy, volcanic peaks (ill. 36) with large craters at their tops providing entrance caverns into the depths of Tartarus, into which demons hurl the damned. Everywhere around the mountains are bursts of flame. The terrain resembles the volcanic areas of Lake Avernus and may be a direct reference to Virgil's description of the underworld.[33]

In the lower left corner of hell (ill. 35), is an inverted figure in a posture identical, but for the absence of wings, to that of Simon Magus carved on a capital at Autun.[34] In the upper right section of hell, another inverted figure, of a different iconographical type, arms and legs extended straight, has been identified by Wilkins as a simonist.[35] Possibly two icongraphical types were in existence and were both used, for variety, to represent the same crime.

The crowd of condemned forming a peak at the left side of hell weep and hide their eyes and gnaw on their hands. The gnawing of hands appears in the Torcello mosaic (ill. 25) and originated in St. Peter's Apocalypse. Also from St. Peter via Torcello are the sinners immersed in fire to their necks, visible to the lower right and left of Satan (ill. 36).

On the right edge of the mountain of souls, two hooded figures

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[33] Above p.11.

[34] Above p.126, fn.111.

[35] E. H. Wilkins, "Dante and the Mosaics of his *Bel San Giovanni*," *Speculum* 2 (1927), 7. Hereafter: Wilkins. Illustrated in De Witt, Pl. XXXIX.

particulary stand out: one white, the other black. While the figure dressed in white has not been mentioned, the figure in black has been identified by Rothschild and Wilkins as "a black-robed monk with pointed hood" and has been linked with a similar figure who is dragged by a demon through Giotto's hell in the Last Judgment scene at Padua (ill. 37).[36]

The prominent figure on his knees in front of the horde of sinners may represent, judging by his beard, headdress, and baggy pantalons, a Persian or Saracen. The kingdom of Jerusalem had fallen to the Moslems in 1187 and subsequent attempts to recover it had failed.[37] This figure's prominence in hell was undoubtedly intended as a reminder to the faithful to pray for the recovery of the Holy Land.

In the centre of hell in a wide valley between the peaks sits Satan on his serpent throne (ill. 36). Two toads devour people nearby. A frog or toad was earlier seen in the tympanum sculpture of Autun (ill. 28), held in the hand of the very tall demon who hovers over the scales. Satan grasps souls in both hands; the legs of another soul dangle from his mouth. Struggling beneath him are two other sinners whom he crushes with his feet, perhaps in imitation of Conques' Satan who rests his feet on a reclining figure (ill. 29). From Satan's ears sprout serpents who bite two more unfortunates in half. The figure of Satan is derived from the Byzantine tradition of the personification

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[36] Rothschild and Wilkins, 34.

[37] Peters, 253.

of Hades, and the immediate model was likely the white-haired, lean, muscular, blue-skinned figure in the Torcello mosaic. The innovation of Coppo di Marcovaldo, the presumed artist, was to add the horns and serpent-sprouting ears, perhaps inspired by some gruesome beast with multiple heads as in the Winchester Psalter (ill.20) or as in any number of images of the apocalyptic dragon. According to Hartt, the zigzag of the serpent forms and the stylized forms of the toads are characteristic of Coppo di Marcovaldo's style.[38]

The serpents which form Satan's throne each have the head of a sinner in their mouths. Images of the carnivourous serpent date back to the tenth century Gerona Beatus (ill. 13). Two more serpents bite at the sinners' necks while four-legged upright reptiles bite at their backs, and lizards nip at their genitals. Genital nipping occurred earlier in stone at Lincoln Cathedral.[39]

On the far right side of the composition, at the bottom, a figure is roasted on a spit, face down, while a demon pours liquid over him and bastes him with a brush. Another demon turns the spit with one hand, and with the other it rakes the coals underneath with a two-pronged fork.[40] The roasting of sinners on a spit has a visual tradition dating back to the tenth century.[41] The inspiration for such

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[38] Hartt, 47.

[39] Above p.106.

[40] Illustrated in De Witt, Pl. XXXIX.

[41] Above p.131.

a figure in the Baptistery mosaic may have come, along with the contorted bodies and general chaos, from Conques.

Also from monumental French sculpture is the hanging figure in the lower right corner.[42] The only inscription in the mosaic names him as Judas. The Suicide of Judas is portrayed on capitals at Autun and Saulieu.[43] At Autun, Judas is naked and two demons pull on either end of a rope and pulley to hang him; at Saulieu, one demon pulls the rope, as in Florence, and Judas is dressed in a costume similar to that in the mosaic. In the Last Judgment on the tympanum at Conques (ill. 29) a figure is also hanged by a demon but the purse around his neck identifies him as a usurer.

Elsewhere in the hell scene there are beatings and floggings and a general man-handling of the wicked souls by blue and green demons. There are no architectural motifs to detract from the sight of punishment. The style is linear and graphic, leaving little to the imagination but the pain of torture. While Borsook sees in it the new classicizing naturalism of Roman influence, it is really the last of the great Romanesque Last Judgment scenes.

Stylistically, the figures of Christ, the angels, and the apostles in the Florence mosaic Last Judgment scene belong to the tradition of Comnenian art, the style which dominated the art of the Comnenian dynasty of Byzantine rulers (1081-1185) and which was

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[42] Above fn.40.

[43] Illustrated in Grivot and Zarnecki, Pl. 17a and D9, respectively.

widespread by the thirteenth century.[44] This is the same style which appears in the Anastasis and the Last Judgment scenes at Torcello (ill. 24) and in the figures of the trumpetting angels between the windows above the Last Judgment scene at S. Angelo in Formis (ill. 26).

The extent of the naturalism can be seen in the forlorn faces which make up the mountain of souls, expressions which were derived from Byzantine influences, and which do not reflect the revival of early Christian murals in Rome. Nevertheless, one can not establish a firm date for the Florence Baptistery Last Judgment based on the mosaic's Romanesque iconography, Byzantine style, and attribution to Coppo di Marcovaldo, since the execution of his design would have depended on the availability of Greek artists, expert in mosaic, who were generally kept busy in Venice.

Giotto's Last Judgment

The Scrovegni Chapel was built on the site of the ancient Roman Arena at Padua. The fresco cycle which covers its interior walls has been attributed to Giotto[45] and has been dated between 1303 and 1310.[46] Giotto's work represents a transition from Medieval to Renaissance in Italy. His humanism and naturalism, depicted in sculpturally modelled

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[44] After the sack of Constantinople in 1204 by the Crusaders, Byzantine artistic booty as well as Greek artists made their way to Italy, attracted by the wealth of the new republics. With them came the highly formalized late Comnenian style. Hartt, 39.

[45] Baccheschi in *The Complete Paintings of Giotto*, A. Martindale, intro., E. Baccheschi, notes and catalogue. (London, 1969), 109.

[46] For documentation on the dating of the frescoes see *Ibid.*, 98-99; and Borsook, 7-8.

figures with expressive faces, are intended to give the illusion of the actual world. These figures, however, are represented in an ideal space, far removed from the spectator, in the tradition of Medieval and Byzantine art.[47]

Giotto was in Rome in the 1290s working for the Stefaneschi family for whom Cavallini was also working.[48] It is not surprising, then, to find in Giotto's work evidence of the Roman revival of early Christian cycles, and specifically, the influence of Cavallini. Hartt mentions, for example, that the apostles of Giotto's Last Judgment at Padua (ill. 37) are enthroned exactly as in Cavallini's Last Judgment scene in the church of Sta. Cecilia in Trastevere, Rome, completed c. 1292.[49] Giotto's innovation was to curve the ends of the platform on which the apostles sit, so that the last apostles in the row are viewed in profile. This device gives the illusion of tremendous depth to the entire painting.[50]

Giotto's Last Judgment scene in the Scrovegni Chapel covers the west wall (ill. 37). It has many of the standard Byzantine characteristics, the most obvious being the river of fire which flows

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[47] *Ibid.*, xxx.

[48] J. Gardner, "The Stefaneschi altarpiece: a reconsideration," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 37 (1974), 58, 97-98.

[49] Hartt, 75. Illustrated in P. Hetherington, *Pietro Cavallini: A Study in the Art of Late Medieval Rome* (London, 1979), fig. 32, 38.

[50] This detail was pointed out by Dorothy C. Schorr, "The Role of the Virgin in Giotto's Last Judgment," in *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes*, J. H. Stubblebine, ed. (New York, 1969), 169.

into hell from beneath the enthroned Christ. Flanking Christ in non-delineated registers are angels, apostles, and groups of righteous and damned. Beneath Christ two angels hold up a large cross, at the base of which, on the heavenly side, is a portrait of the donor, Enrico Scrovegni, presenting the chapel to three holy figures.[51] On the opposite side, consumed by fire and swallowed by darkness, sinners suffer their infernal punishments (ill. 38).

The similarities between Giotto's hell and the hell of the Florence Baptistery mosaic has been discussed in detail by Rothschild and Wilkins, who conclude that, in spite of Giotto's involvement in the new humanistic movement which rejected the language of Byzantine art, he nevertheless appropriated many elements from the Baptistery mosaic.[52] Among those elements, to the left of Satan,[53] are the hanging figure of Judas,[54] the two-pronged fork with hooked tines, and demons lifting and tossing sinners. The figure of Satan dominates both versions; Giotto's Satan is nearly identical to Coppo's, but fleshier. To the right of Satan (ill. 38) are the back-biting saurians, a figure roasting on a spit, and the pouring of liquid from a ladle onto a

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[51] Borsook offers an identification of the three figures and lists other identifications which have been proposed. Borsook, 8, fn.37.

[52] Rothschild and Wilkins, 35.

[53] Illustrated in *The Complete Paintings of Giotto*, Pl. XL-XLI.

[54] In the Padua fresco Judas is disembowled according to a separate iconographic tradition. Rothschild and Wilkins, 33.

reclining, fettered victim.[55]

On the far right edge of the composition, above and to the right of Satan, are four figures which were not derived from the Florence Baptistery mosaic (ill. 38). They hang side by side from a tree branch. The figure on the left end hangs by his tongue; the woman beside him hangs by her plaited hair. They represent the punishments of blasphemers and women who plaited their hair to entice men to adultery, which originated with the apocryphal text of St. Peter.[56] From the same source is the punishment of the two inverted figures on the right, fornicators who hang by their genitals.

Beside this group, struggling with a demon, is a reclining figure about to lose his genitals to a demon with a pair of pliers. His crime may have some connection with the female figure above him. Below, left, a female figure is attacked by a serpent from the throne of Satan. The man gripping her arm is beaten by a demon.

In the lower right corner of this scene are a male and female figure who face each other to exchange a bag of money. An upright reptile attacks the woman's back and neck while two demons flail the man and pull his hair. They are guilty of some illicit transaction which may be related to the general theme of usury which runs through

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[55] The victims are a male in the upper right corner of the Florence mosaic (above fn.40), and a female in the Padua fresco.

[56] The Vision of St. Paul (Redaction IV) had a wider circulation and may have been Giotto's source. Above, p.30-32.

this depiction of hell.[57]

Three other figures, just above and to the right of Judas, are hanged by their pursestrings for the crime of usury.[58] Immediately below them a demon hoists a woman on its shoulder. This entire group, consisting of Judas, usurers, and demon, represents the negative counterpart of the donor portrait to the left of the cross (ill 37). Schlegel has pointed out that a horizontal relationship exists between these two scenes and the figure of Satan.[59] The couple exchanging the purse (ill. 38) seems to complete that relationship, being at the end of the sequence which proceeds from Enrico through Judas and through Satan.

In spite of the grim torments suffered by the wicked souls in Giotto's hell, Dorothy Shorr has shown that the emphasis in the Last Judgment scene at Padua is on the hope of deliverance to heaven.[60] The diminutive scale of the figures in hell, with the exception of Satan, relegate them to secondary positions in the grand scheme. The larger figures of apostles and blessed, and the especially large and commanding figure of the Virgin in her role as intercessor, emphasize

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[57] Schlegel has shown that Enrico Scrovegni built the chapel to atone for his father's acquisition of wealth through usury. Ursula Schlegel, "On the Picture Program of the Arena Chapel," in *Giotto: The Arena Chapel Frescoes*, J. H. Stubblebine, ed. (New York, 1969), 182.

[58] The crime of these figures was identified by Schlegel. *Ibid.*, 186.

[59] *Ibid.*, 187.

[60] Shorr, *op. cit.*, 169-170.

redemption. While there is little evidence of the Gothic style in Giotto's painting, the Gothic aspiration for salvation is indeed present.

With Giotto's Last Judgment, this study of hell imagery in the Middle Ages comes to an end. Throughout the fourteenth century several fascinating scenes of hell were produced in Italy, among them Orcagna's hell in Sta. Croce, Florence (c. 1360), Taddeo di Bartolo's monumental figures in San Gimignano (1396), Nardo di Cione's scheme in Sta. Maria Novella, Florence (c. 1350) which supposedly recreates Dante's *Inferno*, and the numerous illustrated editions of the *Inferno* itself. With the popularity of the *Inferno*, Dante's organization of hell left its imprint on the universal concept of hell and, hence, most of the imagery which followed has made some reference to it. The works included in this thesis, however, all contributed to the concept, topography, and iconography of hell as it existed for Dante.

VI

CONCLUSION

In the course of its evolution, the topography of Christian hell has travelled over many centuries, covered many countries, and been manifested in several different media, the most powerful being the medieval imagination. This thesis has attempted to connect the various media and trace the evolution from concept, to myth, to literature, and ultimately to visual image. With each step hell has expanded, from mere dust and darkness in the closeness of the grave, to images of demons, grim tortures, and the hideous Hades.

Throughout this development one aspect of hell has remained constant: its role as the negative counterpart of earth and the heavenly paradise. The perception of the underworld as cosmological chaos, as opposed to the divine order of heaven, existed as early as the ancient Ugaritic texts.[1] In *The Aeneid*, in the first century B.C., the road through the underworld divided, leading either to yawning Tartarus or the Land of Joy in the Fortunate Woods. The gateways through which Aeneas passed reflected the architecture of the known world,[2] and the adamantine and iron surfaces were the opposite of the

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[1] Above p.10.

[2] Above, p.19.

bejewelled architecture which was thought to exist in heaven. The architecture of hell, as the negative counterpart of that in heaven and on earth, consistently appeared in pictorial images from the ninth century onward, from the Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 4) and the Anglo-Saxon ivory in the Victoria and Albert Museum (ill. 9), to the twelfth century tympanum sculpture of St. Lazare at Autun (ill. 28).

The concept of the underworld as the dreadful opposite of the heavenly realm was not confined to architectural details. Hybrid monsters, which may have originated in the Egyptian Book of the Dead or in ancient oriental sources and which abound in *The Aeneid*, begin to appear as the negative equivalent of the beauty of angels in the Stuttgart Psalter and the Trier Apocalypse (ill. 10). Also of the ninth century is the Anastasis scene in the Byzantine Chludov Psalter[3] in which the figure of Hades appears as the inverted and corrupt mirror-image of the power of Christ. In the thirteenth century, Giotto applied this concept to a contemporary configuration in the Scrovegni Chapel Last Judgment scene by juxtaposing the donor group on the heavenly side of the cross with Judas and the group of usurers in hell (ill. 37).[4]

While an effort has been made to link motifs in the pictorial images of hell with their counterparts in literature, the connections are seldom clear and the influences operate in both directions. The

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[3] Above p.57.

[4] Above p.154.

influence of *The Aeneid* can be detected in the Trier Apocalypse,[5] for example, and may be present in the later Italian Last Judgment scenes in the Florence Baptistery and the Scrovegni Chapel in Padua. In Giotto's Last Judgment the river of fire splits into four cascading streams recalling the four rivers of hell which Virgil borrowed from Homer. In both the mosaic and the fresco (ills. 36, 37) Hades appears with horns. In the Trier Apocalypse a fettered beast with horns appears in the Last Judgment scene (ill. 10), and as noted above,[6] resembles the hybrid beasts of *The Aeneid* and probably represents the bound Satan of Revelation 20:2. This Latin image of the conquered Satan with horns may have survived to become mixed in the Baptistery mosaic with the standard Byzantine figure of Hades. This early type of Hades may have been associated with the horned Minos as underworld judge. But with carnivorous serpents sprouting from their ears and human remains dripping from their mouths, the Hades of the Baptistery mosaic and Padua fresco also seem to make reference to Virgil's description of the gigantic three-throated Cerberus with snakes for a mane. As was to occur with Dante's *Inferno*, Virgil's underworld imagery had enduring repercussions in Italian art.

There are also cases where pictorial imagery seems to have influenced literary accounts of the underworld. The Stuttgart Psalter, for example, depicts the first images of the scales of justice in which

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[5] Above p.79.

[6] Above p.78.

souls of the deceased are weighed,[7] several centuries before the scales appear in vision literature. The medieval visions, however, were generally derived from other literary and pictorial sources and were molded to fit a particular format for Church propaganda.[8] Their descriptions of hell, therefore, are not often innovative, and they did not often inspire illustration.

Some of the twelfth century visions were exceptional, and were well-known all over Europe. In the Italian Vision of Alberic (1127-1137) a demon, dressed in knight's armour and wielding a serpent, rides a gigantic dragon.[9] While this may have been influenced by Byzantine images of Hades on the back of the dragon, such as that in the Paris Grec manuscript 74 (ill. 22), Alberic's vision seems to precede the only image of a knight riding a huge dragon, that of the sword- rather than serpent-wielding knight in Sinai Icon no.2 (ill. 23) of the mid-twelfth century. This theme is undoubtedly related to the Crusades.

The importance of the Stuttgart Psalter images, however, should not be underestimated. It is in the Stuttgart Psalter that the earliest extant examples of many of hell's most popular motifs occur. The demons of folio 10v (ill. 5) continue to appear virtually unchanged up until the thirteenth century, with examples at Ste. Foy, Conques (ill. 30) and St. Julien, Brioude (ill. 33). In the same miniature is

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[7] Above p.62.

[8] Above p.33, 34, fn.26.

[9] Above p.36.

the earliest depiction of a nobleman chained by the neck and led to the fires of hell. This composition inspired later, more elaborate processions of chained sinners, such as that in the Paris Beatus (ill. 32). The earliest known appearance in the west of the Byzantine type of Hades also occurs in the Stuttgart Psalter.[10] The Stuttgart Psalter, however, can not be considered the sole origin of so many motifs; rather, it is representative of a much larger tradition, now lost.

The *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, an eleventh century Winchester manuscript, holds a similar pivotal position in the development of English hell imagery. Folio 7 (ill. 14) depicts the earliest English example of the archangel Michael holding the key to the gates of Hades and locking the gate behind a chaotic group of sinners.[11] The first example of hair-pulling occurs in the *Liber Vitae* and reappears in the Winchester Psalter (ill. 20) and in sculpture at Lincoln Cathedral[12] and Conques (ill. 29). And the mouth of hell appears for the first time since the ninth century Anglo-Saxon ivory plaque (ill. 9).

The mouth of hell, characteristic of medieval English hell iconography, has played a major role in this study of the evolution of the topography of Christian hell.[13] Beginning with the Egyptian wide-

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[10] Above p.61.

[11] A Carolingian miniature in the Trier Apocalypse depicts an angel with the key to the chain attached to the dragon's neck. Above p.78, fn.87.

[12] Above p.106.

[13] Above pp.20-22, 63-64, 73-75, 92-96, 106, 129-130.

throated monster, "the devourer of many who go into Amenthe...," in the sixteenth century B.C., the motif of the voracious jaws of hell enjoyed continuous popularity until at least the thirteenth century of the Christian era. By that time three different pictorial types had evolved. Some stages in this evolution have been discussed above.[14] One type seems to have evolved from the dragon of the Stuttgart Psalter (ill. 5), an animal head in profile with pointed snout and open jaws, the product of conflating Leviathan and Jonah's whale. This is the type which appears in the twelfth century in sculpture at St. Paul-de-Varax,[15] Autun (ill. 28), and Conques (ill. 30), and which Denny refers to as Burgundian.[16] It appears also in two manuscripts produced at Oxford: the twelfth century Bodleian manuscript Douce 293 (ill. 18) and the thirteenth century Walters Art Gallery manuscript 106.[17]

The other two types seem to have originated with the human form of classical deities, as for example, in the Utrecht Psalter (ill. 6), the Anglo-Saxon ivory (ill. 9), and the Trier Apocalypse.[18] The transformation from human form to serpentine type began with the *Liber Vitae* (ill. 14). While the head became ever more beastly, it remained tilted back, reminiscent of the personified head of Tellus in the Trier

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[14] See particularly above pp.73-75, 128-130.

[15] Above p.130, fn. 119.

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, ms. 106, fol. 23, c.1230-1240. Illustrated in Morgan, *op. cit.*, fig. 234.

[18] Above p.93, fn.15.

Apocalypse. The tilted-back head of the beast appears in the eleventh century manuscripts Tiberius C. VI (ill. 15) and *Caedmonian Genesis* (ill. 17), and continues in the twelfth century in folio 24 of the Winchester Psalter,[19] and in the thirteenth century in the Guthlac Roll[20] and the Paris fr. 403.[21]

An interesting development occurs in the mid twelfth century, creating the third type of hell mouth, the double-faced mouth which appears on folio 39 in the Winchester Psalter (ill. 20). This type stands on end at Lincoln Cathedral (ill. 21) but eventually finds its most comfortable position, lying, head tilted back, jaws opened upward, at the bottom of the scene, in several manuscripts produced at Oxford, including the Walters ms. 106,[22] and in the Trinity Apocalypse (ill. 31) and the Paris Beatus (ill. 32).

This thesis has, essentially, traced the history of Medieval Art through the evolution of one theme. The information has been gathered from a wide variety of sources, and organized with care to maintain the focus on infernal elements. The inclusion of references to pertinent literature and political events has established the context in which

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[19] Above p.102, fn.47.

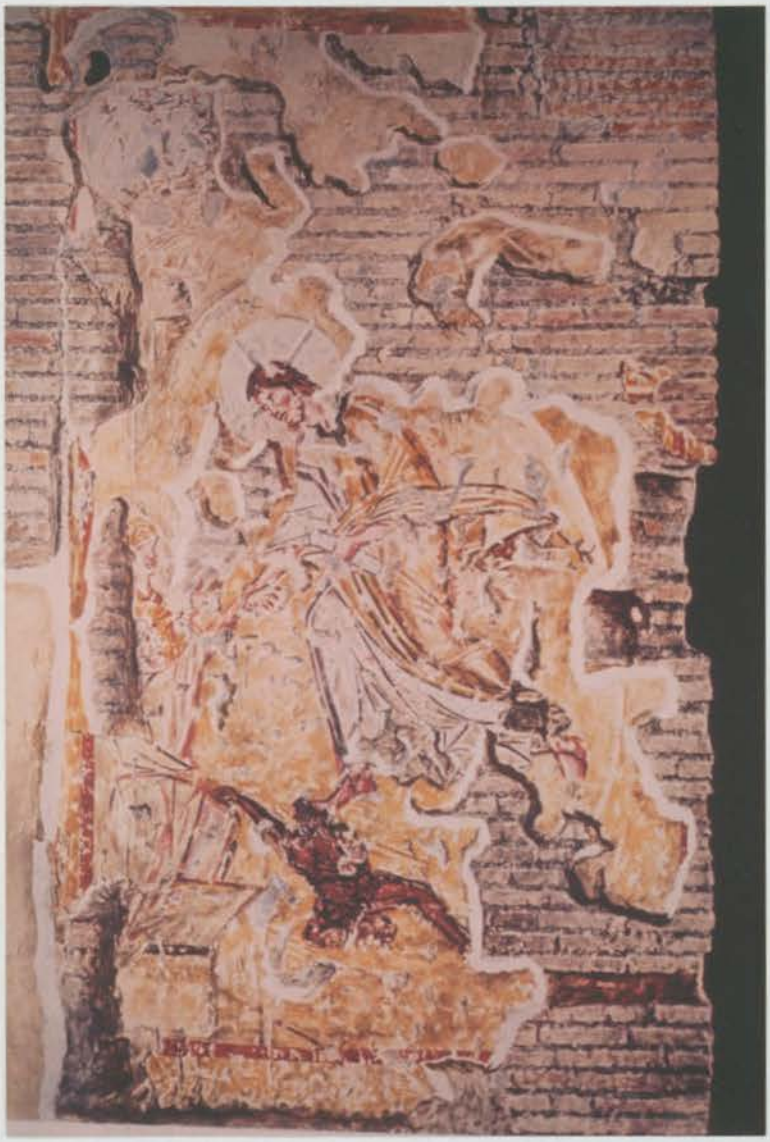
[20] London, British Museum, Harley Roll Y. 6, c. 1200. Illustrated in Morgan, *op. cit.*, fig. 72.

[21] Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, ms. fr. 403, fol. 9, c. 1240-1250. Illustrated in Van der Meer, 168, fig. 114.

[22] Walters ms. 106, fol. 24. Illustrated in Morgan, *op. cit.*, fig. 235.

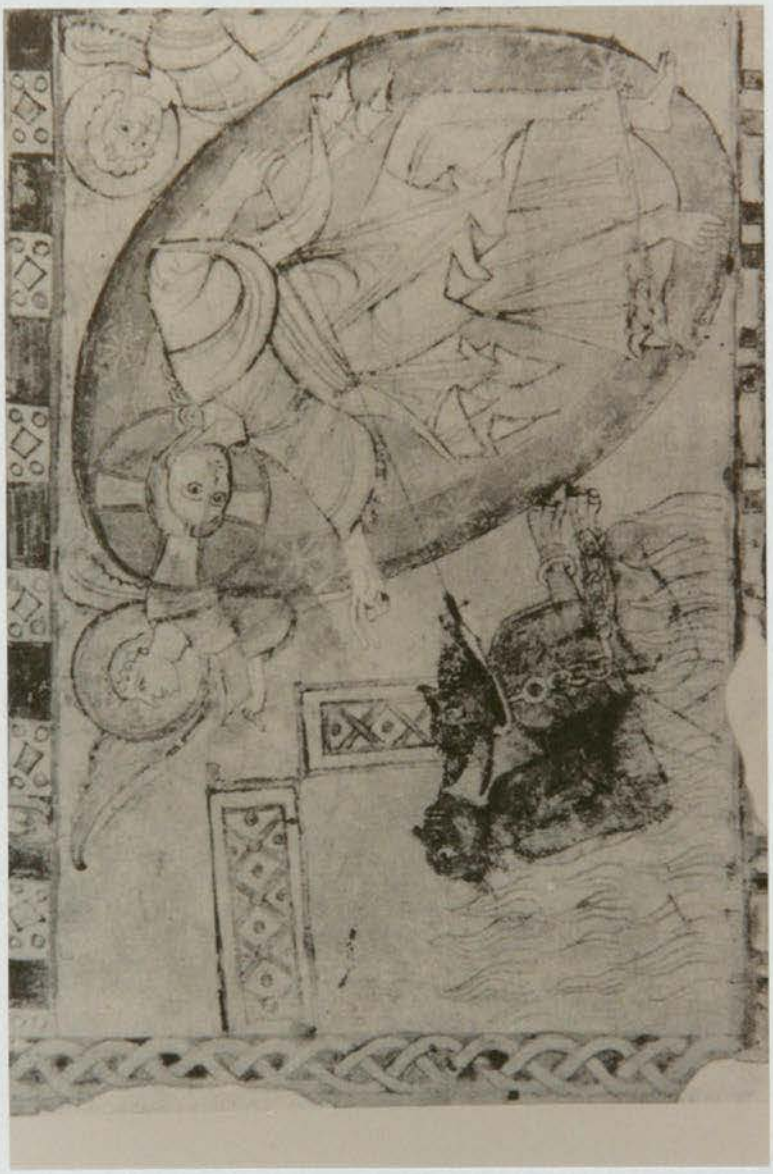
the topography of hell developed. While certainly not every image of hell could be included, the important trends have been discussed from the pre-Christian concept, to the earliest Christian images, to the grand proto-Renaissance Last Judgment scenes. This thesis could now provide a basis from which to study further aspects of Romanesque art, Apocalypse manuscripts, or Italian Last Judgment scenes.

ILLUSTRATIONS



1. Anastasis. Rome, S. Maria Antiqua, 705-707.

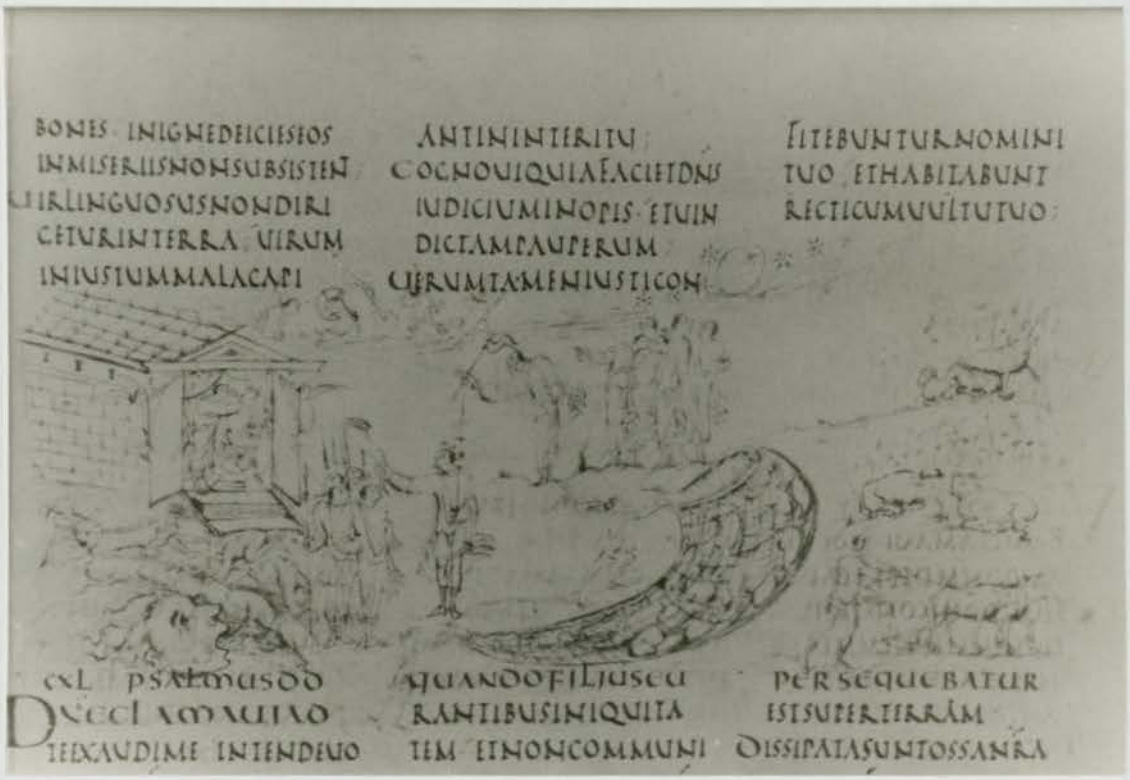
2. Anastasis. Rome, S. Clemente, Lower Church, c. 870.



3. *Regis Victoria.* Vatican Exultet Roll 9820, 981-987.

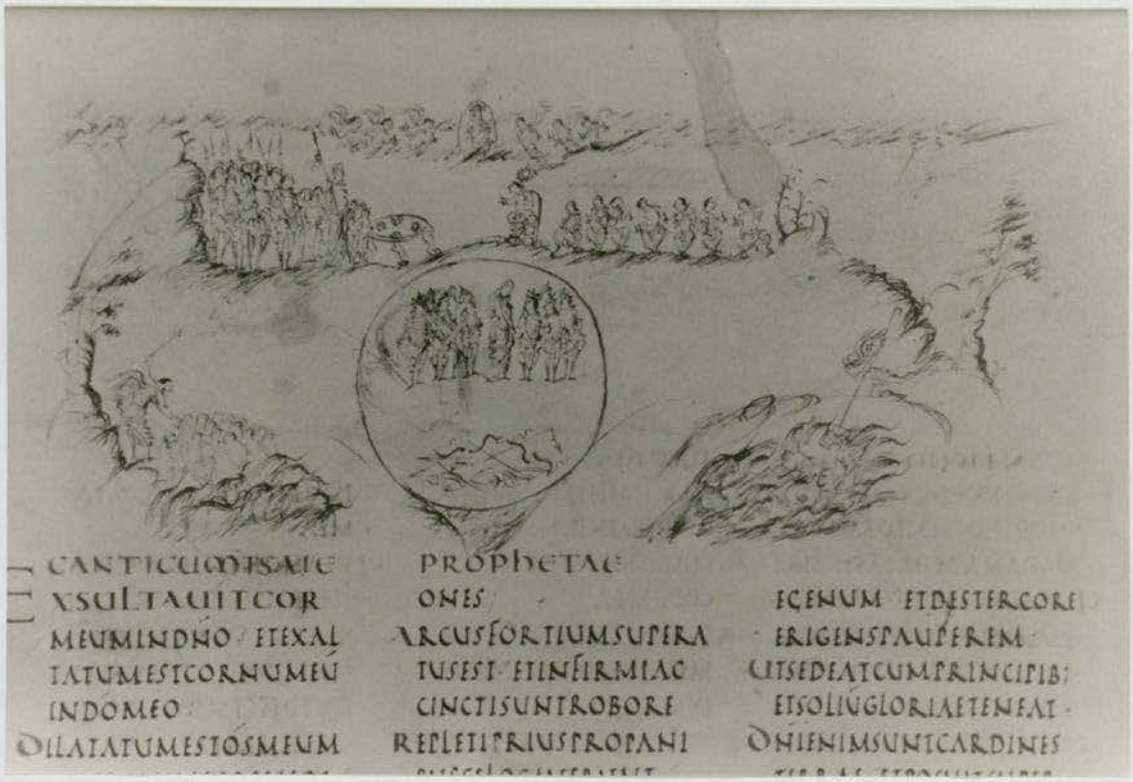
4. Psalm 24. Stuttgart Psalter, fol. 29v, c. 820-830.

5. Psalm 9. Stuttgart Psalter, fol. 10v, c. 820-830.



6. Psalm 141. Utrecht Psalter, fol. 79r, c. 820-830.

7. Psalm 91. Utrecht Psalter, fol. 53v, c. 820-830.



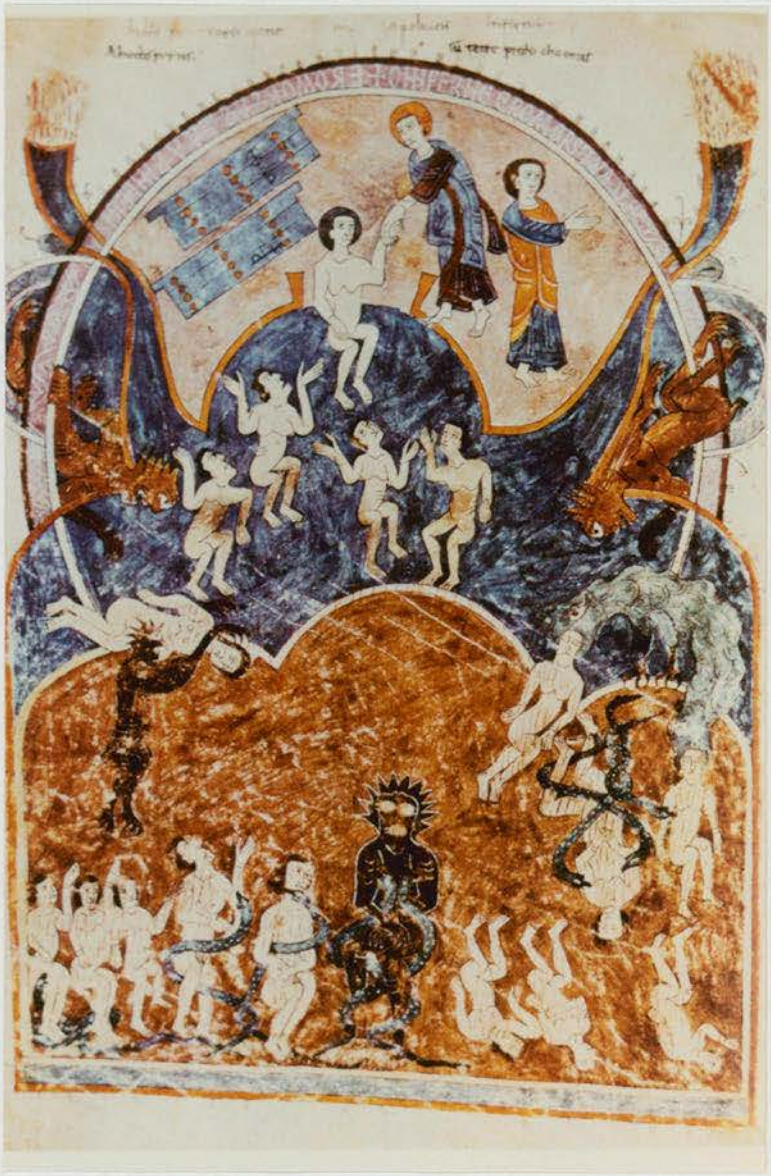
8. Canticle of Hannah, I Samuel 2. Utrecht Psalter, fol 89v, c. 820-830.

9. Last Judgment. Anglo-Saxon ivory plaque, c. 800.

10. Last Judgment. Trier Apocalypse, fol. 67r, c. 800-850.

11. Last Judgment. Bamberg Apocalypse, fol. 53r, c. 1000.

12. Last Judgment. Morgan Beatus Apocalypse, fol. 219v-220r, c. 950.



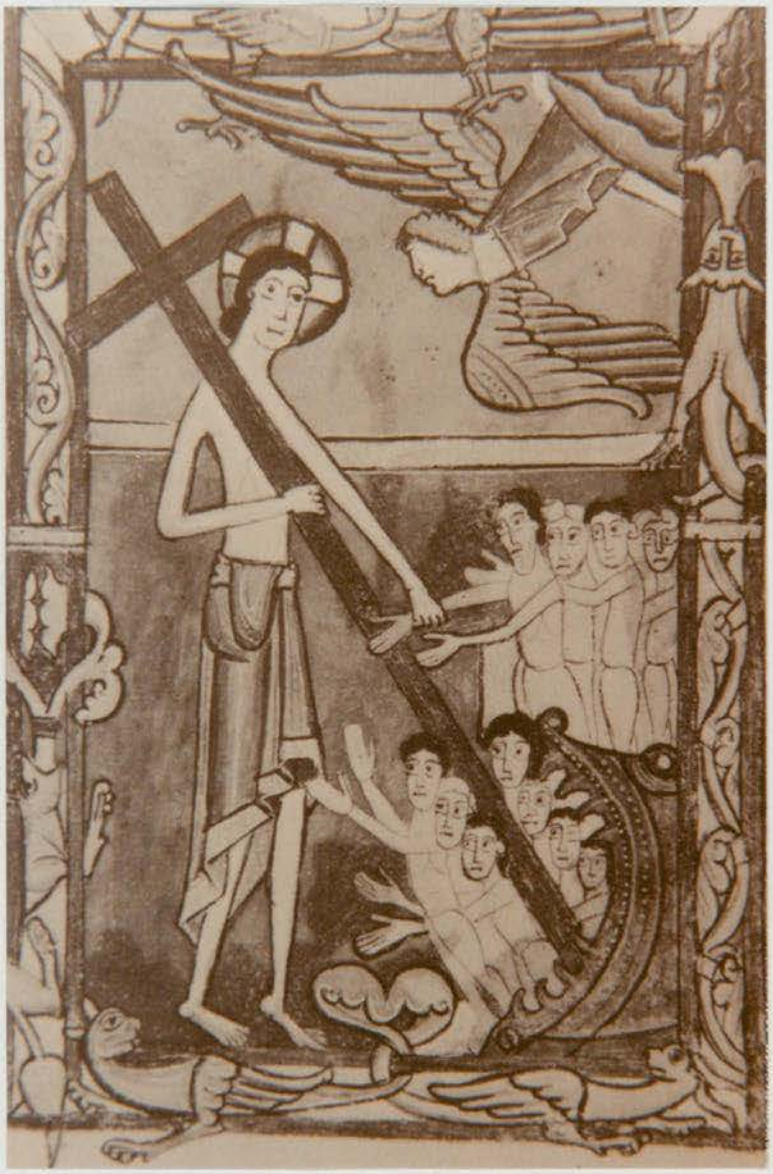
13. *Descensus.* Gerona Beatus Apocalypse, fol. 17, 975.

14. Last Judgment. *Liber Vitae* of New Minster, fol. 7, c. 1016-1020.

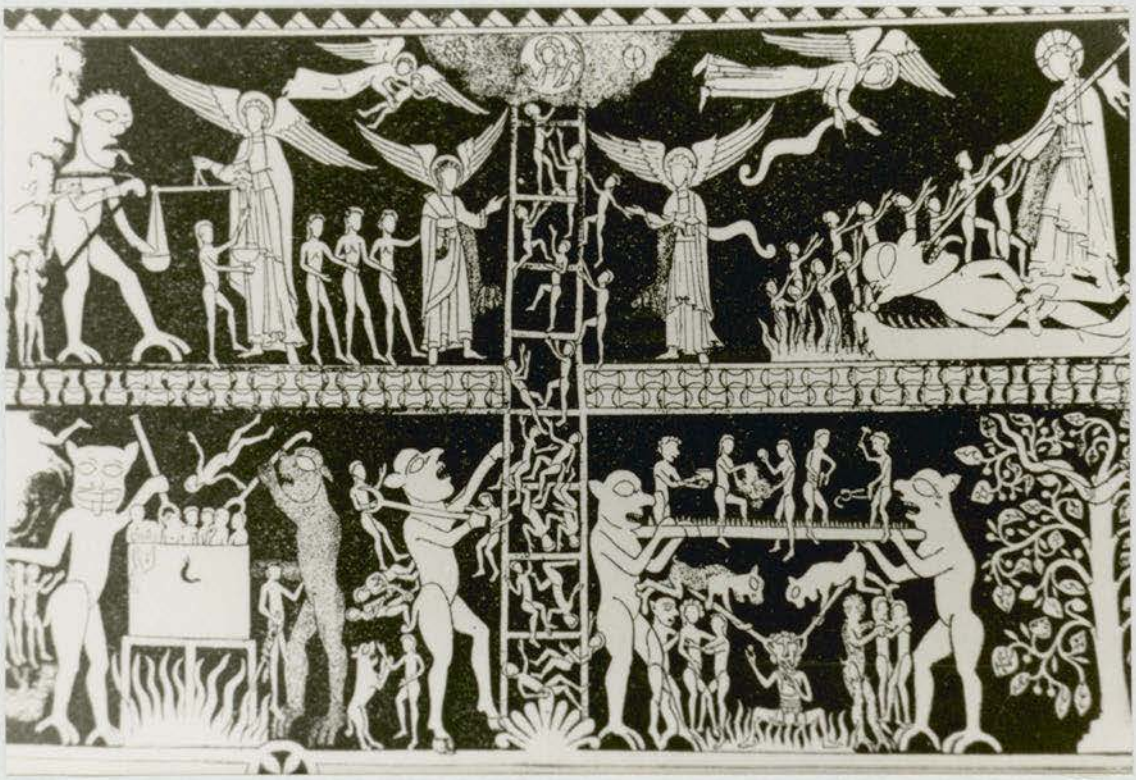
15. Anastasis. Cotton ms. Tiberius C. VI, fol. 14r, c. 1050.

16. Mambres at the Mouth of Hell. Marvels of the East, fol. 81v, c. 1025.

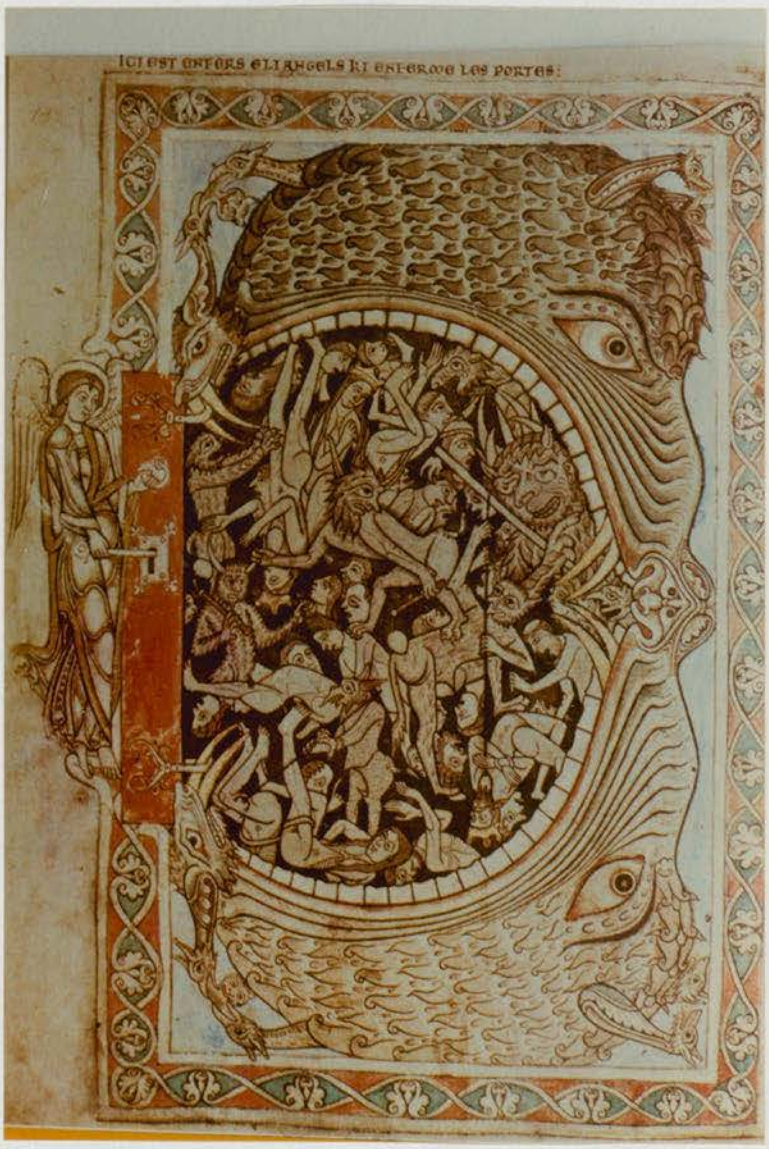
17. Fall of the Rebellious Angels. *Caedmonian Genesis*, fol. 16, eleventh century.



18. Harrowing of Hell. Bodleian Douce 293, fol. 14, c. 1150-1200.



19. Ladder of Salvation. Surrey, Chaldon Church, twelfth century.

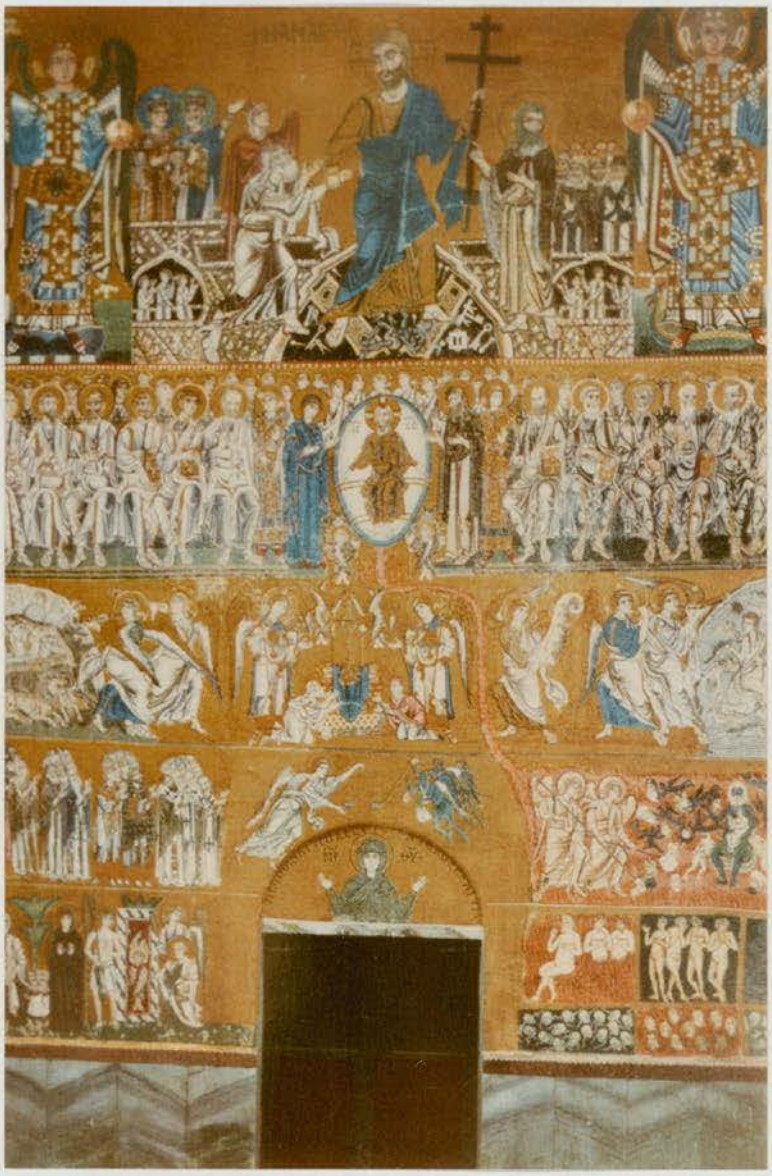


20. Mouth of Hell. Winchester Psalter, fol. 39, c. 1150.

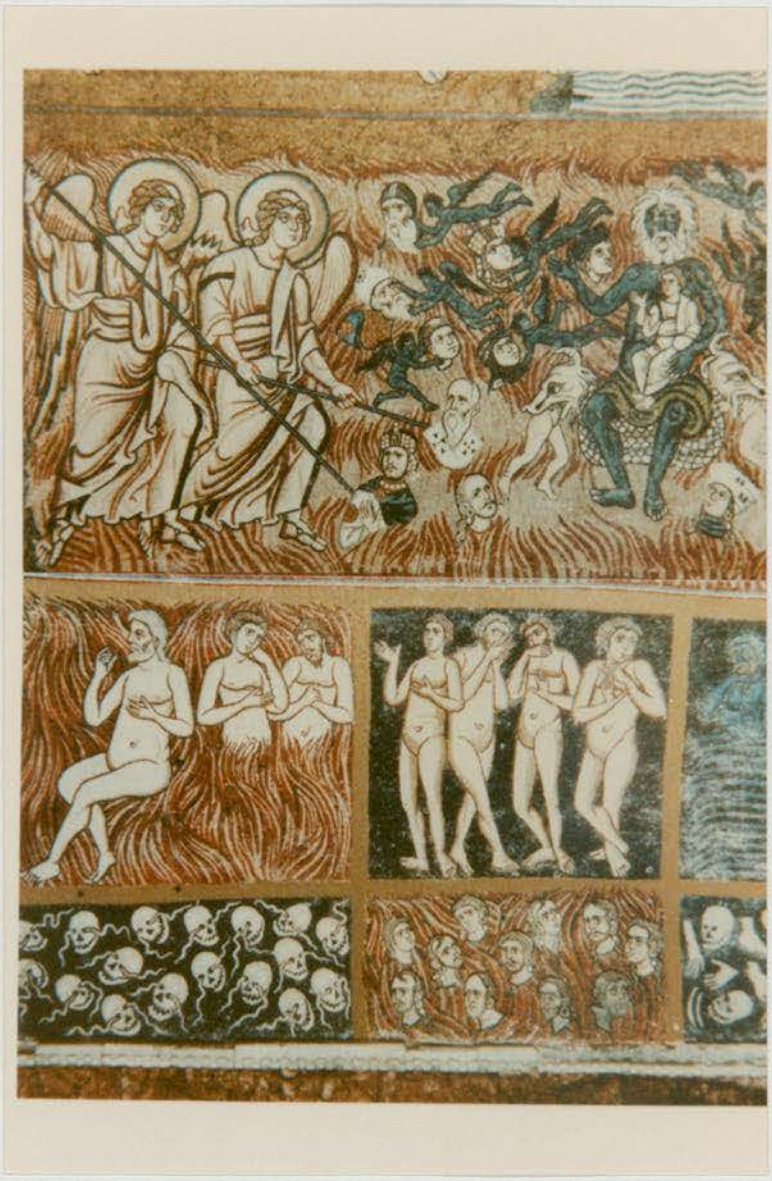
21. Harrowing of Hell. Lincoln Cathedral, c. 1150.

22. Last Judgment. Paris ms. Grec 74, fol. 51v, c. 1050.

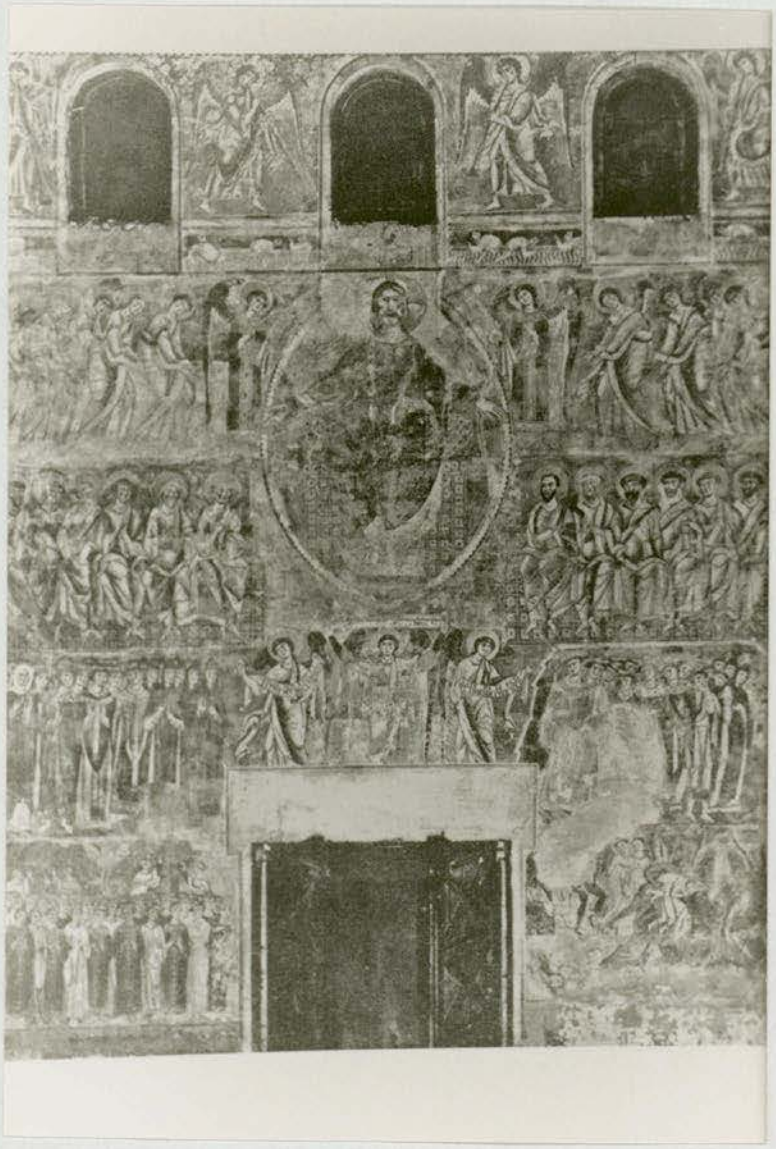
23. Last Judgment. Sinai Icon no.2, c. 1150.



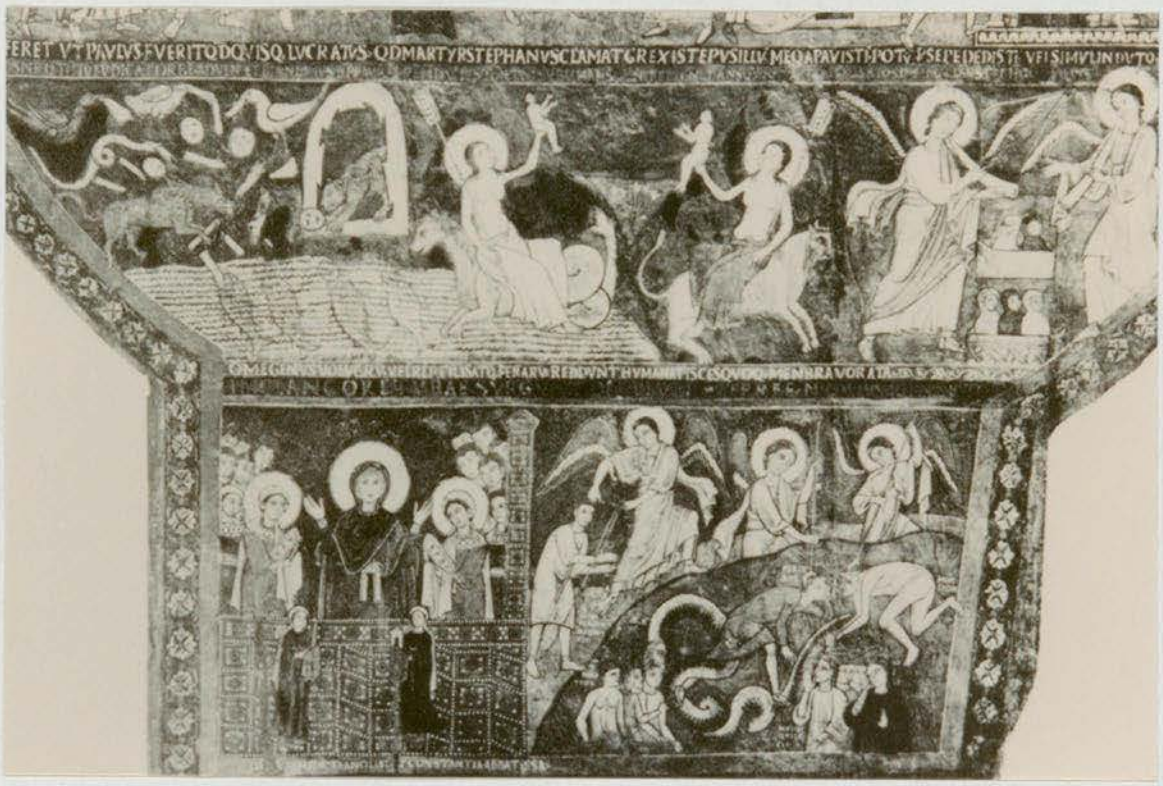
24. Anastasis and Last Judgment. Torcello Cathedral, c. 1100.



25. Hell. Detail of Last Judgment. Torcello Cathedral, c. 1100.



26. Last Judgment. S. Angelo in Formis, c. 1075-1125.

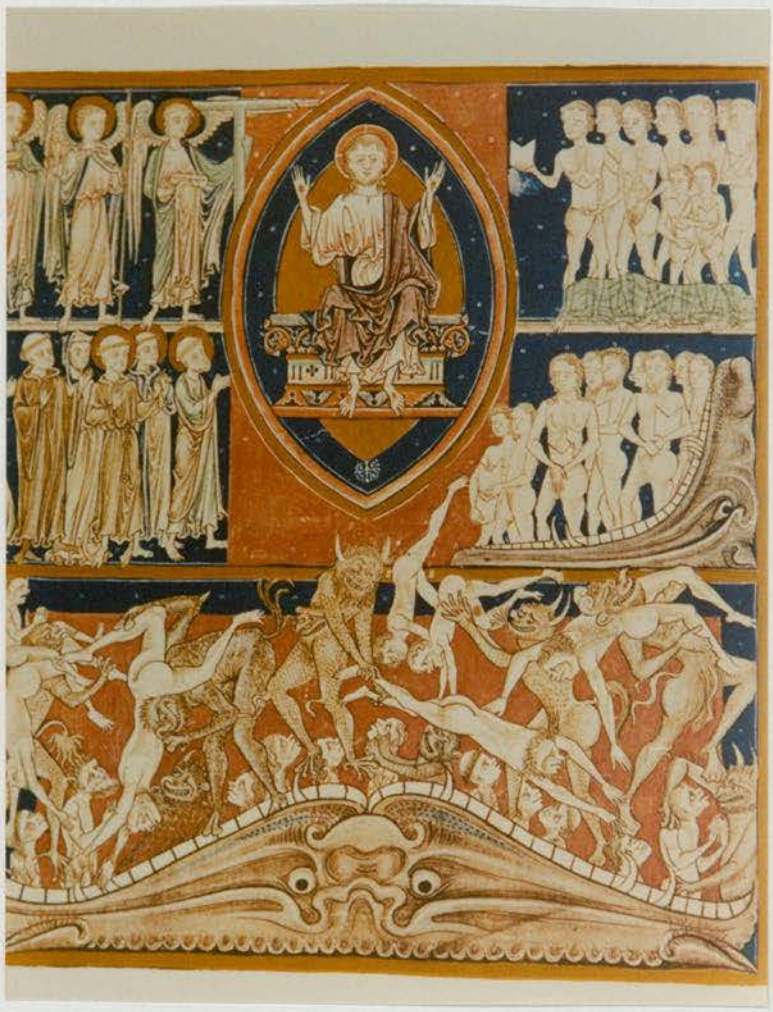


27. Resurrection of the Dead, Heaven and Hell. Detail of Last Judgment. Vatican panel 526, c. 1075-1100.

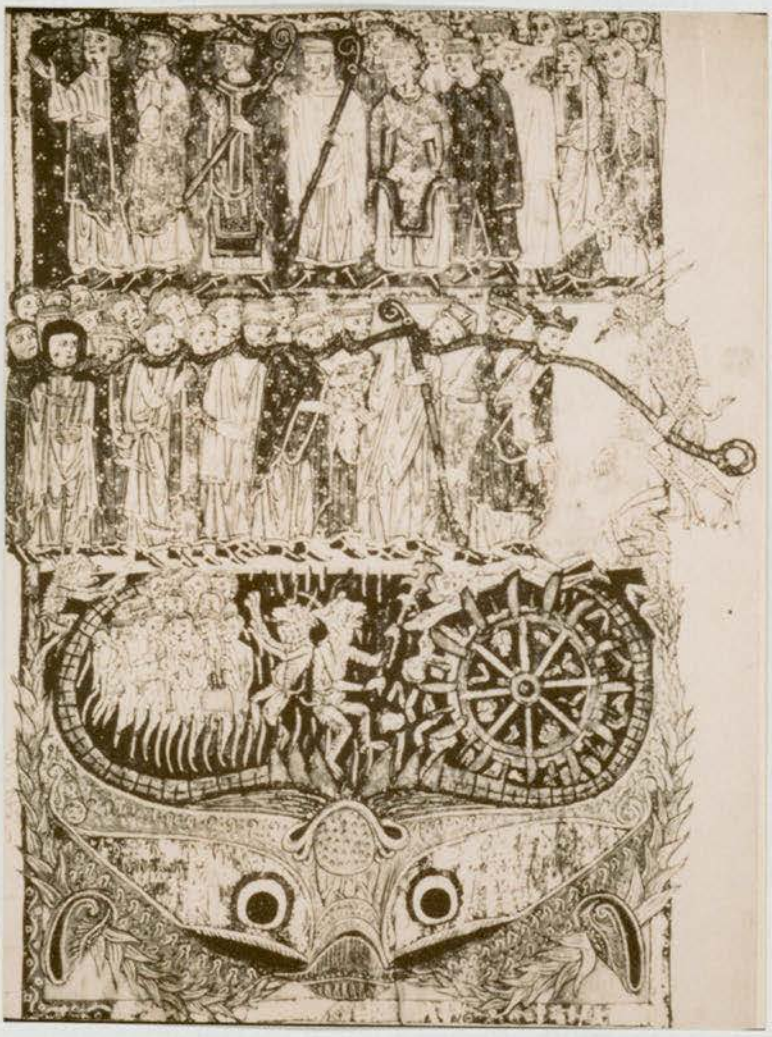
28. Weighing of Souls and Entrance to Hell. Autun, 1125-1135.

29. The Damned and Hell. Conques, c. 1150.

30. Weighing of Souls and Entrance to Hell. Conques, c. 1150.

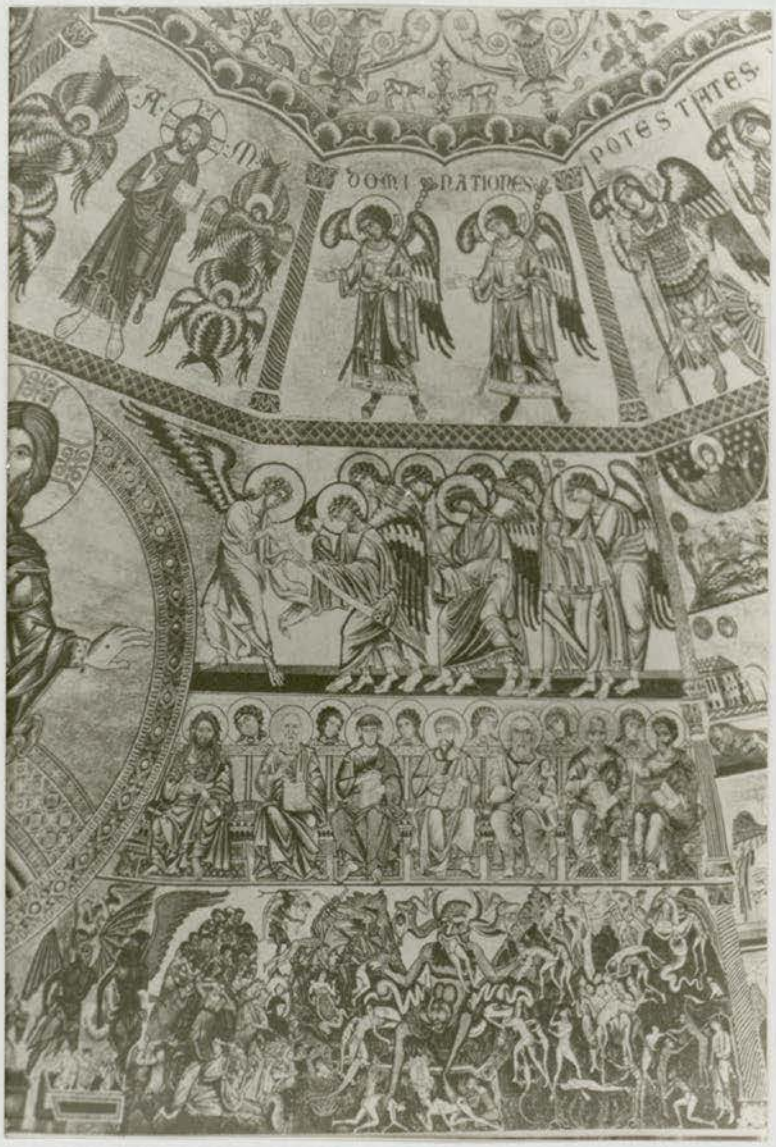


31. Last Judgment. Trinity Apocalypse, fol. 28, c. 1220-1250.



32. Mouth of Hell. Paris Beatus Apocalypse, fol. 160, c. 1200-1225.

33. Demons. Brioude, c. 1200-1225.



34. Detail of Last Judgment. Florence Baptistery, c. 1260-1300.

35. Damned in Hell. Florence Baptistery, c. 1260-1300.

36. Satan in Hell. Florence Baptistery, c. 1260-1300.

37. Last Judgment. Scrovegni Chapel, c. 1303-1310.

38. Damned in Hell. Scrovegni Chapel, c. 1303-1310.

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VITA

Surname: Elliott *Given Names*: Janis Johnston

Place of Birth: Glasgow, Scotland *Date of Birth*: 23 July 1949

Educational Institutions Attended:

University of Victoria 1975-1991

Degrees Awarded:

B.A. (Honours) University of Victoria 1986

Honours and Awards:

University of Victoria Graduate Fellowship 1988-1990

B.C. Provincial Government Scholarship 1984-1986

Government of Italy Book Prize 1984

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Author: [redacted]

Janis Johnston Elliott

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