City, Citizen, Citizenship, 400–1500

A Comparative Approach

Edited by
Els Rose · Robert Flierman
Merel de Bruin-van de Beek

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Acknowledgements

The study of civic values and practices in past ages has recently attracted much interest. The present volume addresses the phenomena of city, citizen, and citizenship from the perspective of the medieval world. It is the result of an international collaboration that began during the online conference City, Citizen and Citizenship: New Perspectives on the Middle Ages, hosted at Utrecht University in June 2021. The conference combined three central aims, which can also be said to underlie this volume. First, to reclaim the Middle Ages, and in particular the period before 1200 CE, as a period with a rich and meaningful civic tradition that is worthy of study. Second, to look beyond a strict political and legal understanding of citizenship towards a more cultural approach to the city, its inhabitants, and the civic values their communities upheld. Lastly, to do so from a long-term, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural perspective, bringing together contributions on the early, high, and later Middle Ages, covering both the medieval East and West, and representing a wide variety of disciplinary angles and sources.

The results we present here could not have been achieved without the engaging and amicable collaboration with all parties involved. We like to thank all the participants in the City, Citizen and Citizenship conference for their inspiring intellectual contributions as well as their cordial demeanour and dedication in the suboptimal circumstances the COVID-19 pandemic forced upon us. We warmly remember the event as one of those unexpectedly vibrant exchanges of knowledge and insight that

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Abbreviations

a.	*anno/annis* (year/years)
AB	Annales Bertiniani
AF	Annales Fuldenses
ARF	Annales regni Francorum
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis
CCSL	Corpus Christianorum Series Latina
CELAMA	Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages (Brepols book series)
c., cap.	*caput* (chapter)
CRMH	Cahiers de recherches médiévales et humanistes
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CSIC	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Spanish National Research Council)
EI2	Encyclopaedia of Islam, ed. P. Bearman et al., 2nd ed. (Brill Online, 2012)
ICAC	Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica, Tarragona (Spain)
l., ll.	line(s)
MGH	Monumenta Germaniae Historica

AA	Auctores antiquissimi
Capit.	Capitularia regum Francorum
Capit. episc.	Capitula episcoporum
Conc.	Concilia
DD Ka III.	Diplomata: Die Urkunden der deutschen Karolinger. Karl III.
DD Karol. I	Diplomata: Die Urkunden der Karolinger. Pippin, Karlmann und Karl der Große

DD Lo I.	Diplomata: Die Urkunden der Karolinger. Lothar I.
Epp.	Epistolae
Fontes iuris	Fontes iuris Germanici antiqui in usum scholarum separatim editi
Formulae	Formulae Merowingici et Karolini aevi
Poet.	Poetae Latini medii aevi
SRG	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum seperatim editi
SRG NS	Scriptores rerum Germanicarum Nova Series
SRM	Scriptores rerum Merovingicarum
SS	Scriptores

MNAR	National Museum of Roman Art, Mérida (Spain)
n., fn.	footnote
PL, PL SL	Patrologiae cursus completus: Series Latina
s.a.	*sub anno* (under the year)
SChr	Sources chrétiennes
s.v.	*sub verbo* (under the word)
TEI	Thesaurus d'Epigraphie Islamique
TLL	Thesaurus Linguae Latinae
v., vv.	verse(s)

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Introduction

CHAPTER 1

The Medieval City: Stones, Communities, Concepts

Merel de Bruin-van de Beek and Robert Flierman

1 Approaching the Medieval City

'Tell me, sir, this city – what is it?', a Christian boy named Iamlikha asks a man on the street after arriving at his hometown, late antique Ephesus.[1] Iamlikha's failure to identify his own native city is understandable given the circumstances. The day before, he and seven companions had decided to flee Ephesus and hide in a nearby cave for the night, rather than submit to an order by the Roman Emperor Decius that they sacrifice to the pagan

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[1] The English translation is from: Sebastian Brock, 'Jacob of Serugh's Poem on the Sleepers of Ephesus', in *'I sowed fruits into hearts' (Odes Sol. 17:13). Festschrift for Michael Lattke*, ed. Pauline Allen, Majella Franzmann, and Rick Streelan (Strathfield, NSW: St. Pauls Publications, 2007), 13–30, here 27, l. 106. This chapter was written as part of the project NWO VICI-Rose 277-30-002 *Citizenship Discourses in the Early Middle Ages, 400–1100*, funded by The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO, carried out at Utrecht University 2017–2023.

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gods. Upon re-entering the city the next morning, Iamlikha had seen, to his profound surprise, the sign of Christ's cross suspended in proud display above the city gates. He is unable to reconcile this sight with the Ephesus he knows and remembers: a pagan city where the sign of Christ was banned from public space. How can his city have changed so fundamentally in a single day?[2]

Iamlikha's disturbing encounter with the unfamiliar facade of his hometown is followed by a series of still more unsettling experiences inside the city. When he goes to look for the imperial palace, he finds it closed. When he tries to buy food, he raises the suspicion of the local merchants who do not recognise his coins. Soon the rumour spreads that he has pillaged an ancient treasure-horde. He is apprehended and threatened with punishment. The story reaches its dramatic peak when the boy is brought to the episcopal church, where the bishop and a sophist question Iamlikha about his family and origins. The boy scans the crowd for a familiar face, someone who could identify him as the son of one of Ephesus' leading citizens, but he does not recognise anyone. His parents, friends, and neighbours have disappeared. It is not until he introduces the crowd to his companions in the cave that the miraculous truth comes to light: what Iamlikha thought to be an overnight absence from Ephesus, has in fact lasted for centuries. The Christian boys went to sleep during the troubled reign of Decius, only to awake under the Christian Emperor Theodosius II, a good two hundred years later.[3]

The above episode can be found in a poetic homily by the sixth-century Syrian bishop Jacob of Serugh.[4] Jacob's homily, in Syriac, is among the earliest surviving versions of the tale, known also as 'The (seven) sleepers of Ephesus', but the story was retold in many forms and languages. It found its way into the *Qur'an* as the Surah al-Kahf, the Chapter of the Cave; it was translated into Old English and other Western vernaculars; and it eventually became a popular segment of Jacopo de Voragine's

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[2] The contrast of hiding and openly showing the sign of the cross is explicitly mentioned in the story: Brock, 'Jacob', 26, ll. 95–100.

[3] Brock, 'Jacob', 27–30, ll. 109–187.

[4] Brock, 'Jacob', 14; Pieter Willem van der Horst, 'Pious Long-Sleepers in Pagan, Jewish and Christian Antiquity', in *Studies in Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. van der Horst (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 248–266, here 261–262.

Legenda Aurea.[5] Modern scholarship has been equally captivated. In an uncharacteristic display of generosity towards a Christian miracle-story, Edward Gibbon praised the 'genuine merit of the fable' and stressed its suitable chronology: the Roman world had well and truly changed during those two centuries of divine sleep.[6] Peter Brown used the tale as a wishful prelude to his *The Making of Late Antiquity* (1978), an attempt, in his own words, to 'enter into [the] surprise' of these Christian brothers as they beheld the new late antique world that had emerged during their years of slumber.[7]

The present volume, too, accepts the invitation to bring a long-term and comparative perspective to the past, but its appreciation for the story of the Seven Sleepers goes beyond chronology. It rests above all on the central place the story allots to the city, as a physical place, as a community, and as an imaginative concept. On one level, it is a story of urban change and continuity.[8] It shows what happened to the ancient

[5] Van der Horst, 'Pious Long-Sleepers', 248–249; Brock, 'Jacob', 13; Hugh Magennis, *The Anonymous Old English Legend of the Seven Sleepers* (Durham: Durham Medieval Texts, 1994); Anna Tozzi di Marco, 'The Mediterranean Cult of the Seven Sleepers: Counter-Narrative vs Official Representation in Islamic Devotion', in *The Mediterranean Other—The other Mediterranean*, ed. Andreas Eckl, Brehl Medardus, and Kristin Platt (Paderborn: Verlag Ferdinand Schöningh, 2019), 169–190; Bartłomiej Grysa, 'The Legend of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus in Syriac and Arab Sources—A Comparative Study', *Orientalia Christiana Cracoviensia* 2 (2010): 45–59, here 45–47; Jacopo de Voragine, *Legenda Aurea*, trans. William Ryan, *Jacobus de Voragine: The Golden Legend* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993; repr. 2012), cap. 101, 401–403.

[6] Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 6 vols. (1776–1789; repr., New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), vol. 3, 389–392, here 391.

[7] Peter Brown, *The Making of Late Antiquity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978; repr. 1996), 1.

[8] Luke Lavan, *Public Space in the Late Antique City*, 2 vols. (Leiden: Brill, 2021); Aude Busine, ed., *Religious Practices and Christianization of the Late Antique City (4th–7th Cent.)* (Leiden: Brill, 2015); Hendrik Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City: Architecture and Ceremony in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Claudia Rapp and Harold Allen Drake, eds., *The City in the Classical and Post-Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 591–692; J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, *Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001); Neil Christie and Simon Loseby, eds., *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996). See also Lucy Grig, 'Cities in the "Long" Late Antiquity, 2000–2012—A Survey Essay', *Urban History* 40 (2013): 554–566.

city as time progressed and new ideologies imposed themselves on the city's physical landscape. Ephesus' walls remained but were hung with crosses. Churches developed from private homes into public buildings. The market continued to serve as a central economic place. The city's administrative centre shifted from the governmental palace to the episcopal complex. The urban topography changed as the resting places of martyrs and saints became focal points of communal devotion and church building outside the city walls.[9] Yet the story does not just approach the city as a collection of stones, but also as a community of people. Beyond asking whether a citizen of a Roman city would still have recognised their city after two centuries had passed, it asks the more pertinent question whether that citizen would still have *belonged* in it. The answer is decidedly ambivalent. Religious persecution had made Iamlikha and his companions flee from the community in which they had been born and held formal citizenship.[10] Upon returning in Christian times their religious affiliation was in alignment, but lack of recognisable kin and poor handling of everyday monetary practices made them suspicious in the eyes of the other townsfolk, who initially rejected their claims to citizenship. Evidently, membership of an urban community hinged on multiple criteria and was guaranteed by multiple agents.[11] Finally, there is the story's widespread popularity throughout the Middle Ages. The tale of the Seven Sleepers became enshrined in Christian and Islamic tradition. It was retold on the streets of Baghdad and in the deurbanised landscape of Anglo-Saxon England. The city was thus not merely a place or community, but also an image and concept. Medieval people thought about and imagined the city quite regardless of whether they themselves lived in a

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[9] A fine example of this process is Simon Loseby, 'Arles in Late Antiquity: "Gallula Roma Arelas" and "Urbs Genesii"', in *Towns in Transition: Urban Evolution in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Neil Christie and Simon Loseby (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1996), 45–70. With regard to the cult of the Seven Sleepers, archaeologists have found traces of a church building at their cave that can be dated back as early as the fifth century. See: van der Horst, 'Pious Long-Sleepers', 264, with Tozzi i Marco, 'The Mediterranean Cult' looking at modern heritage sites related to the Seven Sleepers.

[10] A theme addressed in the recent volume by Katell Berthelot and Jonathan Price, eds., *In the Crucible of Empire: The Impact of Roman Citizenship upon Greeks, Jews and Christians* (Leuven, Paris: Peeters, 2019).

[11] See: Walter Pohl, 'Introduction—Strategies of Identification: A Methodological Profile', in *Strategies of Identification. Ethnicity and Religion in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Walter Pohl and Gerda Heydemann (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 1–64.

city or not. The concept was useful and meaningful outside the context of a specific urban reality.

This volume adopts a threefold approach to the medieval city, studying it (1) as a physical entity which people experienced, shaped, and built; (2) as a community with which people identified, in which they participated and from which they could feel alienated; and (3) as a concept which people reached for in text, image, and material culture. The underlying premise is that these three layers were interconnected and reinforced each other. Civic ideals found their way into the social and physical landscape of the medieval city. Urban monuments helped instil and define feelings of community. Lived experiences in and around the city could feed back into expectations of proper civic behaviour. One of the central aims of this volume is to explore how, where, and why such interactions occurred in a medieval context. To this end, it adopts a long-term, interdisciplinary, and cross-cultural approach. It brings together contributions that range across late Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the early modern period, covering both the medieval East and West, and representing a wide variety of disciplinary angles and sources.

2   THE MEDIEVAL CITY: STONES, PEOPLE, CONCEPTS

The idea of this volume originated in a segment of the Middle Ages not usually associated with cities and citizens: the early medieval West. Between 2017 and 2023, the members of the NWO VICI project *Citizenship Discourses in the Early Middle Ages, 400–1100* undertook a study of the ways post-Roman societies used the Latin language of citizenship.[12] Ostensibly, prospects were bleak. The barbarian kingdoms that emerged after the disintegration of the Western Empire were less urbanised than Rome's eastern successors, the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Khalifate.[13] In some regions, notably the Isles, cities disappeared almost

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[12] For an outline of this project's aims and ambitions, see Els Rose, 'Citizenship Discourses in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 55 (2021): 1–21; for the project's output, see https://citizenshipdiscourses.sites.uu.nl/publications/, last accessed 15 September 2023.

[13] See the useful comparison by Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 609–692.

entirely, or had never been there to begin with.[14] Where cities did remain, local power was in the hands of bishops and royal representatives, with few opportunities for political participation by the city's population.[15] It was only with the emergence of the Italian communes in the late eleventh century that civic government once again became a serious alternative to territorial lordship.[16] Legal understandings of citizenship inherited from the Roman past also seem to have lost much of their force towards the early Middle Ages. Roman citizenship had first and foremost functioned as a legal status.[17] To be a Roman citizen meant having access to rights and privileges under Roman law, a privilege that the majority of inhabitants of the Roman polity did not have initially. When the Emperor Caracalla granted all free inhabitants of the empire citizenship in 212 CE, he deprived this once coveted status of much of its prestige and relevance. Roman citizenship, so the traditional argument goes, did not come to an end with the fall of the Western Empire, but in the centuries before it.[18] The citizen as an agent with particular legal rights and entitlements—what Maarten Prak recently called 'formal citizenship'—did re-emerge in

[14] For an overview of the urban situation in early medieval Britain and Ireland, Pam Crabtree, *Early Medieval Britain: The Rebirth of Towns in the Post-Roman West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Charles Doherty, 'Settlement in Early Ireland—A Review', in *A History of Settlement in Ireland*, ed. Terence Barry (London: Routledge, 2000), 50–80. For Gaul, Spain and Italy, see the contributions to André Carneiro, Neill Christie, and Pilar Diarte-Blasco, eds., *Urban Transformations in the Late Antique West: Materials, Agents, and Models* (Coimbra: Coimbra University Press, 2020).

[15] For the historiography on this development, see: Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose, 'Introduction', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Brélaz and Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 15–39, here 18–21. On the rise of the episcopal town, see: Frank Hirschmann, *Die Anfänge des Städtewesens in Mitteleuropa*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 2012).

[16] On the Italian communes, Philip Jones, *The Italian City-State: From Commune to Signoria* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1997), with Daniel Waley and Trevor Dean, eds., *The Italian City Republics: Fourth Edition* (London: Routledge, 2010) providing a more accessible entry-point. On alternative forms of Italian urban identity and government prior to the eleventh century, see the contributions in Cristina La Rocca and Piero Majocchi, eds., *Urban Identities in Northern Italy, 800–1100 ca.* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015).

[17] See on Roman citizenship the contribution by Flierman in this volume.

[18] Myles Lavan and Clifford Ando, eds., *Roman and Local Citizenship in the Long Second Century CE* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021); Javier Martínez Jiménez and Robert Flierman, 'The Uses of Citizenship in the Post-Roman West', in *Citizenship in Antiquity. Civic Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Jakub Filonik, Christine Plastow, and Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz (London: Routledge, 2023), 669–690, here 670.

the West eventually, but like the return of urban political autonomy, it is associated with the period post-1000 CE.[19]

The early medieval West, then, was not a civic world. Or so it seemed. For it became evident quickly that the concepts of city (*civitas*, *urbs*) and citizen (*civis*) were far from obsolescent. They continued to be used, widely, persistently, and in a great many different political and literary contexts. It was this continued use and re-use of civic vocabulary that the Citizenship Discourses-project set out to explore. Focusing on the Latin West in the period 400–1100 CE and taking in a wide array of written and material sources, the project sought to map out the mechanisms through which old civic language acquired new meanings and applications, especially in the context of Christianity as the dominant religion.

One crucial insight was the central importance of the Bible as a point of reference and interaction for post-Roman thinking about the city and citizenship. The Old and New Testament constitute a rich source of images, stories, and notions related to cities and their inhabitants.[20] Ostensibly many of these seem rather negative about earthly citizenship. The Bible provided examples of the city as a locus of sin—such as the Old Testament cities of Sodom, Gomorrah, and Nineveh—and inspired the subversive ideal of the Christian as a stranger (*peregrinus*) on earth and a citizen (*civis*) of the heavenly city (Ephesians 2:19; Philippians 3:20; Hebrews 11:13–16).[21] The project however showed that, far from closing the door on earthly citizenship, such imagery offered post-Roman authors new ways to define their earthly Christian communities in civic terms. Biblical ideals enriched rather than invalidated earthly claims of civic belonging.

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[19] Maarten Prak, *Citizens Without Nations: Urban Citizenship in Europe and the World, c.1000–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 27–49.

[20] For examples of the application of biblically inspired civic imagery in late antique preaching: Merel de Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming); for Jeremiah's laments on the destruction of Jerusalem as a point of reference in Gildas' writing, see Robert Flierman and Megan Welton, 'De Excidio Patriae: Civic Discourse in Gildas' Britain', *Early Medieval Europe* 29, no. 2 (2021): 137–160, here 156–157.

[21] For examples of the notion of the heavenly fatherland and heavenly citizenship in late antique and early medieval preaching: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming); Els Rose, 'Reconfiguring Civic Identity and Civic Participation in a Christianizing World. The Case of Sixth-Century Arles', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Brélaz and Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 271–294; Flierman and Welton, 'Gildas', 153–155.

A second feature that emerged from the project's studies was that this interaction with Biblical ideals was more than a scholarly or theoretical exercise: it could have far-reaching implications on how post-Roman communities and their authorities defined who belonged and who did not. The 'citizen' in late antique law was progressively defined according to a person's adherence to the Catholic faith; deviance from the norm meant social, legal, and even physical exclusion from the city. Besides law, liturgy was another important medium through which the boundaries between belonging and exclusion were drawn.[22] In the context of Mass, where the urban congregation gathered together, the sermon proved to be a particularly powerful tool to reconsider forms of 'good' and 'bad' citizenship.[23] Often performed in an urban context, sermons enabled bishops to capitalise on their congregants' expectations as members of an earthly city in order to shepherd them towards a proper Christian way of life. Through their moral exhortations, they redrew the boundaries of their civic communities along the yardstick of Christian faith and morality.[24]

This brings us to another crucial observation: the importance of participation and responsibility in Christian visions of civic community. To be a citizen in a Christian context meant having to act in the here and now. Late antique and early medieval sources claim a connection between a city's well-being and the moral conduct of its inhabitants and their rulers. Urban communities were expected to participate in communal religious actions—prayers, processions, public penance—to procure protection for their city in times of distress.[25] A city could be praised on account of its

[22] Els Rose, *Ritual Performance and the Discourse of Citizenship in Medieval Latin Liturgy* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming).

[23] Robert Flierman and Els Rose, 'Banished from the Company of the Good. Christians and Aliens in Fifth-Century Rome', *Al-Masāq* 32 (2020): 64–86.

[24] De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming); Els Rose, *Een gekooide tijger? Over Levend Latijn in Late Oudheid en (vroege) Middeleeuwen* (Inaugural Address Utrecht University, 2019), 16–23.

[25] For examples of formulations of communal devotional action in times of threat: Megan Welton, 'The City Speaks: Cities, Citizens, and Civic Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Traditio* 75 (2020): 1–37, here 19–22 and 28–29; De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming).

virtuous and devout citizens; yet, an abundance of vice could be considered a blemish on the city and associated with its physical ruin.[26] The demand of good citizenship also meant being a good citizen to others: a citizen was expected to keep a watchful and caring eye on other (prospective) members of the Christian community, and to make an ongoing effort to further their physical and spiritual well-being.[27]

The above implies an urban context. However, as the project revealed, the city was but one environment in which the language of citizenship was used in the post-Roman West. Monasteries and royal courts turned out to be other important contexts that relied on civic terminology to set norms of communal belonging and participation. Monks could be framed as soldiers that had to rally to defend their monastic city.[28] And a king who engulfed his citizens and fatherland in civil war could face the prospect of finding the gates of heavenly peace closed on him.[29]

The outcomes of the project have shown the profits of studying citizenship in the late antique and early medieval West outside the strict framework of 'Roman citizenship' with associated rights and duties. Approaching citizenship from the perspective of civic discourse opened new vistas on the relevance and functions that civic notions had and continued to have throughout late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages. This relevance was not confined to the literary and imaginative domain. Indeed, these notions also fulfilled a crucial role in defining and giving shape to urban and non-urban communities, and could have an impact on a community's built surroundings.

It is this interconnectedness of stones, people, and concepts that this volume seeks to explore further, through an extension of the project's

[26] For examples of the connection between virtuous citizens and the state and praiseworthiness of a city in early medieval panegyrics and invectives: Welton, 'The City Speaks', 23–26.

[27] For a bishop exhorting his audience to care for others in a physical and spiritual sense: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming); Rose, 'Reconfiguring Civic Identity', 283–289. About rulers being criticised for their conduct with regard to their *patria* and citizens: Flierman and Welton, 'Gildas', 153–155; about secular and ecclesiastical leaders praised for the protection they provide: Welton, 'The City Speaks', 10–11; and for further examples of bishops protecting their community: Welton, 'The City Speaks', 26 and 30–34; for the bishop in his pastoral role visualised as a caretaker of a civic community: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming).

[28] Welton, 'The City Speaks', 12–13.

[29] Flierman and Welton, 'Gildas', 153–155.

scope. For one, this volume will address the question of city, citizen, and citizenship in the medieval world by focusing on a larger chronological timeframe that reaches from late Antiquity towards the late Middle Ages and the beginning of the early modern period. In part, such chronological expansion should facilitate historical comparison. How do the citizenship discourses found in early medieval saints' lives relate to the civic practices encountered in late medieval Italy and Flanders? In part, the comparison is also about method. What happens when an approach developed for the early medieval West is brought to bear on the more heavily urbanised landscapes of the later Middle Ages? Second, the volume moves beyond the confines of Western Christianity, expanding its view from the West to the East and from the Christian to the Islamic world. Though the Byzantine world is less represented in the present volume, a wealth of literature on Byzantine cities and on the concept of people in Constantinople can be referred to here. Such studies have appeared recently in the form both of monographs[30] and of chapters in comparative volumes.[31] Thirdly, the project's original focus on text, image, and terminology is expanded to incorporate a wider array of sources, including material and archaeological evidence. By extension, the contributions to this volume will adopt different emphases and take different points of departure. Some will start from a city's physical structures; others are most concerned with the city's inhabitants and their actions; yet others take concepts or visualisations as point of entry. All contributions, however, testify to the interconnectedness of these three facets of 'the city'.

3   Volume Overview

In line with the above, the contributions following this Introduction (I) are organised under three headers: (II) Monumentalising the City, (III) Participating in the City, and (IV) Imagining the City. These sections approach the city as a physical manifestation, as a community of people,

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[30] Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic. People and Power in New Rome* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2015).

[31] Anthony Kaldellis, 'Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Constantinople', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Brélaz and Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 93–110; Avshalom Laniado, 'Social Status and Civic Participation in Early Byzantine Cities', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Brélaz and Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 111–144.

and as a concept, respectively. Within each section, the contributions are ordered in more or less chronological fashion. The volume concludes with an Epilogue (V).

Part II, Monumentalising the City, focuses on physical buildings, infrastructures, and monuments in the late antique and medieval city. It looks into the appearance and function of such structures in various urban contexts, while simultaneously asking who was involved in their creation and maintenance, and why. Stones and people are thus closely connected in this section, as indeed is the interaction between physical urban structures and the city as concept or ideal.

The overarching parameters are set in the opening contribution by Javier Martínez Jiménez. He starts with a broad question: what bound the inhabitants of the pre-industrial city together? Beyond functional answers—military safety, economic opportunities, state coercion—Martínez Jiménez emphasises the psychological side of this bond. Cities generated what he calls 'place-based identities', a sense of belonging in, and identification with, a shared environment and its local landmarks. Such place-based identity incentivised a city's inhabitants, and the elite in particular, to make investments towards its survival. Martínez Jiménez goes on to test this model against the late antique and early medieval Visigothic city. Post-Roman Spain was among the more urbanised of the western successor states, but it suffered all the same from dwindling resources, reduced elite spending, and general urban decline. Careful study of archaeological and epigraphical evidence allows Martínez Jiménez to put things in perspective: what changed was the scale and focus of elite investment in their urban surroundings, not the impulse to invest itself. He uncovers a rich cast of elite citizens—city councils, magistrates, bishops, private patrons—who spent resources on the building and upkeep of public monuments. This could involve essential infrastructure inherited from the Roman period, such as aqueducts and streets, but most resources appear to have gone towards Christian buildings: monasteries, funerary basilicas, episcopal complexes, and guest houses. Beyond expressions of elite piety, such Christian monuments served to reinforce a communal identity among the wider populace. Citizens were tied to the newly emerging Christian landscape by their participation in communal rituals such as Mass, burials, weddings, and urban processions. Overall, Martínez Jiménez is optimistic about the early medieval city's continued ability to forge civic identity through acts of elite spending on urban monuments.

The second contribution, by Peter Brown and Maaike van Berkel, turns to the early Islamic city under the Abbasids. Apart from a different political and religious setting, their contribution encounters different urban proportions. With inhabitant numbers ranging in the hundreds of thousands, Islamic cities such as Basra, Samarra, and Baghdad were significantly larger than anything found in the West at the time. All the same, Brown and Van Berkel face familiar challenges. There is an unhelpful academic paradigm, in this case not of urban decline, but of the Islamic city as chaotic and lacking in coherent planning. They also face piecemeal evidence, leading them creatively to combine archaeological and written sources. Brown and Van Berkel's central innovation is to approach the early Islamic city through the lens of water management, a felicitous choice as water was not just essential for human survival but also covered a wide range of secondary activities in the Islamic city. The resulting take on Islamic city-planning is a nuanced yet fundamental correction to the lingering paradigm of urban chaos. More than the Visigothic kings, the Abbasid caliphs were actively involved in the financing and planning of urban infrastructure, taking the lead on major irrigation schemes. Yet they were not afraid to delegate. For the organisation of hydraulic infrastructure within the different quarters or cantonments of the city, they ceded responsibility to the tribes or military units at the head of each cantonment. Still other arrangements come into focus on the level of the neighbourhood: commercial water-carriers delivering drinking water to private homes equipped with basins and cisterns; central courtyards with privately owned wells. Water management in the Islamic city, in short, covered a wide range of infrastructural practices. Essential for the city's functioning and survival, it was neither an exclusively top-down affair nor something that was left unregulated. In the Islamic city, water was a shared responsibility.

The third contribution, by Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, turns to the Carolingian city. Contemporary to the Abbasids, the Carolingians ruled over an extensive European empire. But contrary to the Abbasid khalifate, the Carolingian polity is not usually characterised as urban. The Carolingians ruled through palaces, monasteries, and forts, whereas such cities as existed in Europe under their rule were the domain of the bishop. Consulting a variety of contemporary texts, Ottewill-Soulsby contests this established reading of affairs, starting with Charlemagne's ill-fated foundation of a new city beyond the Rhine in 776, which was razed to the ground two years later by the Saxons. The episode, he shows, is revealing

on several levels. Like other post-Roman kings, Charlemagne and his successors were eager to emulate the Roman example of the ruler as city-founder. Wherever the Carolingians engaged in monumental construction of some sort, contemporaries were quick to celebrate their activities using urban analogies. At the same time, they had a flexible understanding of what exactly constituted a city. Delving further into one civic concept in particular, that of *civitas*, Ottewill-Soulsby shows that Carolingian thinking was heavily indebted to Cicero and Augustine, who had defined *civitas* not merely as a physical city, but also as a community of people under a shared law or united by love. This allowed the Carolingians to think of all sorts of settlements as *civitates*: actual cities, monasteries, royal palaces, and in one notable case, a village of dog-headed people thought to exist in the far North. The city was thus more central to Carolingian ambitions than is usually assumed. It was an ideal that helped them articulate what they expected of the various settlements they founded and ruled: what these settlements should look like and how their members should behave.

In the fourth and final contribution to Part II, Merlijn Hurx leads us through the late medieval Low Countries. Adopting an architectural perspective, he studies urban monuments as expressions of civic pride. At first, the reader might feel to have stepped into a different world, one that feels closer somehow to our own present-day urban environments. Many of the monuments he studies are still standing today. That said, Hurx' underlying concerns are similar to those of the previous contributors. That is: who was involved in creating these urban monuments and why? The question of agency yields rich results for the late medieval Low Countries: to erect a new church in fifteenth-century Delft meant the involvement of several territorial lords, bishops, the town council, city magistrates, the citizens, various guilds, and the builders themselves. We even get to see the bureaucratic procedures accompanying the building-process and the financial agreements underlying them. Hurx refrains from claiming a single ideological purpose for such building projects. Rather, he shows they enabled communication on various levels: a new town hall expressed something about the city to the citizens themselves, it was a form of intra-urban competition, and it was a way to negotiate the city's relationship to their territorial lord(s). A monument's size, form, and aesthetics all contributed to such communication. Yet as Hurx reminds us at the end, through the example of a public oath-taking in Bruges,

part of their ideological meaning was created by what people did within and in front of such monuments.

Part III of this volume, Participating in the City, is an attempt to get a better understanding of what such 'doing' could entail. It explores what it meant to be a citizen in a medieval city in terms of rights and duties and asks who got to set the norms for such participation. At the same time, contributions in this segment also focus on the boundaries between citizens and non-citizens, and the grounds on which such boundaries were drawn.

The first contribution, by Robert Flierman, explores the early medieval reception of two civic traditions: that of Rome and that of Christianity. Ostensibly, the two seem to be at odds. Citizenship in the Roman empire was a means of social differentiation and status; it entailed legal privileges and the right to participate politically in an urban context. Early Christian authors, on the other hand, employed the language of citizenship to articulate a spiritual sense of belonging that cut straight through social and legal ties. The Christian's principal loyalty should be to a world to come, visualised as a celestial city: the Heavenly Jerusalem. Flierman turns to an early sixth-century hagiographical text—Eugippius' *Commemoratorium Vitae Sancti Severini* (Recollections on the Life of the Holy Severinus) to show that these competing visions on citizenship could in fact be reconciled and merged into a single script of civic behaviour. Writing in post-Roman Italy under barbarian rule, Eugippius used the story of Severinus to lay out a model of civic community that revolved around collective responsibility, public piety, Christian orthodoxy, and charity to one's fellow citizens. He aimed this model at a diverse audience of monks, Roman aristocrats, and city-dwellers—Italy's Gothic ruling class was notably excluded—inviting each reader to apply it to their own specific circumstances. Only by acting as good citizens on earth and embracing the labours and wanderings that came with such an ordeal, could they hope to find their way to the heavenly fatherland.

Good citizenship is the subject also of the second contribution within this segment, by Josephine van den Bent and Angela Isoldi. Their study returns to the issue of water management in the Islamic world, but rather than looking at urban infrastructure as a whole, they focus on water-related charity by individual citizens. Alms-giving was an important, indeed mandatory, act for Muslims. In the context of the Islamic city, providing drinking-water to the community through a permanent charitable endowment (*waqf*) was simultaneously an act of great piety and a

means of social communication. Taking Abbasid Baghdad and Mamluk Caïro as their case studies, Van den Bent and Isoldi explore the practical forms of such endowments and who was involved in them. The evidence for Baghdad is limited but suggestive: court-connected men and women, born to a low status, seeking to cement their social elevation by providing their fellow citizens with access to drinking-water by building ponds and tanks. The evidence for the Mamluk Caïro period is more copious, bespeaking a civic environment in which urban dignitaries were morally expected to make water endowments, which typically took the form of underground cisterns, filled by water-carriers and staffed by janitors tasked with cleaning and distribution. In part, as Van den Bent and Isoldi show, this new charitable norm was informed by environmental urgency, as recession of the Nile made drinking-water less accessible to the common citizen. Yet political and religious motives remained pronounced as well: many cisterns were intended to be conspicuous landmarks in the urban landscape, decorated with ornate facades and integrated in larger religious building-complexes.

Spending resources on the well-being of fellow citizens was one way to signal and cement one's civic status. Using the right language was another. The third contribution, by Marco Mostert, poses the question to what extent literacy could function as a boundary that separated citizens from non-citizens in the medieval world. Taking late medieval Scandinavia as a case study, he arrives at several conclusions. The classical ideological distinction between the cultural town-dweller and the uncultured peasant was not very salient in a Scandinavian context. In part, because towns were quite small and functioned within a dominantly rural society, in part because continued usage of runes allowed for literacy without formal schooling. Where Mostert does see the emergence of writing-related boundaries is within the cities themselves. These boundaries were associated, first, with knowledge of written Latin as opposed to the vernaculars, and second, with having access to written administrative procedures. Writing was undeniably associated with power in the Scandinavian towns. Their status and rights as towns were recorded in charters. Their political and legal procedures relied on written forms. Citizens had to be formally enrolled on a citizen-list. Town scribes functioned as important keepers of communal records and institutional history. Overall, Mostert thus stresses practical boundaries over ideological ones: having access to the right documents was more socially distinctive in Scandinavian towns than being perceived as a literate person.

With the next two contributions, by Claire Weeda and Rob Meens respectively, we move once again to the high and late medieval Low Countries. Both are concerned with the boundaries between citizens and non-citizens, though they focus on different sides of the divide. Weeda looks in from the city's social periphery. Her study explores the ambivalent civic status of the so-called ribalds, a loosely defined social group of able-bodied paupers who moved from city to city in search of temporary work. Weeda traces their appearance back to the twelfth century where they appear in a military context, as foot soldiers tasked with the more dishonourable tasks of digging latrines, carrying off the fallen, and pillaging conquered cities. By the thirteenth century, they also appear within the cities themselves, removing waste, cleaning ditches, and declogging waterways. Legally, the ribalds were non-citizens. Their involvement in dirty and dishonourable work also made them an object of widespread moral censure. In practice, however, they were indispensable for the civic health of the late medieval city. As Weeda pointedly asserts, in an urban environment increasingly concerned with pollution and cleanliness, removing dirt constituted a hallmark of civic participation. Much the same could be said of the ribald's involvement in urban armies and militias. Despite relying on them in essential ways, cities took care to maintain and even exploit the ribalds' outsider status. At urban festivals and postwar celebrations, the ribalds were publicly ridiculed, allowing the citizens to dissociate themselves from the ribalds' dishonourable toils and reconfirm their own civic honour and status. In both practical and ideological terms, the non-citizen proved crucial for the city's well-being.

Whereas Weeda seeks to understand medieval citizenship by studying those excluded from it, Meens turns to those on the inside. His contribution is a detailed case study of Galbert of Bruges' history of the murder of the Flemish count Charles the Good in 1127. An urban notary who was himself present in Bruges during the assassination, Galbert offers an insider's view on a city in turmoil. Yet as Meens suggests, his history might also be read as an attempt to call his fellow citizens to order and reinstate a sense of community among them. Galbert pursued various narrative strategies to this end. He almost exclusively spoke about the citizens of Bruges in collective terms, papering over social divisions and political factions, including the fact that many in the city had supported the murder. To reinforce this suggestion of civic cohesion, he offered his readers a number of enemies and threats, such as the provost Bertulf, whom Galbert held responsible for the assassination, and the ill-behaved

and villainous citizens of Gent. Apart from such overt boundary-setting, Meens also discerns more implicit forms of exclusion in Galbert's narrative: women did not have an active role in Galbert's conception of the citizen body, nor did the unfree.

Mechanisms of civic inclusion and exclusion are further explored in the last contribution to Part III, by Rozanne Versendaal, which deals with urban festive culture as a context of civic participation and community-building. Versendaal looks specifically at a type of parodic texts, so-called *mandements joyeux* or joyful ordinances, and their societal uses in fifteenth-century Burgundy and Northern France. Modelled on the strict textual conventions of diplomatic missives, the *mandements* were highly literary documents. Yet they could reach a wide audience: they were meant to be performed during urban festivals in front of a large urban crowd, with citizens themselves being part of the performance. Beyond parodying well-known diplomatic conventions, *mandements joyeux* engaged in what Versendaal terms 'citizenship discourse': they enabled citizens and their authorities to enter into a staged conversation about communal values and contemporary issues. Versendaal thus stresses their situational nature. One of her two central case studies, the *Mandement de froidure* by Jean Molinet, was performed in Valenciennes in 1460, prior to the Lenten Fast. This *mandement* saw a King of Drinks calling his male and female soldiers to arms using exuberant and sexually explicit imagery, lampooning the religious restrictions associated with Lentfasting in what Versendaal considers a remarkably inclusive manner. Such calls for unity among the citizens of Valenciennes and surrounding towns take on additional political significance when we consider Molinet's close association with the dukes of Burgundy: the unifying message of his *Mandement de froidure* fitted the growing ducal ambition at the time to further integrate their disparate domains. The citizenship discourse of *mandements joyeux*, Versendaal concludes, offered room to several distinct voices, who could engage in social criticism but could also support the claims of worldly authorities.

Part IV, Imagining the City, turns from participation to imagination. The principal focus here is not on cities or citizenship per se, but on those who used such concepts, wrote about them, and visualised and depicted them. From scriptural cities in medieval exegesis, to imagined itineraries to Rome, this section aims to understand how, why, and in what contexts medieval individuals and communities reached for the concept of the city. Naturally, this context could be that of the physical city, generating a

complex interaction between how the city was imagined and how it was organised, experienced, and lived. At the same time, this section seeks to address how medieval thinking on the ideal city and civic community could take place also in non-urban contexts: the periphery, the monastery.

The first contribution, by Merel de Bruin-van de Beek, looks at civic imagery in late antique sermons. She deals specifically with the sermon corpus of Maximus of Turin, whose preaching, as De Bruin-van de Beek shows, contains examples of a constant interplay between the real and the imagined city. In the first sermon that De Bruin-van de Beek discusses, we see how Maximus engaged with the ongoing threat of hostilities looming over Turin. While sympathising with his congregants in their anxiety, he at the same time recognises Turin's predicament as an opportunity for communal introspection. After all, the present dangers were but a prefiguration of the Final Judgement. Beyond defending their city physically, the citizens of Turin should thus take care to fortify their spiritual defences. Here Maximus drew from the people's present experiences as well as Scripture to project the soul as a city that had to be protected with all manners of religious action and virtuous conduct. Scripture also allowed Maximus to assert his own authority as a preacher within the Christian community of Turin. Just as God had placed the prophet Ezekiel as a watchman over the People of Israel to look out from the urban heights for enemies and to provide timely warnings to the citizens, so Maximus was responsible to God for spiritually guarding Christ's flock by pointing out sin and the danger of God's future judgement. For Maximus, the city was thus at once a communal reality and a rhetorical resource. A persuasive Christian bishop, De Bruin-van de Beek shows, was able to think along both lines.

The second contribution, by Megan Welton, dives further into Christian uses of civic rhetoric, underlining that such rhetoric did not necessarily require an urban setting or audience. Taking the reader through four successive textual genres used in the post-Roman West—biblical exegesis, liturgy, saints' lives, and letters—Welton shows that the image of the city could present itself to any medieval Christian who thought about 'community', whether that community was an actual city, a church, a monastery, a kingdom, or the Christian Church at large. This flexibility recalls the remarks by Ottewill-Soulsby on Carolingian usage of the term *civitas*. But where Ottewill-Soulsby stressed the importance of Cicero and Augustine, Welton reiterates the importance of the Bible as a shared point of reference, above all the Book of Revelation, with its detailed description

of Heavenly Jerusalem. This description offered the Christian a promise of Salvation and an ideal model of earthly community. Furthermore, it catered to a deep-seated need to think about morality and virtue in material terms, for example, the saints as the gems studding the walls of the Heavenly City, setting a bright example to the living, or the Church as a wall that can never be brought low by the battering ram of heresy. The analogy of the city and its constituent parts—walls, towers, gates, adornments—could make abstract Christian ideals concrete.

The final two contributions, by Klazina Staat and Natalia Petrovskaia respectively, move from the Heavenly Jerusalem towards that other archetypical city in western medieval thinking: Rome. Both focus not on the city itself, but on how Rome was imagined in text and image. Staat's case study is a well-known Carolingian composite manuscript: Stiftsbibliothek Einsiedeln, codex 326 (1076), which contains a rich collection of texts on Rome, including an anthology of inscriptions, a list of city-walks, a description of the walls, a description of Roman liturgical rites, and a collection of poetic texts. Its patent concern with Roman monuments and urban space have led many to believe the manuscript was a guide for pilgrims. Combining careful study of the manuscript with recent scholarship on Carolingian perceptions of Rome, Staat arrives at a different conclusion: the manuscript was intended to be used in a monastic context. It made Rome accessible—'bringing Rome home', in her words—to monks who would probably never visit the city in person, but nevertheless sought to enter the city mentally, and witness the rich heritage on display there: Rome's buildings, her imperial ideology, her literature, her religious festivities and rituals. The Carolingians knew Rome as an actual city, with physical monuments and ongoing political relevance, but they simultaneously thought of Rome as an ideal they sought to imitate and emulate. Staat unearths an up-and-close example of how such imitation and emulation was facilitated.

Natalia Petrovskaia's contribution, lastly, compares an imagined literary journey to and from Rome, the *Dream of Maxen Wledic* (ca. 1215–1217), with a set of real travel-accounts by Gerald of Wales (1146–1223). Both texts originated in a medieval Welsh context, in one and the same intellectual milieu, despite being composed in different languages. Petrovskaia asks how members of this Welsh milieu would have conceptualised the city and the roads towards it. Her texts reveal several concerns. First, both showcase a casual familiarity with Rome and the roads and places along the way. Rome was not perceived as a distant or alien place. Travel

to the city took place regularly, to the extent that even fictional accounts played with their readers' expectations of these places. Second, and somewhat contrary to Staat's Carolingian case study, both Welsh stories were more interested in human interactions than in physical monuments. They conceived of space as something that was given meaning by those interacting with it. Finally, these texts, and the *Dream of Maxen Wledic* in particular, bespeak a political agenda. The story re-imagines the Roman past by showing Britain to have conquered Rome rather than the other way around. In doing so, thus Petrovskaia, the author sought to reclaim Welsh autonomy in the face of Anglo-Norman oppression.

The three research lines of the volume are brought together in the Epilogue (V). Els Rose, who instigated and headed the *Citizenship Discourses* project, takes up the task. Her contribution reflects on the volume as a whole and maps out directions for future research. Taking the language of citizenship as a point of departure, she emphasises the performative potential inherent in that language, and hence, the scholarly need to explore that performative potential further. Language, used in a performative context, gains the capacity not merely to organise, but also to realise. For civic language, thus Rose, this means looking beyond the strictly legal and political understanding of citizenship as a collection of rights and duties guaranteed on an institutional level, towards its symbolic uses to effect change and communicate new models of community. It also means paying attention to the non-citizen—the outsider, the migrant, the refugee—who may not or not yet be a citizen before the law, but can speak and act out the language all the same. Rose singles out communal ritual and worship as a particularly fruitful direction for future research on medieval citizenship. Leading the reader through striking examples from the Western and Eastern Christian liturgy, she stresses the 'transformative force' of civic language in this context. As ongoing participants in the Christian cult, Christians were continuously 're-writing' the *civitas*, which could include its buildings, its citizens, and its ideals.

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Monumentalising the City

Civic Commitment in the Post-Roman West: The Visigothic Case Study

Javier Martínez Jiménez

1 INTRODUCTION

The emergence of cities marks the end of pre-history, since these settlements require complex systems of socio-economic administration and redistribution of resources. However, the concentration of people in large numbers in these spaces with poor sanitation and irregular food supplies led to exceedingly high mortality rates. This makes the existence and growth of cities in pre-industrial contexts a paradox. The pre-industrial city as a settlement type, therefore, could not rely on natural growth and depended on a steady input of rural populations.[1] This appreciation is one that was acknowledged by ancient authors: Martial, Horace, Juvenal, and Seneca's vivid descriptions of Roman cities, even satirical as they were, underline that this perception of dirty streets and floods of rural migrants

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[1] McNeill's paradox, described in Guillermo Algaze, 'Entropic Cities. The Paradox of Urbanism in Ancient Mesopotamia', *Current Anthropology* 59, no. 1 (2018): 23–54.

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is not only crafted by historians.[2] This opens the valid question that can be asked about the importance of urban settlements for their inhabitants in Antiquity: what bound town dwellers together? What kept cities from imploding?[3] No single reason can be given to answer this question, naturally, and a combination of factors (from military safety and economic stability to religious duty and state coercion) can be given.

One of these many aspects could have been psychological: the feeling of attachment, the sense of belonging, and the integration in a community that satisfies a series of emotional and physiological needs. Psychologists from the 1930s onwards have underlined how a person who is comfortable where they live will develop this attachment naturally. Moreover, they will invest resources (capital, effort, surplus, etc.) into preserving the settlement's status quo that allows them to survive, and this is something that can be extended to group behaviour. This shared interest is one of the pillars that forms place-based identities: a sense of identification with a shared environment and its local landmarks.[4] These processes have been studied through the lens of Place Theory by anthropologists, social geographers, sociologists, and environmental psychologists, and there is an extensive body of literature covering how these processes develop nowadays.[5] However, there has been little to no use of this theoretical perspective to study groupings in historical periods—especially in the early Middle Ages.[6]

[2] Alex Scobie, 'Slums, Sanitation, and Mortality in the Roman World', *Klio* 68 (1986): 399–433. Cf. Mart. 6.93.4, 10.5.5 and 10.12; Sen. Ep. 56.1 and 104.6; Hor. Ep. 1.17.6; Juv. 3.62-4.

[3] For the Mesopotamian examples, cf. Augusta McMahon, 'Early Urbanism in Northern Mesopotamia', *Journal of Archaeological Research* 28 (2020): 289–337.

[4] Marco Lalli, 'Urban-Related Identity: Theory, Measurement, and Empirical Findings', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 12 (1992): 285–303; Jeffrey Smith and Ricardo Aranha, 'Cognitive Mapping as a Method to Assess Peoples' Attachment to Place', *Geographical Review* 112, no. 1 (2022): 6–26; Clare Twigger-Ross and David Uzzel, 'Place and Identity Processes', *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 16 (1996): 205–220.

[5] Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 3rd ed. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008 [1996]); Gerard Delanty, *Community*, 3rd ed. (London: Routledge, 2018 [2010]); Gary Fine, 'The Sociology of the Local: Action and its Publics', *Sociological Theory* 28 (2010): 355–377; Stephanie Taylor, *Narratives of Identity and Place* (London: Routledge, 2009).

[6] David Wheatley, 'Making Space for an Archaeology of Place', *Internet Archaeology* 15 (2004); Javier Martínez Jiménez and Carlos Tejerizo García, 'Assessing Place-Based Identities in the Early Middle Ages: A Proposal for Visigothic Iberia', *Early Medieval Europe* 31 (2023): 23–50.

In Classical Antiquity, urban administration relied heavily on elite expenditure. Private investment was part of the social contract, as defined in municipal statutes, by which elites invested in the city in order to obtain honours and public office. This munificence (also called euergetism) was specific to an urban government where magistrates were (s)elected from members of the few chosen families that formed the local council.[7] Membership and participation in these activities was restricted through municipal citizenship.[8]

This municipal model and its associated monumentality has, for a long time, determined our perception of the ancient city, and has been set as the golden standard and benchmark against which other periods are compared, making later phases pale in comparison.[9] However, it is clear that there was public munificence after Classical Antiquity. At least into the sixth century, part of this investment of private capital continued to exist within the systems arranged by and for the local, lay administration. And yet, these 'traditional' forms of lay, civic investment existed in parallel to pious charity.[10] Lay munificence and religious largesse are social manifestations of the same social agreement: to invest into the community's needs. Place Theory can explain this as different manifestations of the ongoing social commitment from the elites towards the local community to preserve the urban fabric to ensure the continuity of the city. They are two sides of the same coin, where resources of the few are re-invested back into the space they share with the rest of their fellow town dwellers.

In this paper, I want to analyse through this sociological lens the different ways in which early medieval urban dwellers invested resources in their cities, presenting these investments out of charity/civic duty as evidence for community commitment. Investing in infrastructure maintenance and new public monuments were ways of reinforcing the religious,

[7] Arjan Zuiderhoek, 'Euergetism', in *Oxford Classical Dictionary*; Accessed 16 March 2022.

[8] Clifford Ando, 'Local Citizenship and Civic Participation in the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose, CELAMA 27 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 39–63.

[9] Bryan Ward-Perkins, 'Continuists, Catastrophists, and the Towns of Post-Roman Northern Italy', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 65 (1997): 157–176.

[10] Michele Salzman, 'From a Classical to a Christian City: Civic Euergetism and Charity in Late Antique Rome', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 1, no. 1 (2013): 65–85.

social, and political ties that bound urban communities, preserving and maintaining the structural fabric, and ensuring the social and economic viability of the settlement. To exemplify how this worked in the early medieval Latin West, I will focus on urban examples from the Iberian Peninsula during the Visigothic period, paying particular attention to its state formation phase (560s–630s). In the end, I will conclude that in the first post-Roman centuries, Roman civic behaviour had adapted to new social circumstances. Lay and ordained urban leaders still invested in their cities despite the changes in which these were performed, all for the sake of their community's survival.

2   Early Medieval Cities as Place-Defined Communities

In order to assess the psychological aspect of early medieval urban invest-ments as part of a community's commitment to its environment, it is necessary to introduce the concept of place and place-defined commu-nities, since these are terms that are not usually encountered in the archaeological or historical literature.[11] Then we will move on to look at different aspects of the early medieval city in Gaul and Italy that can be understood or re-interpreted from this perspective (citizenship, local lead-ership and communal involvement), before we can focus on the Visigothic case studies.

2.1   The Psychology of Place

From a psychological perspective 'place', 'space', community, identity, and commitment are intimately interconnected, and they explain each other. In Place Theory, 'space' and 'place' are not synonymous. 'Space' is a frame of reference, the physical surroundings that can be natural or anthropic. As a space, the Cartuja Campus of the University of Granada is located on a hill, to the north of the medieval city, and its layout is defined by the different faculties that have been built on it, plus the green spaces in between. 'Place' is the product of a cognitive process; place is the subjective understanding of the surroundings. As a place, the Cartuja Campus is different for each individual that lives, works, or studies in it; it

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[11] Wheatley, 'Making Space for an Archaeology of Place'.

is the accumulation of memories and those spots that accumulate the most (the library, the cafeteria, the corridors) are more relevant in the conception of the campus. Space is the same for everyone, but the perception and understanding of place varies. Similarly, place is multi-dimensional, as it includes individual memories and handed-down histories, adding the local past as an extra point of reference.[12]

At a psychological level, individuals tend to cluster and form groups because they recognise in other people emotions and problems that mirror their own. This sympathetic perception and the emphasis on shared interests (the transition from being-with-others to being-for-others) prompt the development of these groupings into communities when common objectives and self-regulating norms and rites arise.[13] Such communities can, because of spatial proximity and through the development of *habitus* associated to their cohabited space, become communities that define themselves according to their shared perceptions of place. Members of these communities can choose to use this form of belonging (individually or collectively) to define themselves against outsiders, promoting place-based identities. These layers of identity, therefore, emerge from: (a) the shared understanding of place and (b) the pre-existing bonds of loyalty and solidarity that outsiders cannot replicate. This means that place-based forms of identity are not completely dependent on insider validation (they are more inclusive), but rather depend on localised, continuous interactions, and can form stronger and more stable forms of self-presentation at group levels.[14]

Place-defined communities are as stable as their shared environment, and it is perfectly possible for communities to dwindle, and spaces to be

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[12] Tim Cresswell, *Place: An Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2014), 7–14; Chris Post, 'Making Place Through Memorial Landscape,' in *Explorations in Place Attachment*, ed. Jeffrey Smith (London: Routledge, 2017), 83–96, here 84–85; Fine, 'The Sociology of the Local'.

[13] Phillip Lersch, *La estructura de la personalidad* (Barcelona: Scientia, 1971 [*Der Aufbau der Charakter,* 1938]), 220–224; Michel Richard, *Los dominios de la psicología* (Madrid: Istmo, 1974 [*La psychologie et ses domains: de Freud a Lacan,* 1971]), 275–277; Sigmund Freud, *Psicología de las masas* (Madrid: Alianza, 1984 [*Massenpsychologie und Ich-analyse,* 1921]).

[14] Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 106–110; cf. Ellen Badone, 'Ethnicity, Folklore, and Local Identity in Rural Brittany', *Journal of American Folklore* 100 (1986): 161–190. Cf. Mateusz Fafinski, *Roman Infrastructure in Early Medieval Britain: The Adaptations of the Past in Text and Stone* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021), 16.

abandoned.[15] It is as a result of this danger that we see commitment towards place and towards the local community developing as part of the group's norms. Communities develop mechanisms to ensure their long-term survival, and these put extra emphasis on those in positions of power and with disposable wealth, who nevertheless rely on their local power base to retain their status.[16] Private investment of resources (and the redistribution of public wealth) for the benefit of the local community in the form of civic munificence and religious charity can be seen in this light. Even if they respond to different individual motivations, the social process is still the same. These examples of individual commitment exist in parallel to other forms of group participation; shared rites, *habitus*, and customs with a specific local-focused meaning that help in the development of a sense of cohesion.[17] With this in mind, perhaps, we may see the archaeological evidence for the cities of the sixth and seventh centuries from a new perspective.

2.2   *Citizenship and Community Belonging*

Commitment to a place required the recognition of a community of inhabitants, separating those *in* from those *out*. In Antiquity, this was done through a legal form of belonging, one ruled by citizenship, which depended on a combination of residence, heritage, and active participation.[18]

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[15] Patricia McAnany and Maxime Lamoureux-St-Hilaire, 'An Archaeological Perspective on Recursive Place-Making and Unmaking', in *Detachment from Place. Beyond an Archaeology of Settlement Abandonment*, ed. Maxime Lamoureux-St-Hilaire and Scott Macrae (Louisville, CO: University Press of Colorado, 2020), 11–23.

[16] Richard Stedman, 'Toward a Social Psychology of Space. Predicting Behaviour from Place-Based Cognitions, Attitude and Identity', *Environment & Behavior* 34, no. 5 (2002): 561–581; Lalli, 'Urban-Related Identity'.

[17] Pierre Bourdieu, *Esquisse d'une théorie de la pratique* (Paris: Seuil, 2000). Cf. Joseph Rykwert, *The Idea of a Town. The Anthropology of Urban Form in Rome, Italy and the Ancient World* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976), here 188–189; John Sheid, *The Gods, the State, and the Individual* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016), 105.

[18] Javier Martínez Jiménez and Robert Flierman, 'The Uses of Citizenship in the Post-Roman West', in *Citizenship in Antiquity: Civic Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Jakub Filonik, Christine Plastow, and Rachel Zelnick-Abramovitz (London: Routledge, 2023), 669–690.

In classical Roman thought, citizenship (*civitas*) was a complex concept,[19] especially as civic language was used to describe belonging to the overall Roman political system while also preserving local connotations related to municipal duties.[20] Overall, citizens were understood to be a community with shared customs and laws, an idea that had its roots deep in Greek precedents.[21] In late Antiquity, Augustine nuanced this take by defining citizens as a group of people bound by loyalty (*hominum multitudo aliquo societatis vinculo conligata*).[22] This sense of citizenship representing the local interests of an urban community was preserved in the post-Roman centuries: Cassiodorus in sixth-century Italy underlined this local involvement by declaring that 'to each citizen, their city (*urbs sua*) is the common good (*res publica*)';[23] later, in the seventh century, Isidore of Seville explained in Augustinian terms that 'citizens (*cives*) are called such because they live together (*quod in unum coeuntes vivant*) so they may live more honourably and safer together'.[24]

The return to (or, rather, the continuity of) the local connotations of civic language is noticeable in other Latin authors from the sixth and seventh centuries, from whom we get the impression that *civis* was one way to describe a city dweller; a member of the urban populace and its local community.[25] In Isidore's words, again, the citizen body was made up by the people (*populus*) and the city elders (*senioribus civitatis*),[26]

[19] Claude Nicolet, *The World of the Citizen in Republican Rome* (London: University of California Press, 1980); Adrian Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973).

[20] Ando, 'Local Citizenship'.

[21] Plato, *Prot.* 322.c-d; Arist. *Pol.* 1.1252.b; Cic. *Rep.* 6.9.13, where *civitas* is a cluster of people bound by law; cf. Neal Wood, *Cicero's Social and Political Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 159–165. See also: Josine Blok, *Citizenship in Classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[22] Aug. *Civ. Dei* 15.8.

[23] Cass. *Var.* 9.2.

[24] Isid. Hisp. *Etym.* 9.4.2.

[25] Ralph Mathisen, 'Personal Identity in the Later Roman Empire', *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 215–248; Javier Martínez Jiménez, 'Urban Identity and Citizenship in the West Between the Fifth and Seventh Centuries', *Al-Masaq* 32, no. 1 (2020): 87–108; Els Rose, 'Citizenship Discourses in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 55 (2021): 1–21.

[26] Isid. Hisp. *Etym.* 9.4.6.

which is to say the town dwellers and the leaders.[27] From an anthropological perspective, we can see these post-Roman forms of defining citizen bodies as self-defined communities linked together by residence, shared understandings of their environment, and divided according to unequal distribution of wealth and power.

These forms of local belonging were validated by opposition and recognition,[28] and were recognised as such in the post-Roman period in ways that echoed those from the Classical past. For instance, the way the monarchy could promote and demote settlements by creating and dismantling bishoprics was one of the ways of acknowledging certain local communities with an urban tradition as potential foci of the central administration.[29] Similarly, the way cities demanded exemptions and privileges shows a degree of community self-awareness[30]—something that can also be seen in competitive construction projects (but more on that later). The best way a community had to validate itself, however, was by acting as one towards itself. It is here that the urban leaders and neighbourly expectations come into play.

2.3   Leading the People, Managing the City: Elites and Civic Commitment

Cities as groups of citizen dwellers (*civitates*) acted as place-defined communities, and the existence of local forms of citizenship show that city-defined communities could see themselves as groups with shared space focused interests. However, we should also note that the social divisions within the civic community reflected a division of power. Members of local elites, lay and ecclesiastical alike, represented the municipal institution that continued into these centuries. As such, their sociological role was framed as it had been in the Roman past; they were those with means to invest back into their shared space. Sociological models tell us that it was socially and politically expected from them to invest and commit

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[27] Cf. Gaius, *Inst.* 1.3 (*sine patriciis ceteri cives*) and *Dig.* 50.16.238 (*plebs est ceteri cives sine senatoribus*).

[28] Jenkins, *Social Identity*, 102–206.

[29] Pablo Poveda Arias, 'La diócesis episcopal en la Hispania Visigoda: concepción, construcción y disputas por su territorio', *Hispania Sacra* 71 (2019): 9–24.

[30] E.g. Greg. Tur. *DLH*. 5.28, 9.30; Cass. *Var*., 3.40, 3.42, 4.20; *Vita Caesarii*, 1.20; Toledo XIII, can. 3.

resources. The mechanisms of how this was implemented in a historical context, however, are less clear.

The issue of who ruled the post-Roman city is hotly debated.[31] The evidence is scarce and patchy, so it is impossible to make generalising assumptions about the West as a whole or about any of its regions in particular. Furthermore, the different evolutions of main cities vs. secondary nuclei make any analysis more complex. For these reasons, it is with great care that we must understand the legal aspects of running a late antique city on the one hand, versus the anthropological expectations of a place-defined community on the other.

The administrative changes imposed during the fourth-century reorganisation of the Roman Empire had already transformed the way cities levied taxes; the growing demands from the central administration meant that town councils relied more on the substantial fees individuals had to pay in order to hold office (known as liturgies/*litourgiai*, *summa honoraria* or *civilia munera*), and early Roman offices like the *duumviri* or the *aediles* disappeared.[32] In late Antiquity there was still a local public career (a *cursus honorum*) and local aristocrats (*honestiores*) still had to belong to the local council (the *curiales*), but appointments to office did not rely any longer on public participation/election. Most executive powers had been transferred to centrally appointed figures like the *comites* (counts)—all of this while a parallel, local career emerged through the church, offering local elites a way to obtain political power without having to spend personal fortunes into public office.[33]

After the fifth century, the picture we have for the running of cities is much blurrier, and it varies greatly from one region to another. The resilience of some urban systems and the disappearance of others happened at an extremely regional level and independent from the degree

[31] Julio Cesar Magalhães de Oliveira, 'Le quotidien institutionnel des cités tardives', *Antiquité Tardive* 26 (2018): 23–46.

[32] Jean-Michel Carrié, 'La législation impériale sur les gouvernements municipaux dans l'Antiquité tardive', *Antiquité Tardive* 26 (2018): 85–125; Mark Whittow, 'Ruling the Late Roman and Early Byzantine City: A Continuous History', *Past and Present* 129 (1990): 3–29.

[33] Bryan Ward-Perkins, 'The Cities,' in *The Cambridge Ancient History Vol. XIII: The Late Empire, AD 337–425*, ed. Averil Cameron and Peter Garnsey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 371–410; J. H. W. G. Liebeschuetz, 'The End of the Ancient City', in *The City in Late Antiquity*, ed. John Rich (London: Routledge, 1992), 1–50.

of Roman-like centralisation of the overarching successor state.[34] Counts and bishops remained, overall, as the central individuals running the city. In the sources, the bishop emerges as the main local figure, representing the interests of his flock, but we must remember that most of the sources backing this are hagiographical or ecclesiastical in nature, and the political influence of bishops might be overrepresented.[35] Besides, we know from written documents from sixth-century and seventh-century Gaul and Italy that local city councils still existed. Members of these councils still were expected to act as magistrates with administrative responsibilities, mostly clerical and bureaucratic, especially as registrars and notaries.[36] It is this expectation of *caritas civica* praised by Cassiodorus that underlines the local relevance of civic commitment by urban elites.[37]

Much of the late antique literature on the taxation system seems to underline the complaints about these burdensome payments, but there is no evidence to suggest that these were any heavier than in previous

[34] See: Daniel Osland, 'The Role of Cities in the Early Medieval Economy', *Al-Masāq* 35 no. 3 (2023): 343–363, https://doi.org/10.1080/09503110.2023.2211882.

[35] Simon Loseby, 'Gregory's Cities: Urban Functions in Sixth-Century Gaul', in *Franks and Alamanni in the Merovingian Period: An Ethnographic Perspective*, ed. Ian Wood (San Marino: Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Social Stress, 1998), 239–270.

[36] For Italy: Francesca Sansoni, 'I papiri di Ravenna: gesta municipalia e procedure di insinuazione', in *L'héritage byzantin en Italie (VIIIe–XIIe siècle). I. la fabrique documentaire*, ed. Jean-Marie Martin, Annick Peters-Custet, and Vivien Prigent, Collection de l'École Française de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2011), 9–32; Niels Paul Arends, *Fragments from the Past. A Social-Economic Survey of the Landholding System in the Ravenna Papyri* (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2018). Other references to the role of councils can be seen in the letters of Gregory the Great (2.9, 2.8, 8.15, 9.58, 9.71, 9.98, 13.18, etc.). I would like to thank Andrew Wallace-Hadrill for pointing these out. See also: Merle Eisenberg and Paolo Tedesco, 'Seeing the Churches Like the State: Taxes and Wealth Redistribution in Late Antique Italy', *Early Medieval Europe* 29, no. 4 (2021): 505–534. For Gaul: Josiane Barbier, *Archives oubliées du haut moyen âge. Les gesta municipalia en Gaule franque (VIᵉ–IXᵉ siècle)* (Paris: Champion, 2014).

[37] Cas. *Var*. 1.21.1 (citizens and *amor patriae*), 3.10 (duty towards local city), 3.49 (*caritas civica*), 7.44 (civic duty towards local monuments); Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Cities of Cassiodorus: The Resilience of Urban Values' in *Remembering and Forgetting the Ancient City*, ed. Javier Martínez Jiménez and Sam Ottewill-Soulsby (Oxford: Oxbow, 2022): 23–44.

periods,[38] and since the cull on local taxes from municipal lands,[39] town councils appear to have relied on these payments to fund their expenses. A regular expenditure could have been writing equipment and material like parchment and papyrus (the sort that Gregory of Tours complains about).[40] These materials are essential in the running of councils, which evidently produced paperwork at a rate which is higher than what we can imagine based on the surviving evidence. Most funds would have been invested back into the city through the maintenance of infrastructure. Imperial legislation underlined the need of local involvement in the preservation of hydraulic infrastructure, for example.[41] Some of these laws relieved local councils' burdens and expected private landowners to keep public aqueducts that crossed their lands clean,[42] but public workmen in charge of aqueduct maintenance still existed in sixth-century Gaul and Italy.[43] Similarly, investment into public baths seems to have come to a halt, and although some continued (perhaps through leases to private individuals), municipal funds had traditionally been also invested in fuel and maintenance.[44]

[38] Harmut Ziche, 'Making Late Roman Taxpayers Pay: Imperial Government Strategies and Practices', in *Violence in Late Antiquity: Perceptions and Practices*, ed. H. Drake (London: Routledge, 2006), 127–137, here 127–128.

[39] Hendrik Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City. Architecture and Ceremony in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 30; Ward-Perkins, 'The Cities'; but we should remember that '[t]here is no satisfactory account of municipal taxation under the Empire': Luuk de Ligt, *Fairs and Markets in the Roman Empire: Economic and Social Aspects of Periodic Trade in a Pre-industrial Economy* (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 208, n. 31.

[40] Greg. Tur. *DLH*, 5.20. Cf. Robert Flierman, 'Gregory of Tours and the Merovingian Letter', *Journal of Medieval History* 47, no. 2 (2021): 119–144.

[41] Christer Brunn, 'Roman Emperors and Legislation on Public Water in the Roman Empire: Clarifications and Problems', *Water History* 4, no. 1 (2012): 11–34.

[42] *CTheod* 15.2.1 = *CIust* 11.43.1.1.

[43] Gaul: Greg. Tur. *DLH*, 2.33: *artifex ille cui de aqueducto cura manebat*. Italy: Cass. *Var.*, 7.6.2 and Yuri Marano, '"Watered… with the life-giving wave". Aqueducts and Water Management in Ostrogothic Italy', in *Ownership and Exploitation of Land and Natural Resources in the Roman World*, ed. Paul Erdkamp, Koenraad Verboven, and Arjan Zuiderhoek (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 150–169.

[44] Douglas Underwood, *(Re)use Ruins: Public Building in the Cities of the Late Antique West, A.D. 300–600* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 71–88.

Municipal investments became fewer and rarer as the number of public infrastructures that demanded these commitments declined.[45] Private individuals, however, still invested in public constructions, although these were mostly religious in nature.[46] The construction of churches by bishops or donations by private individuals were still part of the social contract even if the political circumstances were different. In these cases, it was done so to invest in the spiritual and religious needs of the people, which were as high on the list of early medieval community needs as municipal infrastructure. Preserving or modifying the space in these ways allowed for the creation of a place that fitted better the needs and expectations of its community. And yet, the social contract worked both ways; it was not only the elites who had to do something for the community, the people also had a role to play.

2.4   *Popular Participation and Community Involvement*

Popular participation in the post-Roman city is more difficult to trace than elite investment: mentions in the sources are anecdotal, and laws and council acts may reflect ideal situations rather than actual practices. But still, in the Isidorian conception of the city (*civitas*) as a group of people bound by residence and networks of loyalty and solidarity, the *hoi poloi* still mattered—if anything because there would be no city without them.[47]

At one level, the participation of city dwellers was essential in certain political appointments of public offices, in a way that was altogether unrelated with pre-existing forms of civic assemblies.[48] These were not necessarily elections, but popular acclamations and confirmations. These acts of communal agreement were a sign of civic consensus and were essential in the consecration of bishops and other members of the local

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[45] For an overall survey, see: Underwood, *(Re)use Ruins.*

[46] Carlos Machado, *Urban Space and Aristocratic Power in Late Antique Rome: AD 270–535* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 66–69; Salzman, 'From a Classical to a Christian City'.

[47] Julio Cesar Magalhães de Oliveira, 'Late Antiquity: The Age of Crowds?', *Past & Present* 249, no. 1 (2020): 3–52.

[48] Peter van Nuffelen, 'A Relationship of Justice. Becoming the People in Late Antiquity', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 249–270.

clergy.[49] This need for compromise also applied to the appointment of lay figures like counts, where urban factions could clash and cause revolts if consensus was not achieved.[50] The actual political impact of these popular demonstrations is difficult to gauge, but the idea of consensus as part of the urban order is ingrained in the sociology of place-defined groups.[51]

The participation in pagan civic cults had been a defining element of ancient citizenship,[52] but Christian cults (especially that of local saints) took over these community-binding ceremonies during late Antiquity.[53] Local martyrs and saints were essential in the re-definition of urban communities as Christian ones, as if by sharing the same earthly (municipal) citizenship these saints could act as intermediaries between their fellow town dwellers and the Almighty. These cults, moreover, with their local, place-focused narratives, helped to create a Christian landscape with new memories that re-defined what it was, for the local community, to live in that city. Besides, Mass and other religious celebrations like public penitence, burials, weddings, and processions were rituals in which the congregation came together and was expected to participate,[54] consolidating the links between local cults, local inhabitants, and the shared understanding of the environment.

We must also mention that processions were other events in which the urban community participated either actively or as spectators. From an anthropological perspective, processions are nothing more than ritualised *habitus* that link various key places in the city.[55] Processions connected sites which were perceived as important landmarks (palaces, churches,

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[49] Susan Loftus, 'Episcopal Elections in Gaul: The Normative View of the Concilia Galliae Versus the Narrative Accounts', in *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity*, ed. Johan Leemans and Shawn Keough (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011), 423–436.

[50] Italy: Cass. Var. 7.3; Gaul: Greg. Tur. *DLH*, 5.48, 8.18, 8.58.

[51] Erin Araujo, 'Consensus and Activism Through Collective Exchanges: A Focus on El Cambalache, Mexico', *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 36, no. 11 (2016): 741–755.

[52] Cf. Blok, *Citizenship*.

[53] Robert Bartlett, *Why Can the Dead Do Such Great Things? Saints and Worshippers from the Martyrs to the Reformation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 129–132.

[54] Els Rose, 'Plebs sancta ideo meminere debet. The Role of the People in the Early Medieval Liturgy of Mass', in *Das Christentum im frühen Europa: Diskurse − Tendenzen − Entscheidungen*, ed. Uta Heil (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 459–476.

[55] Martínez Jiménez and Tejerizo García, 'Assessing Place-Based Identities'.

shrines, gates, etc.), and their central importance was only strengthened in the collective cognitive maps by these linear rituals. They also are occasions for the community to participate, to see and be seen, and reinforce local bonds of belonging by participation and sharing experiences.[56] These were forms of participation that could also take place alongside other festivals linked to the agricultural calendar, games linked to weddings, or public banquets in celebrations and funerals.[57]

The running of a city across cultures and across history requires collaboration, commitment, investment, and some degree of coercion. In the classical Roman period, this was organised through municipal local governments, the bare concept of which was preserved into late Antiquity and the post-Roman period. Local elites, even in this late period, were still expected to invest in the community, which they did for a combination of reasons, from civic duty to moral obligation, Christian charity, and the community's social expectations. Based on the information preserved in inscriptions or texts we can prove very little about the actual workings of the city, but public urban infrastructure was a governance resource. This is an element that facilitated the management of a space; and controlling it aided in the preservation of the sense of place that bound the community together.[58]

This broad and theoretical proposal works as an introductory interpretation that explains the social, cultural, and political needs behind civic commitment in late antique and early medieval urban communities. More examples from across the Mediterranean can improve our perception, and for the rest of this paper I shall look into the cities of sixth- and seventh-century Iberia to further analyse civic commitment and investment as expressions of the urban social contract that was in place in Visigothic cities.

[56] Leslie Brubaker and Chris Wickham, 'Processions, Power, and Community Identity: East and West', in *Empires and Communities in the Post-Roman and Islamic World, c. 400–1000 CE*, ed. Walter Pohl and Rutger Kramer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 121–187.

[57] Yitzhak Hen, *Culture and Religion in Merovingian Gaul: A.D. 481–751* (Leiden: Brill, 1995), 217–224.

[58] Fafinski, *Roman Infrastructure*, here 23–34.

3   Commitment, Consensus, and Contribution: Civic Communities in Visigothic Iberia

From the departure of the Roman troops and government officers in the first half of the fifth century and up until the mid-sixth century, local populations in the Hispanic provinces were left to self-rule—in a way, perhaps, not that different from what happened in Britain at the same time.[59] Some areas to the north and west became integrated into the Suevic kingdom, but most of the central and southern regions were seemingly left to their own devices. The Visigoths began to establish themselves in the peninsula as allies of the Empire already in the 440s, but beyond nominal presence at a few strategic locations (including centrally located Toledo, well-fortified Barcelona, and economically powerful Mérida), actual control was not implemented up to the second half of the sixth century and the first decades of the seventh century.[60] This period of state formation (560s–630s) marked the point when royal control became effective across the territory, prompting a collaboration between the monarchy, its military elites, and the local landowning aristocrats, reaching a level of Roman-like centralisation that the Frankish or Lombard kingdoms lacked.[61]

Cities in early Medieval Iberia continued to function as place-defined communities,[62] and were perfectly integrated into the new post-Roman administrative system, since the monarchy needed the collaboration of the city-based landowning elites. While the literary sources are scarcer than for Gaul or Italy, there is perhaps enough that can be combined with

[59] Fafinski, *Roman Infrastructure*.

[60] Javier Arce, 'The Visigoths in Hispania: New Perspectives on Their Arrival and Settlement', in *The Visigothic Kingdom: The Negotiation of Power in Post-Roman Iberia*, ed. Sabine Panzram and Paulo Pachá (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 59–78; Santiago Castellanos, *The Visigothic Kingdom in Iberia: Construction and Invention* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2020); Edward Thompson, *Romans and Barbarians: The Decline of the Western Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982), 74.

[61] Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 95.

[62] Javier Martínez Jiménez, 'Local Citizenships and the Visigothic Kingdom', in *The Visigothic Kingdom: The Negotiation of Power in Post-Roman Iberia*, ed. Sabine Panzram and Paulo Pachá (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 195–212.

the archaeological record to explain in more detail the workings of civic commitment in the Visigothic case study.

Public investment in municipal infrastructure during the Visigothic period is an obscure subject. Municipal government appears to have been reduced to appointed magistrates and a council in charge of the bureaucratic aspects of administration. Naturally, in larger cities and administrative hubs (Córdoba, Mérida, Barcelona, Tarragona, Lisbon, Valencia, Braga, Narbonne, etc.) it is likelier that local government held more traces of a wider municipal administration than in secondary towns. However, there were still powerful figures in these cities who acted as leaders, investing private and public resources in updating their urban space in order to improve their shared sense of place. It seems that these magistrates and councils still had access to public funds, which they invested in the maintenance of public infrastructure.

3.1   *Powerholders in Visigothic Cities*

In Visigothic cities, the main figure in the lay administration was the count (*comes*), which was centrally appointed to rule a city. This was a position that technically (but not always actually) seems to have existed alongside the higher, military/provincial governor, the duke (*dux*).[63] In the case of Claudius of Mérida (*dux Emeritensis civitatis*), his ducal rank came from his role in the royal military, but he appears to have also been the leading officer of Mérida (itself a provincial capital).[64] Immediately below, there was a municipal council that was restricted to local 'notables' (variously named *primates*, *primarii, senatores, curiales*, etc.).[65]

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[63] Pablo Poveda Arias, 'The Role of the Military Factor in the Political and Administrative Shaping of the Visigothic Kingdom (Sixth to Seventh Centuries)', in *Early Medieval Militarisation*, ed. Ellora Bennett, Guido M. Berndt, Stefan Esders, and Laury Sarti (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2021), 115–129. Cf. *LV* 12.1.2.

[64] Roger Collins, 'An Unreliable Witness?: Vitas Sanctorum Patrum Emeretensium and Religious Conflict in Visigothic Spain', *Revista Diálogos Mediterránicos* 21 (2021): 36–58.

[65] de Oliveira, 'Le quotidien'; Michael Kulikowski, 'Cities and Civic Identities in Late Roman and Visigothic Spain', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 195–212.

These filled, at least into the seventh century, whatever public magistracies still existed as well as their position as members of the local councils, which were still relevant in the running of the city.[66]

These local councils were very different from the municipal institution that had existed five centuries prior, but inasmuch as it served the interests of the city protected by local legal customs, it can still be considered to be a post-Roman form of civic government that honoured its elite rulers with titles and positions. The roles of the council itself were mostly clerical and bureaucratic, especially as registrars and notaries, although the evidence is tenuous.[67] These magistracies (broadly described as *iudices* in the sources), were still desirable posts, as they were key steps to achieve a position in the central administration (the *officium palatinum*) later on. We do not know what these junior/local positions were precisely, but the few leading positions in the cities of the Visigothic period (the *curator*, the *defensor*, and the *numerarius*) were appointed from among those eligible to the council and held certain roles as *iudices*.[68]

Besides the purely lay administration, bishops appear to have played a key role in running the city, a responsibility partly inherited from the late Roman model. While this is supported by some royal documents like the *De fisco Barcinonensi*,[69] ecclesiastical sources like the *Lives of the Fathers of Mérida* might have exaggerated their role. Bishops, in any case, belonged to the landed class of a city; in that way, bishops were part of the traditional elites of these urban communities, but they had opted for a route to power that was, by the sixth century, firmly established. The way they looked after their flock and assisted the lay authorities in their

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[66] During the reign of Chindaswinth (r. 642–653) a law still existed (*LV* 5.4.19) that still expected *curiales* to pay taxes for their property to the *arca publica*, although it is unclear what administrative and political local duties they had; Leonard Curchin, 'Curials and Local Government in Visigothic Hispania', *Antiquité Tardive* 26 (2018): 225–240.

[67] For Spain: Kulikowski, 'Cities and civic identities'; Curchin, 'Curials and Local government'; Damián Fernández, 'Transformaciones institucionales y liderazgo cívico en la Hispania post-imperial', in *Urban Transformations in the Late Antique West: Materials, Agents, and Models*, ed. André Carneiro, Neil Christie, and Pilar Diarte (Coimbra: Coimbra University Press, 2020), 259–279. They might have existed, to a degree, in Britain: Fafinski, *Roman Infrastructure*.

[68] Céline Martin, 'Administration and Justice', in *The Brill Companion to Visigothic Iberia*, ed. Jamie Wood, Molly Lester, and Javier Martínez Jiménez (Leiden: Brill, forth.).

[69] Damián Fernández, 'What Is the De fisco Barcinonensi About?', *Antiquité Tardive* 14 (2006): 217–224.

duties does not mean that municipal government had been overturned and abandoned, simply that the local elites had two alternative ways to secure political power (and of fulfilling the community's expectations).[70]

These urban leaders, regardless of the way they held or achieved local power, had inherited from the Roman past a series of political privileges and fiscal exemptions, but these came with municipal responsibilities. These magistrates had to collect taxes or act as jurors, but they still had to make *ex officio* payments into the public treasury.[71] These payments were the main forms of income for municipal councils which they could use to invest back into public property and infrastructure, but the needs of urban communities surpassed what the municipal institution could offer, which is where charitable donations and private largesse come into play.

3.2   *The Many Faces of Civic Commitment*

Urban elites in Visigothic Iberia invested back into their local communities in three main ways, just as we have described for early medieval Europe as a whole: through the lay (municipal) administration, through the local church, and at an individual level. In doing so they justified their political power, secured their networks of patronage, and reinforced the sense of community by reverting wealth back into the shared space, aiding in the consolidation of a shared perception of place. The individual motivations and institutional justifications might have varied, but the net result remains the same. But it was not only the elites who had a role to play in the consolidation of a place-based community—town dwellers also had to partake in certain aspects, so beyond institutionally-backed contributions and private examples of munificence, we must remember that there were forms of communal action that helped reinforce a city's urban community.

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[70] Pablo Poveda Arias, 'Coexisting Leaderships in the Visigothic Cities: A 'Coopetitive' Model', in *Leadership, Social Cohesion, and Identity in Late Antique Spain and Gaul (500–700)*, ed. Dolores Castro and Fernando Ruchesi (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2023), 159–183.

[71] For the *munera* see: Curchin, 'Curials and Local Government'; cf. Enrique Melchor Gil, 'Summae honorariae y donaciones ob honorem en la Hispania romana', *Habis* 25 (1994): 193–212 and *LV* 5.4.19.

Institutional Contributions

Public expenditure for institutional investment in the Visigothic period was very limited, but it was not non-existent. The first question that emerges here is, naturally, if there were any public funds and where they could have possibly come from. Public funds came from the payments of the *civilia munera*, but other local taxes might (and I should underline this 'might' as a possibility) have also been collected. The royal administration collected, through its customs officers (the *telonarii*), tariffs on the import and export of luxury items.[72] Other, basic products seem to have been exempt from these royal tariffs, and could have easily been taxed locally as it had happened in Roman times. A sales tax similar to the *ansarium* of Ostrogothic Italy can be inferred from the wording of a seventh-century law against the Jews, who are levied an extra tax different from other, general ones.[73] The 541 law on processual charges, similarly, hints that a tenth of the fine's cash was to be returned to the *iudices* (i.e., the magistrates).[74] Lastly, we should consider that all other sorts of local rents derived from public urban plots and concessions (including market rights) and fines would have, similarly, been paid to the city's treasury.[75] None of these incomes, even combined, would have been able to make up for the loss of the taxes and rents on rural public properties (these had been usurped by the central administration already in the fourth century), but it shows that councils had other potential forms of income. Moreover,

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[72] *LV* 12.3.1. *aurum, argentum, vestimenta vel quelibet ornamenta*. Cf. *LV* 12.2.18, where the *cataplus* is also a place. Also: Salvador Mariezkurena, 'Puertos y comercio marítimo en la España visigoda', *Polis* 11 (1999): 135–160; Francesc Rodríguez Martorell, 'Acerca de los conceptos telonum, catabolus y cataplus en las fuentes francas y visigodas: el caso del puerto de Tarragona', in *Oppidum-Civitas-Urbs. Städteforschung auf der Iberischer Halbinsel zwischen Rom und al-Andalus*, ed. Sabine Panzram (Münster: Lit, 2017), 811–832.

[73] *LV* XII.2.18; Pilar Fernández Uriel, 'Alguas precisiones sobre el sistema fiscal romano', *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma II* 8 (1995): 159–181; Santiago Castellanos García, 'The Political Nature of Taxation in Visigothic Spain', *Early Medieval Europe* 12, no. 3 (2003): 201–228.

[74] *LV* suppl. II. *De ea vero, que exigerit; decimum num[mum] pro suo consequatur exercitio; hac conditione [ad]dita ut si conmodatas exigerit pecunias, suprascriptum conmodi modum, exactores a reddente poena[m] recipientem recipiant.*

[75] Although this scenario is more fitting for the fifth than the sixth century; Curchin, 'Curials and Local Government', 233; cf. Manuel Ruiz Bueno, 'La desarticulación del callejero hispanorromano: cambios en la infraestructura viaria y de saneamiento entre los siglos II y VII d. C', *Archivo Español de Arqueología* 91 (2018): 143–162.

the use of small-denomination coins in urban contexts at these dates and the minting of new *minimi* demonstrate the continuity of a cash economy in the larger cities of the peninsula.[76] A monetised economy of this type could facilitate trade and local markets, as well as local taxes as those described.

With this kind of available funding, we can take a step forward to give historical explanations to archaeological questions, especially those linked to urban infrastructure. After all, the money collected in cash from these indirect commercial transactions could later be invested back into the city through low- and intermediate-level salaried administrators and it could have also been used to fund contractors employed for the maintenance of public infrastructure, although larger projects (which would have required larger budgets) might have been excluded.[77]

Most public buildings inherited from the Roman past were, in the sixth century, out of use. Buildings like circuses, theatres, and amphitheatres had been abandoned, converted, or dismantled as the spectacles associated with them had ceased to be popular, feasible, or affordable from the fourth century onwards.[78] Most fora and civil basilicae, similarly, had been allowed to be encroached upon, quarried, or repurposed.[79] The maintenance and preservation of these structures would have been

[76] Ruth Pliego, 'The Circulation of Copper Coins in the Iberian Peninsula During the Visigothic Period: New Approaches', *Journal of Archaeological Numismatics* 5, no. 6 (2015–2016): 125–160; Ruth Pliego, 'Rethinking the Minimi of the Iberian Peninsula and Balearic Islands in Late Antiquity', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 12, no. 2 (2020): 125–154; Ruth Pliego and Tawfiq Ibrahim, 'La ciudad a través de las emisiones monetarias y sigilográficas de la Península Ibérica de la Antigüedad Tardía a la conquista Omeya', in *Entre civitas y madina*, ed. Sabine Panzram and Laurent Callegarin (Madrid: Casa de Velazquez, 2018), 135–155.

[77] The monarchy did invest its economic resources (and cash) in new constructions (like cities and walls): Andrew Kurt, *Minting, State, and Economy in the Visigothic Kingdom: From Settlement in Aquitaine Through the First Decade of the Muslim Conquest of Spain* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 262; cf. Javier Martínez Jiménez, Isaac Sastre de Diego, and Carlos Tejerizo García, *The Iberian Peninsula 300–850: An Archaeological Perspective* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2018), 170–180.

[78] Juan Antonio Jiménez Sánchez, 'Un testimonio tardío de ludi theatrales en Hispania', *Gerión* 21, no. 1 (2003): 71–377; idem, 'Los últimos ludi circenses realizados en Hispania en época visigoda', *Faventia* 28 (2006): 99–113; Martínez Jiménez et al., *The Iberian Peninsula*, 80–82.

[79] Pilar Diarte Blasco, *La configuración urbana de la Hispania tardoantigua: transformaciones y pervivencias de los espacios públicos romanos (s. III–VI d.C.)* (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2012).

the responsibility of councils and magistrates like the aediles, something that imperial legislation had been adamant about.[80] But these buildings belonged to a past phase of the city, their original purpose did not fulfil a social need any longer,[81] so letting them be recycled or occupied was only natural. Other urban infrastructure, however, preserved their social relevance and their role in articulating the city, and it is in these that we can infer council intervention.

Aqueducts, even if not essential, had become in the late antique world an urban expectation. Preserving the water supply ensured the continuity of a way of living that had been honed for centuries, and was an integral part of the conception of the city as a place. The fact that a handful of aqueducts continued in use into the sixth and seventh centuries in the main cities of the Visigothic kingdom (including those of Valencia, Lisbon, Barcelona, Córdoba, Tarragona, and Mérida; Fig. 1) can only be explained due to regular maintenance of the conduits as opposed to one-off large-scale repairs.[82] Only the regular cleaning of conduits and sluices of sand, sediment, and debris ensured the viability of aqueduct supply in the long term.[83] In fact, the one example we have of a major reconstruction (one of the pillars of the aqueduct of Los Milagros, in Mérida, Fig. 2), belongs to a failed attempt.[84]

The construction of new public fountains in fifth-century and sixth-century contexts is also worth noting. The best example is that of Lisbon (Fig. 3), which was clearly connected to a pipe, but it is possible that there was a late fifth-century fountain linked to an inscription built in Tarragona and there was certainly a public water distribution point at

[80] Cf. Wallace-Hadrill, 'The Cities of Cassiodorus'.

[81] Javier Martínez Jiménez, 'Foundational Grids and Urban Communities in the Iberian Peninsula in Antiquity and the Middle Ages', in *Rome and the Colonial City*, ed. Andrew Wallace-Hadrill and Sofia Greaves (Oxford: Oxbow, 2022), 237–264.

[82] Javier Martínez Jiménez, *Aqueducts and Urbanism in Post-Roman Hispania* (Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2019).

[83] Trevor Hodge, *Roman Aqueducts and Water Supply* (London: Duckworth, 1992).

[84] Miguel Alba Calzado and Pedro Mateos Cruz, 'El paisaje urbano de Emerita en época visigoda', in *Recópolis y la ciudad en la época visigoda. Zona Arqueológica 9*, ed. Lauro Olmo Enciso (Alcalá de Henares: Museo Arqueológico Regional, 2008), 261–273, here 268.

Fig. 1 Map of the Iberian Peninsula indicating those aqueducts that continued in use after the fifth century

the new city of Reccopolis.[85] In the absence of any direct evidence, it is impossible to confirm if these were public or private initiatives, but they show that, by building these fountains, the aqueduct was expected to keep on functioning—which was a public responsibility.

Something similar could be said about streets. In most cities, the flagged and cobbled surfaces of the earlier Roman phases had been abandoned during the fourth century in favour of trampled earth and streets metalled with gravel, clay, and lime.[86] This transition from one surface to another affected urbanism at many levels, including the rising of street circulation levels, and the blocking of accesses to underground

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[85] Martínez Jiménez, *Aqueducts and Urbanism*, 68–72; Javier Martínez Jiménez and Joaquín Checa Herraiz, 'The Water Cycle in Reccopolis', *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 36, no. 1 (2023): 157–185.

[86] Ruiz Bueno, 'La desarticulación del callejero'; Cf. Luke Lavan, *Public Space in the Late Antique City* (Leiden: Brill, 2021), vol. 1, 146–149.

Fig. 2 Failed sixth-century repair of a pillar of the Los Milagros aqueduct, Mérida

Fig. 3 The late antique fountain of Lisbon. Note the reused masonry and the groove for the pipe

sewers (Fig. 4).[87] But this transition was not simply a process of lack of care or abandonment; these new road surfaces were the result of direct, active action that promoted a new road surface that was easier to maintain and repair on the long term. The fact that street alignments and directions were, overall, preserved shows both a degree of municipal ruling and evident prioritising of main avenues vs. secondary streets and back alleys.[88] Moreover, streets in this period had changed from convex surfaces (where water ran off to side drains) to concave ones (with a central gutter), still facilitating the drainage of rainwater. This is a transition from a model that can be seen from fourth-century Mérida and Córdoba. It had become standard practice by the late sixth century in Reccopolis. Even in those places where public streets are encroached

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[87] Cf. Jesús Acero Pérez, *La gestión de los residuos en Augusta Emerita. Siglos I a.C. - VII d.C.* Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología 82 (Mérida: CSIC, 2018).

[88] Lavan, *Public Space*, loc. cit.; Martínez Jiménez, 'Foundational Grids'.

upon by private structures (like the baths of the Domus of the Marbles in Mérida or the apse of the basilicas of St. Fructuosus in Tarragona and the cathedral of Valencia),[89] the streets are never blocked and even alternative diversions are created.

Considering the direct archaeological evidence at our disposal, it would seem that the minting of local coins (especially those with the CIVITA[S] legends), together with the maintenance of streets and, to an extent, of water supplies were the only ways in which municipal councils invested

Fig. 4 Archaeological site of Morería, Mérida: first-century street level with flagstones up to the portico and post-fourth-century structures encroaching the portico built on top of the trampled earth late antique street level

[89] Jordi López Vilar, *Les basíliques paleocristianes del suburbi occidental de Tarraco. El temple septentrional i el complex martirial de Sant Fructuós, Tarragona* (Tarragona: ICAC, 2006); Arnau Perich Roca and Ferran Gris Jeremías, 'Las fases tardorromana y visigoda de al "Casa de los Mármoles" (Mérida, España). Análisis arquitectónico y nuevas propuestas de restitución', *Oppidum. Cuadernos de investigación* 11 (2015): 171–198; Albert Ribera Lacomba, 'Origen i desevolupament del nucli episcopal de València', in *VI Reunió d'arqueologia cristiana hispánica*, ed. Josep Maria Gurt Esparraguera and Albert Ribera Lacomba (Barcelona: Institut d'Estudis Catalans, 2005), 207–243.

in their city's infrastructure. It may not seem as much, but these actions underline the continuity of institutionalised forms of community invest-ment out of political duty but also a result of the social contract and the urban inhabitants' expectations.

Having said this, there are a few new constructions that might have housed the new municipal administration, including some 'palaces' that are associated with counts in Córdoba, Gerona, Barcelona, and, perhaps, Mérida (Fig. 5).[90] While these new spaces of political representation probably belonged to the centrally imposed administration, it is possible that the municipal order was involved in their construction, especially since its traditional buildings of representation (fora and basilicae) were not the main focal points of political power any longer.

Fig. 5 Fifth-to-sixth-century public structure built in the temenos of the temple of the imperial cult in Mérida

[90] Manuel Ruiz Bueno, 'Transformaciones en la topografía del poder de Córdoba entre los siglos III y VII', *Al-Mulk* 18 (2020): 93–122; Martínez Jiménez et al., *The Iberian Peninsula*, 170–173.

The continuity of some form of municipal administration in the cities of the Visigothic kingdom can be expected because the vast majority of these cities had existed as self-governing settlements for centuries.[91] The fact that this was a model that was part of the early medieval concept of the city and that was still valid in late-sixth and seventh-century contexts can be seen in the case of Reccopolis. The city of Reccopolis was a new urban foundation of the 570s. It is a perfect case study of Visigothic urbanism—or at least of what the urban ideal was in the late sixth century.[92] The colonists of the new city were granted urban and rural plots, certain, undefined *privilegia*, and a new urban environment: the perfect circumstances to develop a place-defined sense of belonging and to form an urban community.[93] The royal foundation replicated the ideal of a city in sixth-century Visigothic politics, and that had to include some form of local administration. While the excavated area in the city is quite small, the known streets show a continuity of metalling maintenance and drain and fountain management. Small change has also been found in the commercial street, but the city was also a recurrent mint whose coins bore the RECCOPOLIT(ANA [CIVITAS?]) legend. The city had at least one main basilica and an axial layout that would have favoured processions. We cannot know if the legal figure of the *civis reccopolitanus* existed, but Reccopolis functioned like other cities of its time—at least into the eighth century. Regardless of the initial royal input, the existence of the city into the Islamic period is a testament to the interest of the community and the commitment of its inhabitants, replicating the urban and civic life of other cities of the Iberian Peninsula.

Private Donations

As in earlier periods, private investment usually outdid public monumentality, mostly because such displays of conspicuous consumption of

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[91] Pieter Houten, 'Civitates Hispaniae. Urbanisation on the Iberian Peninsula During the High Empire' (PhD diss., University of Leiden, 2018).

[92] Joachim Henning, Michael McCormick, Lauro Olmo Enciso, Knut Rassman, and Eyub Fikrit, 'Reccopolis Revealed: First Geomagnetic Mapping of the Early Medieval Visigothic Royal Town', *Antiquity* 93 (2019): 735–751.

[93] Lalli, 'Urban-related identity'; Javier Martínez Jiménez, 'Civitatem Condidit. City Building and Community Formation in the New Visigothic Urban Foundations', in *Lived Spaces in Late Antiquity*, ed. Carlos Machado and Rebecca Sweetman (London: Routledge, forth.).

architecture exceeded the monetary capabilities of councils and it reported larger benefits to single individuals. We have explored already what councils could have done but we must remember that private investments had always been a fundamental part in the construction and maintenance of city infrastructure. Private individuals had access to more resources, and their position of power generated more expectations in the community for them to return something to it. Elite munificence is, in this sense, much more straightforward to identify, and examples of individual largesse are better known because of the limited but ongoing epigraphic habit.[94]

Investment in infrastructure were rarer in this period, and we only have certain examples for the fifth century; the repair of the walls and bridge of Mérida by Bishop Zeno in the 480s.[95] These repairs were commemorated with a metric inscription that praises the bishop for having done these repairs because of the damage caused by old age (*ruinosa vetustas*) out of *amor (patriae)*.[96] After this unique example, however, most privately-funded investments were religious in nature.

Parishes, funerary basilicas, monastic sites, cathedrals, and episcopal complexes became prominent elements in urban landscapes, especially from the sixth century onwards. We find plenty of archaeological, literary, and epigraphic examples across the peninsula (Mérida, Córdoba, Valencia, Tarragona, Barcelona) and Septimania (Narbonne, Nîmes).[97] The way some of them reoccupied public spaces (like amphitheatres or forum areas, Fig. 6) hint at some degree of municipal collaboration and, perhaps, regulation, but we must see private initiative behind these constructions. Whether these result from ecclesiastical or lay patrons is certainly a matter for debate,[98] but they were the result of elite investment in the type of

[94] Cf. Daniel Rico Camps, 'Arquitectura y epigrafía en la Antigüedad Tardía. Testimonios hispanos', *Pyrenae* 40, no. 1 (2009): 7–53.

[95] Daniel Osland, 'Text and Context: Patronage in Late Antique Mérida', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 3, no. 4 (2019): 581–625.

[96] ICM 10 = ICERV 353, lines 1 and 14.

[97] Martínez Jiménez et al., *The Iberian Peninsula*, 161–168; Frank Riess, *Narbonne and Its Territory in Late Antiquity. From the Visigoths to the Arabs* (London: Routledge, 2013).

[98] Andrew Kurt, 'Lay Piety in Visigothic Iberia: Liturgical and Paraliturgical Forms', *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies* 8, no. 1 (2016): 1–37; María de los Ángeles Utrero Agudo and Francisco José Moreno Martín, 'Evergetism Among the Bishops of Hispania Between the Sixth and Seventh Centuries: A Dialogue Between Archaeological and Documentary Sources', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 23, no. 1 (2015): 97–131.

monumental architecture that urban communities required. The origins of Christian architecture in the urban landscapes were in the suburbs, and originated as memorial shrines associated to funerary areas, but these early spaces were insufficient for the needs of sixth-century urban congregations. By funding these cult buildings, urban elites consolidated their positions of power and, within a Christian rhetoric, earned merits for the Afterlife, but they also provided social and spiritual hubs to meet the demands of their fellow city dwellers. These churches would also become focal points in the communities' conceptions of place.[99]

Other examples of private munificence that have been understood through the lens of Christian piety but that also underline the importance of local solidarities for the integration of place-based communities are charitable constructions and donations.[100] From the *Life* of Bishop Masona of Mérida, despite the elegiac nature of the hagiography, we know about the distribution of a dole (a local *annona*) and the construction of a hostel-hospital (*xenodochium*).[101] Another aspect of episcopal charity that reflected on the well-being of the community was the redeeming and ransoming of captives.[102] Such acts of charity were not uncommon in the period,[103] and a structure excavated in Mérida has been identified as the *xenodochium*. This structure would have been part of a suburban monastic complex dedicated to service the local community and any pilgrims coming to the city.[104] The construction of a set of baths adjacent to the episcopal complex of Barcelona[105] suggests that similar, Church-sponsored, public constructions set within this pious version of

[99] Martínez Jiménez and Tejerizo García, 'Assessing Place-Based Identities'; Kurt, 'Lay Piety'.

[100] Salzman, 'From a Classical to a Christian City'.

[101] *VPE*, 5.3. There are also mentions of a city *annona* (*annona civitatis*) in later Visigothic laws (*LV* 12.1.2).

[102] William Klingshirn, 'Charity and Power: Caesarius of Arles and the Ransoming of Captives in Sub-Roman Gaul', *Journal of Roman Studies* 75 (1985): 183–203.

[103] Raquel Homet, 'Formas de la caridad en la España visigoda', *Estudios de Historia de España* 3 (1990): 5–28.

[104] Pedro Mateos Cruz, 'A propósito del edificio identificado como el xenodochium de Masona en Mérida. Aspectos cronológicos y funcionales', *Spal* 31, no. 1 (2022): 426–442.

[105] Virginia García-Entero, *Los balnea domésticos −ámbito rural y urbano− en la Hispania romana*. Anejos de Archivo Español de Arqueología 37 (Madrid: CSIC, 2005), 213.
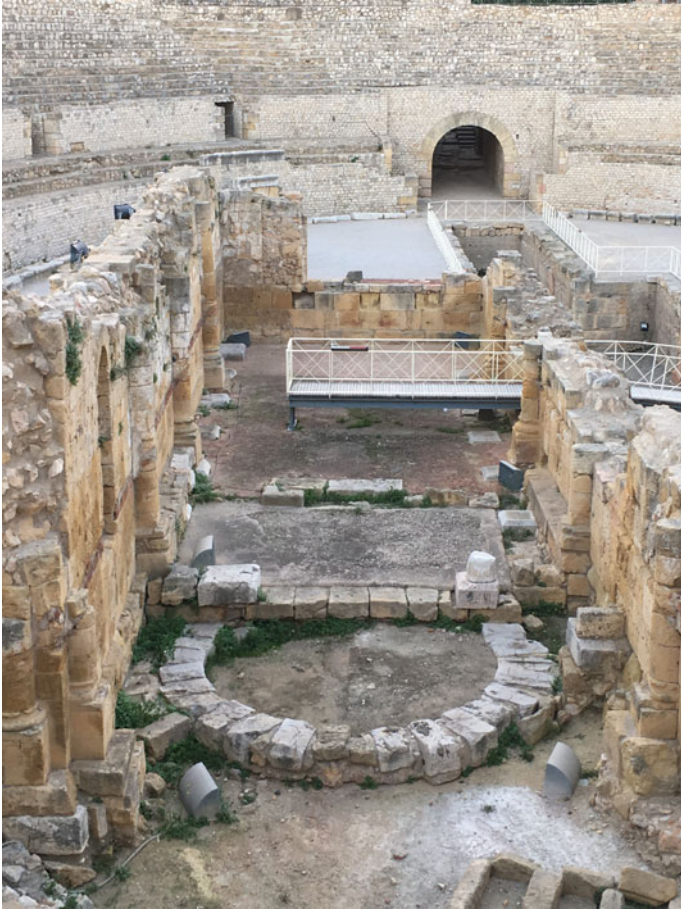
Fig. 6   Foundations of the sixth-century basilica (under standing walls of the later, medieval church) built in the Roman amphitheatre of Tarragona

euergetism were not uncommon.[106] In contrast, it is more than likely that the sixth-century public baths of Mérida (Fig. 7) were privately built

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[106] Cf. Bryan Ward-Perkins, *From Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages. Urban Public Building in Northern and Central Italy AD 300–850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984), 140.

and run, although it is impossible to say if these were the result of lay or episcopal initiative.[107]

Most of these private investments in monumental architecture and public services can also be seen as ways of singling the city in opposition to its neighbours, underlining its individuality and their differences; as peer-polity interaction.[108] Having a new cathedral, larger than the nearest local neighbour's, or preserving a functioning aqueduct when the nearest city had lost its supply, could be seen as a source of local content. The hunt for the holy and the collection and accumulation of multiple relics was not

Fig. 7   Sixth-century baths near the theatre complex in Mérida

[107] García-Entero, *Los balnea*, 527–529.

[108] John Ma, 'Peer Polity Interaction in the Hellenistic Age', *Past & Present* 180 (2003): 9–39; Colin Renfrew and John Cherry, *Peer Polity Interaction and Socio-Political Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

only a lucrative business, but a matter of local pride.[109] This form of inter-community competition further helped to validate place-based identities and to strengthen the sense of belonging.[110]

Lastly, we should note that, as opposed to what had happened in the early Roman period, there were fewer options when it came to investing private resources into public festivities. Horse or chariot racing might have continued into the sixth century, and there is a reference to *ludi theatrales* in the 620s linked to private initiative, but these have to be seen as anecdotal occurrences.[111] Most other forms of public entertainment in the Visigothic period were feasts and festivities linked to saints' celebrations. Similarly, civic and religious processions also helped to bring the community together for locally focused ritual performances. These public acts, however, can be hardly singled out as examples of either council duties or private munificence, and are better seen through the lens of overall community involvement and interaction.

Communal Action

Finally, and as outlined above, we must remember that popular participation was a defining element in the community life of the medieval city; a way to balance out the power of the ruling elites, codifying the social consensus that regulated the norms of the group. In the Visigothic period, we have limited information for public displays of civic participation, but there is evidence that shows the agency of the urban population in certain political and religious events that brought the community together.

Popular participation was key in episcopal elections and the confirmation of certain magistrates.[112] These were not real assembly-like elections

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[109] Sean Lafferty, 'Ad Sanctitatem Mortuorum: Tomb Raiders, Body Snatchers and Relic Hunters in Late Antiquity', *Early Medieval Europe* 22, no. 3 (2014): 249–279; cf. Sabine Panzram, 'Mérida contra Toledo, Eulalia contra Leocadia. Listados "falsificados" de obispos como medio de autorrepresentación municipal', in *Espacios urbanos en el occidente mediterráneo (S. VI–VIII)*, ed. Alfonso García (Toledo: Toletum visigodo, 2010), 123–130.

[110] Martínez Jiménez and Tejerizo García, 'Assessing Place-Based Identities'.

[111] See above, Footnote 51.

[112] Toledo IV, canon 19; cf. Santiago Castellanos, 'The Significance of Social Unanimity in a Visigothic Hagiography: Keys to an Ideological Screen', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 11, no. 3 (2003), 387–419; Peter Norton, *Episcopal Elections 250–600. Hierarchy*

like those of the Republican Roman period, but rather public acclamations of nominated candidates intended to demonstrate social consensus. Figures like the *defensores civitatis* ('defenders of the citizenship'), the *adsertores pacis* ('enforcers of peace'), and the *numerarii* (agents of the fisc) required an 'election' (*electus ab episcopis vel populis fuerit*).[113] In fact, not even kings were exempt from popular demands and acceptance, and King Sisebut (r. 612–621) complains to Isidore in his poem on the eclipse that he is unable to concentrate because of the ruckus in the city (*latrant fora*) of the people demanding attention.[114] In rural contexts we know that peasant communities would gather at moot spots (*conpita*) and were represented by some sort of 'public assembly of neighbours' (*conventūs publici vicinorum*),[115] but if these were a reflection of urban practices it is impossible to tell.

Other civic activities that brought the people together and required popular input were processions which, as we have seen, played a key role in reinforcing the understanding of place by linking specific landmarks through chosen pathways. From sixth- and seventh-century sources we know of civic and religious processions. Some of them were linked to royal parades and coronations in Toledo, some to the civic ceremonies of *adventus*, while some others were part of specific events in the liturgical calendar.[116] On top of these, we also know of impromptu processional demonstrations of religious zeal.[117] Reccopolis is designed following an

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and Popular Will in Late Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007); Johan Leemans et al., eds., *Episcopal Elections in Late Antiquity* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011).

[113] *LV* 12.1.2.

[114] Sisebut, *Astron.*, l. 6; Cf. David Ungvary, 'Clarifying the Eclipse: Ascetics, Politics, and the Poetics of Power in Post-Roman Iberia', *Vigiliae Christianae* 73, no. 5 (2019): 531–563.

[115] Isid. Hisp. *Etym.*, XV.2.15. *Conpita sunt ubi usus est conventus fieri rusticorum; et dicta conpita quod loca multa in agris eodem conpetant; et quo convenitur a rusticis*; Eduardo Daflon, 'Tumultos e clamores: assembleias rurais e resistência camponesa na Hispânia Visigoda (séculos VI–VIII)', *Brathair* 15, no. 2 (2015): 132–167.

[116] Dey, *The Afterlife*, 140–160; Guy Halsall, 'The Decline and Fall of the Ancient Triumph', in *Der römische Triumph in Prinzipat und Spätantike*, ed. by Fabian Goldbeck and Johannes Wienand (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), 555–568.

[117] Greg. Tur. *DLH*, 5.4.

axial layout, following a Constantinopolitan inspiration, and with this kind of processional demonstrations in mind.[118]

Religious celebrations and festivities were the main occasions for popular participation. These brought all the people together to celebrate local cults, reinforcing the sense of belonging by actively taking part in shared rites that reinforced the connection with the locally defined past, and substituting the theatre and circus spectacles of the Classical period. Canons from church councils clearly show how popular these were, even if they usually turned into celebrations beyond their original religious meaning. We find descriptions of 'un-religious customs' (*inreligiosae consuetudines*) and 'lewd dancing' (*saltationes turpes*) in these occasions.[119] Even night vigils, another, more solemn popular gathering, could have a more 'celebratory' turn in the darkest corners of cemeteries.[120]

4   COMMUNITY AND INVESTMENT IN THE EARLY MEDIEVAL CITY—SOME CONCLUSIONS

It is easy to talk about the transformations and even the decline of both the city and of the municipal institution in late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages.[121] The regional variation and centrifugal forces that characterise the post-Roman centuries make it difficult to make broad statements that hold true for every city and, moreover, a careful archaeological assessment shows that many cities continued to exist even to this day. The transformation of the way these cities were run can only be seen

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[118] Lauro Olmo Enciso, 'Reccopolis: The Representation of Power in a Complex Landscape', in *The Visigothic Kingdom: The Negotiation of Power in Post-Roman Iberia*, ed. Sabine Panzram and Paulo Pachá (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2020), 215–233.

[119] Toledo III (589), canon 23. *Inreligiosa consuetudo est quam vulgus per sanctorum sollemnitates agere consuevit. Populi qui debent officia divina attendere saltationibus turpibus invigilant.*

[120] Elvira (early 4th c.?), canon 35. *Placuit prohiberi ne feminae in cimiterio pervigilent eo quod saepe sub obtentu orationis latenter scelera committant* = 'It pleases [us] to ban women from partaking in vigils in the cemetery because often, under the pretence of praying, they may commit crimes [i.e., prostitution] without being seen'.

[121] J. H. W. G. Wolf Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).

in terms of 'decline' if cities of this period are judged against a theoretical Augustan standard; an anthropological understanding of the way place-based communities work shows that cities functioned in similar ways and that community commitment was at the heart of civic life. Priorities, means, norms, and motivations might have changed—as it is only natural—but the social expectations and the participation in shared rituals and *habitus* of town dwellers and urban elites alike were not that different.

Cities were still cities for better and for worse (here again, we are reminded of McNeill's Paradox), but their survival required commitment and investment, something that could only come from city dwellers themselves. I hope to have illustrated, with the help of the Visigothic example, how the survival (and thriving) of post-Roman cities can, in part, be explained because of the social bonds that ruled them. City-based communities in the early Middle Ages had inherited a lot of baggage from the Roman period, in terms of urban infrastructure, civic culture, and understanding of place, but they had also inherited a series of expectations and commitments to their built environment and their fellow town dwellers. The balance between elite investment and redistribution and ritualised participation ensured (or, if necessary, corrected) the established social order and the continuity of the civic status quo. Preserving a public water supply and paving roads while providing the city with cultic buildings, regardless of the scale, show the investment and commitment of the ruling elites and that was as important for the city as the confirmation of a bishop, donating liturgical furniture, or the celebration of a procession. In all cases, the inhabitants were participating in ways that benefitted their city and their fellow citizens; it was a way in which the *cives* preserved their *civitas* in an early medieval understanding.

The main case study in this paper has been the Visigothic kingdom, with its network of old and new cities with active and thriving urban communities. Urban elites in the Visigothic period fulfilled, to an extent, their role of investors and redistributors of private and public wealth back into the community. Their motivations varied from civic duty, religious piety, political advantages, and expectations of tax exemptions, but they showed a commitment to their surroundings (to their space and place) in order to preserve their status. Similarly, non-elite urban dwellers had social duties to fulfil and communal rites to participate in, since these were essential in preserving the social order and the local bonds of belonging—the same elements that were essential in the conception of post-Roman municipal citizenships. These commitments (economic,

social, participative) were part of the civic understanding of the community, and ritualised and regulated as such. It was the social contract that bound the inhabitants together.

Early medieval cities (with some noted exceptions) lacked large public construction programmes and large works of civil engineering or infrastructure. Civic inscriptions and public honours, which had been so visible and noticeable in the Roman centuries, all but disappeared. The rhetoric in the existing sources talks about a 'crisis' of the curial class that begins in the fourth century but the same situation is still ongoing in the sixth and seventh centuries—perhaps not a crisis but an established new pattern. The Christian nature of the monumental phases of this period and the religious re-definition of the elites add another layer of distortion. The city of the seventh century was clearly (but obviously) not a 'Roman' city inasmuch as it does not conform to the urban patterns of the first century. But the city of the seventh century still functions as a place-defined community. At an anthropological and sociological level, the cities of early medieval Europe relied on the commitment of their inhabitants and the leading role of the elites. The basic functioning of how communal norms that preserve space and place is comparable if not the same in both periods. That the early medieval city post-dates the 'classical' one means that some aspects had to be reinterpreted, preserved, or recycled.

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Cass. *Var*. = Cassiodorus, *Variae*.
Cic. *Rep*. = Cicero, *De re publica*.
CIust = *Codex Iustinianeus*.
CTheod = *Codex Theodosianus*.
Dig. = *Digestum*.
Gaius, *Inst* = Gaius, *Institutiones*.
Greg. Tur., *DLH*. = Gregory of Tours, *Decem libri historiarum*.
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Juv. = Juvenal, *Saturae*.

LV = *Lex Visigothorum*.

Mart. = Martial, *Epigrammata*.

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Water Provision in Early Islamic Cities: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Urban Water Governance

Peter J. Brown and Maaike van Berkel

1 INTRODUCTION

In urban settlements in arid regions, the provision and management of water has always been at the forefront of dialogues between authorities and citizens. Indeed, exercising control over water to expand agricultural production—and the associated requirement to organise labour, mainte-nance and water rights—has long been viewed as one of the key drivers

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behind early state formation and the emergence of institutions, bureaucracies and governance structures.[1] More recent studies have criticised the supposition by scholars such as Wittfogel concerning the relationship between water management and so-called 'despotic rule', but only recently have water historians begun to formulate alternative pathways to analyse the relationship between state formation and water management.[2] By the medieval period, urbanised populations had existed in water scarce regions such as Mesopotamia for more than 4000 years. In such geographic zones, therefore, the profound challenges of providing water to densely agglomerated groups of people—as well as allocating access to different users, organising the maintenance of the hydraulic infrastructure and dealing with issues such as sanitation and pollution—were age-old problems. The rise of Islam in the seventh century, however, and the forms of urban settlement that took hold in the regions that fell under the sway of the Islamic caliphates, brought together different configurations of people with new institutional structures—often in settlements located in previously unoccupied places. Furthermore, recent scientific studies suggest that fluctuations in the availability of water, as a result of changing climatic and environmental conditions, may have been factors both in the initial emergence of Islam[3] and possibly also in some of the settlement patterns that followed in its wake.[4] Accordingly, this chapter aims to combine both the available textual evidence as well as surviving

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[1] Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1957), 15–48; Wayne Kappel, 'Irrigation Development and Population Pressure', in *Irrigation's Impact on Society*, ed. Theodore E. Downing and McGuire Gibson (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 1974), 159–167.

[2] Michael J. Harrower, *Water Histories and Spatial Archaeology: Ancient Yemen and the American West* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[3] Evidence from stalagmites indicates significant droughts occurred during the sixth century. Dominik Fleitmann, et al., 'Droughts and Societal change: The Environmental Context for the Emergence of Islam in Late Antique Arabia', *Science* 376, no. 6599 (2022): 1317–1321.

[4] In Morocco, for example, Capel suggests that a climatic deterioration between the eighth and ninth centuries 'created the need for collective and concerted management of the common good that is water' affecting both settlement patterns and land-use. Chloé Capel, 'Authority Beyond State and Tribe in the Early Medieval Maghrib: The Impact of Climate on the Economic, Social and Political Reorganisation of the Maghrib al-Aqṣā in the Eighth-Ninth Centuries: The Case of Sijilmāsa (Morocco)', *Al-Masāq* 33, no. 1 (2021): 47–65, here 65.

material traces, to analyse how the provision and management of water was organised within the cities of early Islam—a story both of continuity from what had existed before as well as the implementation of new ideals and social norms.

As a complicated topic that involves many different scales of evidence, spread across a large geographic region, this chapter gives a broad overview of water management in early Islamic cities before exploring certain areas in more detail. What follows, therefore, initially considers the organisation of early Islamic cities—and how the forms of urbanism that emerged in the post-conquest era potentially influenced the provision and governance of water—highlighting the significant role that tribal authority may have played in regulating the water supply at a communal level. Secondly, the chapter explores various aspects of the hydraulic infrastructure in the caliphal capitals—some of the largest cities for which significant bodies of evidence are available. Finally, the limited evidence for how water was supplied to and managed within individual domestic households in several early Islamic cities is explored. A common theme running throughout what follows is evaluating who, and which groups, exercised control and responsibility over the construction, maintenance and overall management of urban water systems and especially exploring the interlocking roles of figures representing the state, commercial interests, local communities and the private interests of both wealthy landowners and individual households.

2   Early Islamic Urban Organisation

One of the most notable facets of the new cities established during the early centuries of Islam were their relatively large populations. Though precise figures are unavailable, estimates for the population of Basra suggest a figure of up to 250,000, as many as 500,000 for Baghdad during its zenith in the late eighth and ninth centuries,[5] a maximum of 200,000 for Samarra at its peak[6] and a similar number for Fusṭāṭ by

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[5] Hugh Kennedy, 'The Feeding of the Five Hundred Thousand: Cities and Agriculture in Early Islamic Mesopotamia', *Iraq* 73 (2011): 177–199, here 177.

[6] Alastair Northedge, 'Calculating the Population of Samarra', in *The Historian of Islam at Work. Essays in Honor of Hugh N. Kennedy*, ed. Maaike van Berkel and Letizia Osti (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022), 210–233, here 231.

the early tenth century.[7] Not only would these large populations have required a reliable supply of drinking water but also water for a wide range of secondary activities, from the mundane—laundry, bathing, food preparation and sanitation—to more specialised applications—milling, brick and pottery production and, by the eighth century, the making of paper. Furthermore, not only was water a fundamental requirement for *wuḍūʾ*—ablutions performed before prayer—but water was also used extensively throughout Islamic cities for purposes that were not strictly practical—such as impressive fountains, pools and the irrigation of gardens.[8] Given both the basic necessity, as well as the economic, social and religious significance of water to urban settlement, therefore, it is difficult to imagine that the supply and distribution of water was not, at least to some extent, planned and overseen within early Islamic cities by central authorities.

The view that, at least in the immediate aftermath of the conquests, Islamic cities lacked *any* central planning and developed more or less organically—to become both haphazard and unsanitary—was widespread throughout the twentieth century.[9] Scholars such as Gustave von Grunebaum discussed the concept of a so-called 'Islamic' city, an urban type considered to be fundamentally different from the European premodern city.[10] Their ideas were nourished by Orientalist notions of a dichotomy between East and West and defined in juxtaposition to Max Weber's conceptualisation of the ideal–typical city.[11] As a result, the 'Islamic' city has often been characterised in terms of its deficiencies in comparison to the premodern European city—particularly a perceived absence of formal urban institutions. Although area specialists

[7] Gia Dijandjgava, 'Ways of Estimating Population Numbers in Medieval Islamic Cities as Exemplified in the Case of Fustāt Cairo', *Al-Masāq* 5, no. 1 (1992): 65–169, here 68.

[8] James W.P. Campbell and Amy Boyington, 'Fountains and Water: The Development of the Hydraulic Technology of Display in Islamic Gardens 700–1700 CE', *Studies in the History of Gardens & Designed Landscapes* 38, no. 3 (2018): 247–267.

[9] Keppel A.C. Creswell, *Early Muslim Architecture, Volume I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), 30; Henri S.J. Lammens, *Études sur le Siècle des Omayyades* (Beyrouth: Imprimerie Catholique, 1930), 147–148.

[10] G.E. von Grunebaum, *Islam. Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (Menasha: George Banta Publishing Company, 1955), 275–304.

[11] Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1978), 1226–1236.

have convincingly argued otherwise,[12] this assumption of institutional weakness continues to inspire general comparative scholarship.[13] Scholarship is only recently starting to uncover what an 'Islamic city' was in terms of governance, though the focus has, so far, only been on specific cities or specific urban institutions and mainly in the era after the year 1000. Through his analysis of the role of urban elites in the management of local affairs in the major cities of Iraq and Egypt, for example, Mathieu Tillier argued for the existence of a 'civic sphere' in early Islamic cities. For example, urban elites frequently played active roles in the political life of their city, either by exercising official positions—governor, chief of police, or judge (*qāḍī*)—or through the periodic and informal representation of the urban community before the governor or caliph.[14] This chapter contributes to the ongoing debate on urban governance and the nature of a 'civic sphere' by taking water as a microcosm through which urban organisation and civic participation in public services are investigated—starting with some of the urban settlements founded during the early phases of the Islamic conquests.

The cores of the cities founded during the early conquests, such as Basra and Kufa in Iraq and Fusṭāṭ in Egypt, started out as temporary military encampments which were only subsequently formalised as permanent settlements. It is probably true, therefore, that these early settlements were not planned at the outset with much concern for sustaining the large population numbers that would soon settle at these sites.[15] Though

[12] See, for example: Janet L. Abu-Lughod, 'The Islamic City. Historic Myth, Islamic Essence and Contemporary Relevance', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 2 (1987): 155–176; Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967); André Raymond, 'Islamic City, Arab City: Orientalist Myths and Recent Views', *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 21, no. 1 (1994): 3–18; Nezar AlSayyad, *Cities and Caliphs. On the Genesis of Arab Muslim Urbanism* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991).

[13] See, for example: Aiden Southall, *The City in Time and Space* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 207–209; 226–227.

[14] Mathieu Tillier, 'Urban Populations in Early Islam. Self-Identification and Collective Representation', in *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 333–361.

[15] Jacob Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press 1970), 138.

non-orthogonal street plans are a typical feature of pre-Islamic settlement in Arabia and Syria,[16] these were also often defined by organisation based around tribal groupings and communal, and often large-scale, water sources.[17] Pre-Islamic urban settlements such as Umm el-Jimāl, Jordan, Subayta, Palestine and Yathrib, Saudi Arabia, have been interpreted as revealing evidence for internal divisions between different tribal, or clan, groups through distinct clusters of housing arranged in separate centres within the settlement. This type of organisational structure was repeated in the armies that participated in the Islamic conquests, which were principally arranged around tribal groups with kinsmen fighting together—led and administered by tribal leaders.[18] Even in siting a temporary military camp, however, an accessible and reliable water supply would have been one of the primary requirements. In Fustāt, for instance, the banks of the Nile, from where drinking water was drawn, were protected as a communal resource—rather than being granted to a specific tribal group. Furthermore, the proximity of different land grants allocated to different groups and the river was probably a significant factor in the demarcation of the city's different districts as well as the development of east/west routes between these neighbourhoods and the Nile—along which water must have been carried.[19] This kin-group based social structure, therefore, directly influenced how the so-called 'garrison towns', or amṣār, were planned out and their internal organisation.[20] Furthermore, within these individual city sectors, or districts, tribal groups may have exercised a certain degree of autonomy in the construction and management of the neighbourhood[21]—which most likely included the management of water.

[16] Hugh Kennedy, 'From Polis to Madina: Urban Change in Late Antique and Early Islamic Syria', *Past and Present* 106 (1985): 3–27, here 13–17.

[17] Andrew D. Peterson, 'Baghdad and Samarra. Imperial Capitals of the Abbasid Empire', in *New Aspects on Viking-age Urbanism c. AD 750–1100*, ed. Lena Holmquist, Sven Kalmring, and Charlotte Hedenstierna-Jonson (Stockholm: Archaeological Research Laboratory Stockholm University, 2016), 211–220, here 212.

[18] Hugh Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs. Military and Society in the Early Islamic State* (London: Routledge, 2001), 5–9.

[19] Wladyslaw B. Kubiak, *Al-Fustat. Its Foundation and Early Urban Development* (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 1987), 68, 72–73.

[20] Donald Whitcomb, 'Urbanism in Arabia', *Arabian Archaeology and Epigraphy* 7 (1996): 38–51.

[21] Jamel Akbar, 'Khaṭṭa and the Territorial Structure of Early Muslim Towns', *Muqarnas* 6 (1989): 22–32.

3 Tribes and Water Management

The importance of tribal social structures in relation to the management of water during the early Islamic period is most widely attested in rural contexts. In Oman, for example, the pre-existing tribal makeup of society strongly influenced the development of water law, property rights and dispute mediation relating to water.[22] Tribal affiliations were also paramount in the villages of the Fayyūm and, by the Ayyubid period, played an important role in landholding and taxation as well as the division of water rights—which were most commonly assigned collectively to clan groups occupying specific villages.[23] In al-Andalus too, tribal organisation was integral to the management of irrigation systems— Glick explains that 'norms of tribal governance are embodied in both the design of allocation procedures and that of the physical layout of the system[s]'.[24] The settlement of the Balearic Islands in the tenth century, which has been studied in detail by Kirchner, reveals how different Arab and Berber clan groups colonised areas based on the available water resources, apparently managing the irrigation systems they created largely without the involvement of higher authorities.[25]

Since water management in rural areas was evidently often organised in close association with the tribal makeup of society, it would be natural to assume that this also played an important role in Islamic urban settlements. One case in which this may be apparent comes from the early history of Basra. Shortly after the city's foundation, a neighbourhood was assigned to the Asāwira—a military unit of Persian origin who aligned themselves with the conquerors and converted to Islam. In various accounts retold by the ninth-century historian al-Balādhurī, it

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[22] Katariina Simonen, *Ancient Water Agreements, Tribal Law and Ibadism. Sources of Inspiration for the Middle East Desalination Research Centre—And Beyond* (Cham: Springer, 2021), 111–129.

[23] Notably, villages along specific canals often belonged to the same tribal affiliation highlighting the key role that clan identity played in the management and maintenance of the collective resource. Yossef Rapoport, *Rural Economy and Tribal Society in Islamic Egypt* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 173–198.

[24] Thomas Glick, *From Muslim Fortress to Christian Castle. Social and Cultural Change in Medieval Spain* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 74.

[25] Helena Kirchner, 'Original Design, Tribal Management and Modifications in Medieval Hydraulic Systems in the Balearic Islands (Spain)', *World Archaeology* 41, no. 1 (2009): 151–168, here 153–155.

appears that the Asāwira may have had to excavate a new canal in order to bring water to the quarter of the city to which they had been assigned.[26] Districts, or quarters, associated with specific tribes or ethnic groups still existed at Basra when Ibn Baṭṭūṭa visited the city in the mid-fourteenth century—with quarters of the Banū Hudhayl and Banū Ḥarām (Arab tribes) and 'the Persians', each with their own 'chief'.[27] While the Asāwira were not technically a tribe, they were assigned their own neighbourhood in accordance with the tribal division of Islamic society at the time. The brief anecdote about the canal that supplied their district advances the possibility that, at least in the period shortly after the foundation of Basra, canal digging—and by extension the construction, administration and maintenance of the water management system more generally—was organised at the level of these distinct city neighbourhoods.

4   Cooperation Between the State and Local Actors

While organisation and management within tribal units were probably important, especially at the micro-scale, state authorities[28] certainly also exerted significant influence and were often responsible for the establishment of major pieces of hydraulic infrastructure. Al-Balādhurī's account of the founding of Ramla, Israel, by the Umayyad governor Sulaymān b. ʿAbd al-Malik in the early eighth century provides one such example. Here, a cistern was reportedly among one of the first things to be constructed in the city and, after a mosque and a palace had been built, the governor also established canals and wells to provide water for citizens moving to the city.[29] Although al-Balādhurī implies these new residents were left to their own devices when it came to the construction of their

[26] al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb Futūḥ al-Buldān*, ed. and trans. Francis Clark Murgotten, *The Origins of the Islamic State, Part II* (New York: Columbia University, 1924), 81, 106.

[27] Ibn Baṭṭūṭa, *Tuḥfat al-nuzzār fī gharāʾib al-amṣār wa-ʿajāʾib al-asfār*, ed. and trans. H.A.R. Gibb, *Ibn Battúta: Travels in Asia and Africa 1325–1354, Volume II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1962), 276.

[28] In the early Islamic world, the distinction between 'public' and 'private' property is frequently unclear. Often, 'private' and 'non-private' are more useful categories. When we refer to representatives of the caliphate at any level—municipal, central, local—we refer to them as 'state authorities'.

[29] al-Balādhurī, *Kitāb futūḥ al-buldān*, 220.

homes, the archaeology reveals that housing was carefully planned on a grid following the same alignment as the central mosque.[30] We may imagine here the involvement of surveyors much like those described in the Geniza documents who, in twelfth-century and thirteenth-century Cairo, ensured that land was properly divided between properties, both prior to construction and in order to settle disputes.[31] A corresponding picture can be seen after the Islamic conquests in North Africa where, though re-occupation of pre-existing Byzantine settlement was typical, new cities were also established. Kairouan, Tunisia, for example, was founded in 670 CE and closely followed the model of the *amṣār*—most likely with an orthogonal street plan, at least in the centre, and separate districts assigned to different tribal groups. Major hydraulic infrastructure, including an aqueduct, reservoirs and cisterns were built under Hishām b. ʿAbd al-Malik, who ruled between 724 and 743 CE.[32] Similarly at ʿAnjar, an early eighth-century foundation located in present-day Lebanon, between Damascus and Beirut, Hillenbrand hypothesises the existence of an overarching scheme prior to the construction of the urban centre which probably included the city's hydraulic infrastructure—and specifically the removal of sewage and the intensification of agriculture in the rural surroundings.[33] Such a plan may have been achieved using either a pictorial depiction—for example drawn on animal skin—or markings laid out on the ground—such as ashes arranged in dark lines—to plan the form and location of these civic features prior to construction.[34]

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[30] Gideon Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine. An Archaeological Approach* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 170.

[31] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza. Volume IV: Daily Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 38–39.

[32] Corisande Fenwick, 'Early Medieval Urbanism in Ifrīqiya and the Emergence of the Islamic City', in *Entre Civitas Y Madīna. El Mundo de las Ciudades en la Península Ibérica y en el Norte de África (Siglos IV–IX)*, ed. Sabine Panzram and Laurent Callegarin (Madrid: Casa de Velázquez, 2018), 203–220, here 207–209.

[33] Robert Hillenbrand, 'ʿAnjar and Early Islamic Urbanism', in *The Idea and Ideal of the Town Between Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. G.P. Brogiolo and Bryan Ward-Perkins (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 59–98, here 67–68 n. 36.

[34] Notably, such representational designs do not appear to have been common in Egypt. Nasser Rabbat, 'Design Without Representation in Medieval Egypt', *Muqarnas* 25 (2008): 147–154, here 150–151.

Though these examples all clearly highlight the importance of the state, and often the caliph himself, in the design and implementation of hydraulic infrastructure, this may be a misleading picture. Within the rectilinear symmetry of ʿAnjar, for example, shown in Fig. 1, which presents a clear picture of order and authority imposed from above inspired by Roman antecedents, the internal organisation appears to have been to some degree compartmentalised—with discrete blocks given over for specific purposes, such as domestic housing in one area and official and religious structures in another. Possibly, in a similar way to the tribal districts of the *amṣār*, each sector may have been to some extent autonomous—planned and administered in isolation.[35] One reading of ʿAnjar, therefore, which may be applied more generally, is of a skeleton plan laid out at the outset by a high authority, that included the major municipal infrastructure. Subsequently, within this overarching schema, lower-status actors and groups were given leeway and autonomy to exercise control within specific districts. Such a model accords with what Hugh Kennedy describes as the 'minimalism' of the early Islamic state which was generally happy to let local actors and communities regulate themselves so long as this presented no threat to wider affairs.[36]

A comparable approach—in which top-down planning and investment provided the impetus for management and extensification by local actors—may be apparent in the major irrigation schemes enacted in rural areas. In Syria, for example, there are numerous examples of large canals constructed by the Umayyad caliphs and princes. Some evidence suggests that major hydraulic works such as those along the Euphrates, and along other major rivers, were regarded as the exclusive responsibility, and remit, of the state and were funded by the central treasury.[37] Similarly, many of the largest canals that existed in the hinterland of early Islamic Basra bore names which, either directly or indirectly, referenced either the caliphs themselves or the governors of Basra[38]—with further textual evidence

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[35] Hillenbrand, 'Anjar and Early Islamic Urbanism', 65.

[36] Kennedy, 'From Polis to Madina', 20.

[37] A. Asa Eger, *The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier. Interaction and Exchange Among Muslim and Christian Communities* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2015), 206–215.

[38] For an exploration of the visible archaeological evidence for the canals constructed around early Islamic Basra see: Peter J. Brown, 'Supplying a Medieval Metropolis: Water Management and Agriculture in the Hinterland of Early Islamic Basra', *Water History* 14 (2022): 379–398.

Fig. 1 The walled town of ʿAnjar, Lebanon, with major water management features marked. Redrawn by Peter J. Brown after Finster (2003)

often attesting to their direct involvement in the construction of these canals.[39] In such cases, however, rather than the provision of water as a public service, private investment by members of the elite was often motivated by commercial interests and Islamic landholding practices—which assigned ownership to the individual who made 'dead' land cultivable.[40]

[39] For example, the Nahr Ibn ʿUmar—which brought drinking water to the city—was reportedly excavated in 744 at the behest of ʿAbd Allāh b. ʿUmar b. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz who was governor of Basra at the time while the Nahr al-Amīr, a major canal in the rural hinterland, was originally known as the Nahr Amīr al-Muʾminīn, 'the river of the Commander of the Faithful' referencing its construction by the caliph al-Manṣūr who ruled between 754 and 775. Peter Verkinderen, *Waterways of Iraq and Iran in the Early Islamic Period. Changing Rivers and Landscapes of the Mesopotamian Plain* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2015), 86, 92–93.

[40] Kennedy, 'The Feeding of the Five Hundred Thousand', 177–199, here 184–187.

Furthermore, as both Eger and Verkinderen have noted, there is considerable bias in the historical sources as infrastructure which was financed and constructed by members of the elite—which were usually the largest and most important canals—is significantly more likely to be described and recorded in the surviving textual sources.[41] More minor canals, on the other hand, which are more likely to have been community initiatives, dug and maintained through local collaboration as offshoots from these larger more substantial canals, rarely appear in the historical sources. A rare example in which the maintenance of hydraulic infrastructure is discussed in detail comes from the Fayyūm in thirteenth-century Egypt, where a complex picture emerges in which the wealthy landowner provided significant financial investment to restore the system, but the work was guided and carried out by the local peasantry who were familiar with, and reliant upon, the irrigation infrastructure.[42] In such cases, it is evident that a complex bilateral relationship existed between state authorities, or wealthy landowners, and the local communities that depended on these systems.

5   WATER IN THE CALIPHAL CAPITALS

A multi-layered dialogue between 'public' and 'private'[43] interests is also apparent in water provision in urban contexts. As the caliphal capitals, such as Baghdad and Samarra, were some of the largest and best documented early Islamic cities, these make a useful case study to explore in greater depth. Identifying the varying (de)centralised and top-down/bottom-up processes in relation to water provision in these cities also more clearly highlights the deeply nuanced nature of issues such as the divide between 'public' and 'private' spheres of life. Much of the evidence relating to the succession of caliphal capitals built during the eighth and ninth centuries emphasise the roles of caliphs and members of the elite in the planning and construction of at least the major 'backbone' of these cities' hydraulic infrastructure. In Baghdad, for example, the new capital built in central Iraq in 762 CE, the geographer al-Yaʿqūbī (d. 897–898) relates how, during the initial stages of construction of al-Manṣūr's round

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[41] Verkinderen, *Waterways of Iraq and Iran in the Early Islamic Period*, 109; Eger, *The Islamic-Byzantine Frontier*, 215–216.

[42] Yossef Rapoport, *Rural Economy and Tribal Society in Islamic Egypt*, 64–68.

[43] See note 28.

city, wells and canals were dug to bring water to the building site, not only to supply drinking water but also, for 'brick-making, and moistening clay'.[44] Unfortunately, the layout of early Islamic Baghdad is not known through physical remains and, though textual sources describe the configuration of the canals that flowed through the city, details of their financing, construction and management is rarely discussed. In one case, Ibn Serapion mentions that a canal was dug by the caliph al-Muʿtaḍid, who ruled between 892 and 902 CE, suggesting continued elite oversight and investment in the hydraulic system. It is notable, however, that his description of the canals often relates their route to the locations of various palaces suggesting that providing water for these elite residences was often a primary goal.[45] Similarly, at Hārūn al-Rashīd's capital of Raqqa, Syria, significant hydraulic infrastructure was constructed, seemingly both as a 'public good' as well as for the caliph's own benefit—with a major canal excavated to provide water for the populace alongside a separate canal that brought water exclusively to a group of palaces.[46] This can also be seen at Samarra, where the caliph al-Mutawakkil (847–861 CE) embarked on the construction of a new city district alongside a large palatial complex to the north of the existing developments built under his father al-Muʿtaṣim (833–842 CE). One of the key elements to this new development was a canal—the *nahr al-Jaʿfarī*—that would bring water, firstly, to his new palaces and, secondly, throughout the

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[44] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, ed. and trans. Matthew S. Gordon, Chase F. Robinson, Everett K. Rowson, and Michael Fishbein, *The Works of Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī Volume 1* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 238, 72. This textual description is closely paralleled by the unfinished octagonal urban centre of Ḥuṣn al-Qādisiyya, 14km SE of Samarra, built by the caliph Hārūn al-Rashīd in 796 CE. Here, canals terminating in basins bisect the internal urban layout and Northedge convincingly argues that this represents a similar situation to that described by al-Yaʿqūbī—canals intended to provide water during the construction process which may have originally been intended to be infilled after work had been completed. Alastair Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra* (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq/Foundation Max van Berchem, 2007), 89.

[45] Ibn Serapion, *Kitāb ʿajāʾib al-aqālīm al-sabʿa*, ed. and trans. Guy le Strange, *Description of Mesopotamia and Baghdād Written About the Year 900 A.D.* (London: Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, 1895), 277–280, 285–288.

[46] Louise Rayne, 'Early Islamic Water Management in the Hinterland of Raqqa', in *New Agendas in Remote Sensing and Landscape Archaeology in the Near East. Studies in Honour of Tony J. Wilkinson*, ed. Dan Lawrence, Mark Altaweel, and Graham Philip (Oxford: Archaeopress, 2020), 306–320, here 315–317.

new district he had planned.[47] Construction began in 859/860 CE and although, ultimately, the canal was never completed, work was ongoing for approximately two years at a cost of perhaps more than a million dinars.[48]

Though elite, and especially caliphal, involvement in these cities' water projects, as funders and planners, often dominates the surviving textual accounts of these projects, non-elite involvement in the construction of hydraulic infrastructure is also apparent. In the construction of Samarra, for example, al-Yaʿqūbī describes how al-Muʿtaṣim recruited specialists who were skilled in 'channeling and measuring (the flow of) water, tapping water, and finding underground water'.[49] Ibn Serapion, meanwhile, mentions the presence of a 'quarter of the canal-diggers' in Baghdad[50] while canal diggers, under various names, crop up in a variety of eighth-century to eleventh-century sources from Iraq.[51] Canal construction, therefore, appears to have been a profession carried out by specialists though their skills were perhaps transferable. When Ibn Ṭūlūn decided to build an aqueduct bringing water from a pond east of Fusṭāṭ to the southern outskirts of his new development at al-Qaṭāʾiʿi, in what is today southern Cairo, he recruited an architect to plan out and oversee construction.[52] That this same architect reportedly also designed the

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[47] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 100.

[48] Different sources provide different figures, none of which can be taken at face value though they all agree that the canal was extremely costly. According to al-Yaʿqūbī the canal was originally estimated to cost 1,500,000 dinars and about a million dinars had been spent by the time of the project's abandonment. al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 100. Al-Ṭabarī gives the initial estimate for the project at 200,000 dinars. al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. and trans. Joel L. Kraemer, *The History of al-Ṭabarī. Volume XXXIV, Incipient Decline* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 1438, pp. 155–156. Both Yāqūt and al-Hamadhānī agree that, in the end, the uncompleted project had cost in the region of 700,000 dinars. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-Buldān*, ed. Ferdinand Wüstenfeld, *Jacut's Geographisches Wörterbuch, Dritter Band* (Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus, 1868), 16. Al-Faqīh, Abū Bakr al-Hamadhānī, Kitāb al-buldān, ed. Y. Al-Hādī (Beirut, 1996), 365.

[49] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 98.

[50] Ibn Serapion, *Kitāb ʿajāʾib al-aqālīm al-sabʿa*, 287.

[51] Maya Shatzmiller, *Labour in the Medieval Islamic World* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 101–102.

[52] al-Balawī, *Sīrat Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn*, ed. Muḥammad Kurd ʿAlī, *Sīrat Aḥmad ibn Ṭūlūn* (Damascus: Maṭbaʿat al-Taraqqī, 1939), 180–183. See also: Tarek Swelim, *Ibn*

mosque of Ibn Ṭūlūn a few years later, however, demonstrates that 'architects' were involved in the design and construction of all types of structure and hydraulic infrastructure was not the sole domain of specialists in hydraulic engineering.

Presumably, a great deal of unskilled labour would also have been required to enact these kinds of plans and we may speculate about whether labourers were employed as full-time canal diggers or whether corvée or enslaved labour was more common. By the time an eleventh-century treatise on canal construction was composed, full-time professionals seem to have been the norm in Iraq though the extent to which the diggers, and the workers who carried away the excavated soil to form the adjacent levees, worked on canal construction full-time is difficult to gauge.[53] Perhaps atypically, in the construction of the *nahr al-Jaʿfarī* at Samarra, 12,000 men reportedly toiled under the supervision of Dulayl b. Yaʿqūb al-Naṣrānī, a secretary to one of the commanders of the Turkish troops stationed at Samarra, to complete the canal.[54] The involvement of the military leadership in the construction of the *nahr al-Jaʿfarī*, alongside the high numbers who worked on the canal, advances the possibility that, at least at Samarra, the military may have provided the labour to build the hydraulic infrastructure. The figure of 12,000 given for the workforce agrees quite closely with Hugh Kennedy's estimate of 15,000 for the maximum number of Turkish troops stationed at Samarra at any one time[55] and matches figures given for other military forces in the city shortly afterwards.[56]

Certainly, the large numbers of military personnel garrisoned at Baghdad and Samarra would have required a reliable and well-managed water supply. At Baghdad, the army was housed in several different areas and, though these cantonments were not divided along tribal lines, each

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Tulun. His Lost City and Great Mosque (Cairo: The American University in Cairo Press, 2015), 42–44.

[53] Anonymous, *Kitāb al-ḥāwī lil-aʿmāl as-sulṭāniya wa rusūm al-ḥisāb ad-dīwāniya*, ed. Claude Cahen, 'Le service de l'irrigation en Iraq au debut du XIe siècle', *Bulletin d'Études Orientales* XIII (1951): 117–143.

[54] al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, 155–156.

[55] Kennedy, *The Armies of the Caliphs*, 127.

[56] Al-Masʿūdi, *Kitāb al-tanbīh wa-l-ishrāf*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, *Bibliotheca Geographorum Arabicorum, Pars Octava, Kitâb at-Tanbîh Wa'l-Ischrâf* (Leiden: Brill, 1894) 203v, pp. 361–362.

was assigned to a specific military unit—reflecting a conscious Abbasid policy to diminish the social order, and military connections, that had existed under the Umayyads.[57] At Samarra too, large parts of the city were given over to cantonments granted to specific military commanders, somewhat divided by the geographic origins of their troops.[58] While at Baghdad, the cantonments are only known through textual descriptions, at Samarra their locations and much of the internal layout can be reconstructed in detail based on early aerial photographs of the site. These cantonment districts account for about 40% of the city and likely housed an even larger percentage of the population due to their density.[59] These districts are distinctive for their regular orthogonal layouts with grid-pattern streets and individual units or houses arranged in rectangular blocks.[60] One of the few details about how water was managed within these cantonments comes from al-Yaʿqūbī who states that, once al-Muʿtaṣim had allocated different areas for the development of the cantonments, he built public bathhouses as well as '[establishing] a small market in which were a number of shops for grocers, butchers, and other essential tradesmen'.[61] Though bathing facilities appear to have been, to some extent, a public utility, foodstuffs were presumably supplied to individual cantonment blocks where water would have been required for food preparation and cooking.

The boundaries of several of the cantonments in Samarra, such as al-Karkh, abut canals from which water could have been drawn. Presumably, as in the initial division of the tribal allotments at Fusṭāṭ, discussed above, proximity to the river would have been an important consideration in choosing the locations of the cantonments. While some cantonments

[57] Jacob Lassner and Michael Bonner, *Islam in the Middle Ages. The Origins and Shaping of Classical Islamic Civilization* (Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2010), 144–149.

[58] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, pp. 92–94; Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra*, 167–172.

[59] See Fig. 2. Derek Kennet, 'The form of the military cantonments at Samarra. The organisation of the Abbasid Army', in *A medieval Islamic city reconsidered: an interdisciplinary approach to Samarra*, ed. Chase F Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 157–207, here 175.

[60] Derek Kennet, 'The form of the military cantonments at Samarra. The organisation of the Abbasid Army', in *A Medieval Islamic City Reconsidered: An Interdisciplinary Approach to Samarra*, ed. Chase F. Robinson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 157–207, here 159–162; Northedge, *The Historical Topography of Samarra*, 167–193.

[61] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 93.
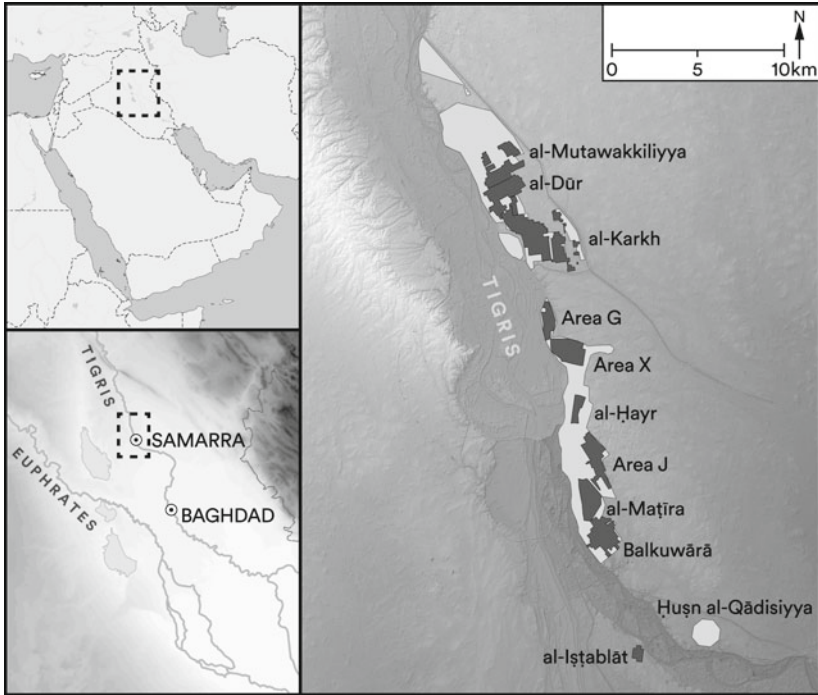
Fig. 2 The Abbasid city of Samarra on the banks of the Tigris. The major cantonments are marked (dark grey) and labelled. Created by Peter J. Brown after Kennet (2001) and Northedge (2007) using data from the Copernicus Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and Natural Earth

are located almost directly on the banks of the Tigris (al-Dūr, al-Maṭīra, Balkuwārā and Site/Area G) others, such as the eastern part of al-Karkh, lie up to 3 km from the river. In this case, however, the area of al-Karkh furthest away from the Tigris was a later addition, possibly dating to the time of al-Mutawakkil, so its distance from the river is likely explained by the fact that more convenient sites were not available as all potential riverside sites would have already been developed by this period.[62] As this section of al-Karkh also abuts the pre-Islamic Nahrawan canal, another

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[62] Kennet, 'The form of the Military Cantonments at Samarra', 157–207, here 161.

possibility is that this feature provided the water supply. The extent to which pieces of hydraulic infrastructure, such as the Nahrawan canal, were maintained and managed during the Abbasid occupation at Samarra is unclear. Observations made of the upcast from some of the Sasanian-era canals, which continued to function during the Islamic period, in some cases point towards phases of cleaning but it is not known whether these works coincided with the occupation of the Abbasid city.[63] In a much more clear-cut case, at the city of Sultan Kala (Merv, Turkmenistan), excavation attests to the careful maintenance that took place to keep the main water supply channel flowing for about 470 years—with the lack of silt deposits encountered at the base of the canal indicating regular cleaning.[64] Though we cannot say exactly who carried out the work at Sultan Kala, it seems likely that similar maintenance works would have taken place at Samarra.

6   RESIDENTIAL WATER SUPPLY AND COMMERCIAL INVOLVEMENT

At Samarra, the importance of the water provided by the Tigris is borne out by the textual evidence. Al-Yaʿqūbī, a contemporary of the city's short-lived occupation, maintains that drinking water for the entirety of the city's residents was transported from the Tigris in skin bags by water carriers on beasts of burden.[65] The reason for this was that wells had to be dug to a great depth and the limited water they provided was both salty and unpalatable—though such water may still have been widely used for tasks such as cleaning, washing clothes, bathing and watering animals. While some drinking water may have been drawn from the canals and qanats that ran through some parts of the city, al-Yaʿqūbī's account suggests that the river itself was the primary source. As much of the parts of Samarra immediately abutting the Tigris have been lost to erosion, it is impossible to pinpoint the riverside spots where the carriers obtained

[63] Alastair Northedge, Tony J. Wilkinson, and Robin Falkner, 'Survey and Excavations at Sāmarrāʾ 1989', *Iraq* 52 (1989): 121–147, here 122, 124.

[64] Tim Williams, 'Flowing into the City: Approaches to Water Management in the Early Islamic City of Sultan Kala, Turkmenistan', in *Water Societies and Technologies from the Past and Present*, ed. Yijie Zhuang and Mark Altaweel (London: UCL Press, 2018), 157–179, here 164–165.

[65] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 97.

their water as can be seen occurring in a much more recent photograph at Mosul in Fig. 3. In transporting the water of the Tigris throughout the city, the water carriers of Samarra provided an essential service which is similarly visible in many other medieval Islamic cities—and, indeed, water carriers have been a ubiquitous feature of Middle Eastern cities up until the twentieth century. The existence of a 'street of the water-carriers' in early Islamic Baghdad demonstrates that, here too, many people were involved in the provision of water.[66] As in Samarra, this was presumably a city-wide service which provided drinking water to all the city's residents. This was also the case in Fusṭāṭ where a more detailed understanding of how the water carriers may have operated is possible. Within the houses that have been excavated at Fusṭāṭ, for example, Harrison argues that niches located in entranceways, with easy access from the street, contained water jars—allowing water carriers to easily refill them to top up the household's water supply[67]—something which is also described in the Geniza documents.[68] That this kind of arrangement was practised in other urban settings may be demonstrated by the remains of one of the houses at ʿAnjar (House IV) in which a small private cistern was found adjacent to the entranceway.[69] At least in Fusṭāṭ, it seems that the water carriers were not public employees but commercial service providers who were paid directly by households and other users.[70] These water carriers were not public employees but commercial service providers who were presumably paid directly by households and other users. Exactly how this service was arranged and how it operated in practice is a matter for speculation. Perhaps water carriers were engaged to deliver water to a household at regular intervals, or on specific days, presumably with the possibility to order extra deliveries if more water was required—for example because of the presence of guests or festivities and special occasions.

[66] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-buldān*, 74. See also: al-Jāḥiz, *Kitāb al-ḥayawān* (Cairo, 1938–1945), IV, 435.

[67] Matthew James Harrison, *Fusṭāṭ Reconsidered: Urban Housing and Domestic Life in a Medieval Islamic City* (PhD diss., University of Southampton, 2016), 302.

[68] S.D. Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society. The Jewish Communities of the World as Portrayed in the Documents of the Cairo Geniza. Volume IV: Daily Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 63.

[69] Barbara Finster, 'Researches in ʿAnjar I. Preliminary report on the architecture of ʿAnjar', *Bulletin d'Archéologie et d'Architecture Libanaises* 7 (2003): 209–244, here 216.

[70] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 232–233.

Fig. 3 Water carriers collecting water from the Tigris at Mosul. Date unknown. Underwood & Underwood. Public Domain

The few excavations that targeted domestic housing at Samarra were not as detailed and, in many cases, not as extensive, as those from Fusṭāṭ though they do reveal some aspects of how water was supplied to and used within domestic structures in the city. Where external entranceways were recognisable, niches that could have been used for water storage

cannot be identified[71]—though the practicality of having spaces and facilities close to the entranceway where water carriers could easily deliver drinking water for the household's use makes it probable that this was a common arrangement. A typical feature of the domestic architecture at Samarra is the central rectilinear courtyards with rooms arranged around the four sides. In many cases these courtyards appear to have been foci for activities involving water as many contained drains, cisterns and basins[72]—presumably relating to everyday tasks such as cleaning, laundry and food preparation. A number of the houses were also equipped with private latrines and bathing facilities—with these rooms distinguishable by their bitumen flooring and wall-coatings required to water-proof the mud-brick. Of the houses which contained private baths, none of these were heated by hypocausts unlike the city's public baths indicating a key difference between the two.[73] Importantly, there is no evidence that any of the domestic structures were connected to anything resembling a city-wide water supply. While systems of pipes existed within individual houses, these seem to have been intended exclusively to allow water to be drained out onto the adjoining street outside.[74] At least in the small sample of houses that have been excavated at Samarra, therefore, water seems to have been supplied and managed within the unit of individual structures rather than at a more communal level.

The Geniza documents furnish us with analogous descriptions of the situation in Fusṭāṭ. Here, wells were commonly located in the central courtyards around which houses were arranged—though again this water was not used for drinking as water from the Nile was preferred. In at least one case, residents living in the upper storeys of a building had to first obtain permission from the owners of the well below to use its water.[75] Some of the pits detected across the domestic areas that have been excavated at Fusṭāṭ may be the remains of such wells.[76] Apparently in contrast to the situation in Samarra, however, Goitein argues that the sanitation

[71] Thomas Leisten, *Excavation of Samarra Volume I Architecture Final Report of the First Campaign 1910–1912* (Mainz: Philip von Zabern, 2003), 122, 133.

[72] Leisten, *Excavation of Samarra*, 124, 127, 130.

[73] Leisten, *Excavation of Samarra*, 143, 147–149.

[74] Leisten, *Excavation of Samarra*, 124–143.

[75] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 68.

[76] Matthew James Harrison, 'Fusṭāṭ Reconsidered', 200–208.

system in Fusṭāṭ must have been managed by a government apparatus to oversee the installation, cleaning and maintenance of underground pipes.[77] Documentary evidence attests to payments made for the cleaning of 'qanāts' which Goitein suggests represent payments to a government authority that probably employed a private contractor to carry out this task.[78] It seems likely such a system might have existed in Samarra in relation to the major conduits that ran through the city—including canals and qanats. The apparently self-sufficient nature of the water systems revealed in the excavations of domestic areas, however, suggests services such as maintenance and sanitation were probably carried out at the level of the household—either through a service organised at the city or neighbourhood level or by private service providers.

Echoing the situation that appears to have been established in cities such as Samarra and Fusṭāṭ, many of the cities of the Levant that predated the Islamic conquests saw a gradual shift in the organisation of water during the Islamic era. At Caesarea, for example, the water supply seems to have experienced a gradual decline after the Islamic conquests. The public water system of Byzantine times—which included large aqueducts—may have already been falling into disrepair by the late sixth century[79] and seems to have been non-functional by the seventh century when private cisterns within courtyards became common. By the late eighth century, a new urban layout, based around grid-patterned streets had been established in which almost all houses had individual wells and cesspits with water supplied and drained via channels running alongside the streets.[80] This pattern seems to have been repeated at Jerash where the hydraulic system of the classical city was severely damaged by an earthquake in 749 CE. As a result, the aqueducts, cisterns, reservoirs and piping, which provided water for numerous fountains, bathhouses and industrial activities, fell out of use during the Islamic period. The system established after the earthquake saw no return to those of Roman and Byzantine times and instead water supply seems to have been organised at the level of individual households—with each house equipped with its

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[77] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 36.

[78] Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society*, 37.

[79] A pattern of decline that is more widely visible in contemporary urban centres. Kennedy, 'From Polis to Madina', 3–27.

[80] Avni, 'The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine', 42–51.

own cistern located in an open courtyard.[81] At Tiberias too, the earth-quake of 749 led to significant rebuilding and the Islamic-era domestic architecture appears to have relied upon private cisterns while the city's Roman-era aqueduct ceased to be maintained.[82] The destruction caused by the earthquake, therefore, provided an impetus to move from a system that must have required significant management from public authorities to one that apparently placed greater emphasis on private responsibility—mirroring arrangements found in cities such as Samarra and Fusṭāṭ that were Islamic-era foundations.

7 Conclusions

In planning, constructing and governing the monumental cities of the early Islamic period, the textual sources emphasise the paramount role played by state authorities in the construction of hydraulic infrastructure. Archaeological evidence also provides numerous examples of these major water management initiatives which point towards the involvement of the state in the implementation and organisation of these systems. Some of these were incredibly expensive schemes requiring significant marshalling of labour and financial resources. There are important nuances to consider, however, when it comes to who organised water provision and for what purposes. When it came to constructing new hydraulic infrastructure, although the caliph often played the role of funder, planner or decision-maker, water was often used for private purposes, and the elite too were often motivated by commercial interests rather than the provision of water for the 'public-good'. At the same time, however, a considerable body of evidence from a wide variety of early Islamic cities highlights the key role that communities and individuals played in the management and maintenance of the urban water supply.

   In the immediate post-conquest period, the tribal structure of the army influenced the spatial and social organisation of the *amṣār*, the newly built garrison cities, and the regulation and management of the

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[81] Louise Blanke, 'Abbasid Jerash Reconsidered: Suburban Life in Jerash's Southwest District over the Longue Durée', in *The Archaeology and History of Jerash. 110 Years of Excavations*, ed. Achim Lichtenberger and Rubina Raja (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 39–57, here 50–52.

[82] Avni, *The Byzantine-Islamic Transition in Palestine,* 78–85.

water supply was probably one of the things that was organised within the distinct neighbourhoods that formed in these settlements. A comparable decentralised system of managing the water supply within individual neighbourhoods may have also been practised in the military cantonments of later cities such as Baghdad and Samarra. This key role, apparently played at the neighbourhood level, reflects the co-operation and ad hoc organisation of services that was often prevalent in the absence of more formal intervention from state bodies—who were typically more active in the regulation of 'public' spaces such as markets.[83] An important role was also seemingly played by private service providers including not only architects and specialists in planning and constructing hydraulic infrastructure but also water carriers and, perhaps sanitation workers. These considerations place the overarching role played by caliph and state in perspective. We should also remember the evidence from cities such as Baghdad, Raqqa and Samarra, in which the water supply of palaces and elite residences appears to have been at least of equal importance to that supplied to the city's residents. At the other end of the scale, individual households managed their own water use—perhaps through agreements with water carriers, drawing water from private wells and draining water away through drains and pipes within their own homes.

Some of the conclusions reached through this analysis of the textual and material evidence echo those made by von Grunebaum in his 1955 essay *The Structure of the Muslim Town*. Von Grunebaum also viewed tribal social structures and private households as important units within Islamic cities[84] though his arguments subsequently attracted significant criticism for their dogmatic repetition of orientalist tropes.[85] In the case of water management, his conception of medieval Islamic cities certainly does not match the picture assembled by the various strands of evidence considered here. He states, for example, that: 'residents of the Muslim town did not develop their own administrative machinery' and that 'the administrative framework … was imposed by the state'.[86] The evidence

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[83] Abu-Lughod, 'The Islamic City', 169–170.

[84] Von Grunebaum, *Islam. Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, 284–285.

[85] Abu-Lughod, 'The Islamic City', 157–158; Ronnie Ellenblum, *Crusader Castles and Modern Histories* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 78–82.

[86] Von Grunebaum, *Islam. Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition*, 287.

presented here for how water was organised within various early Islamic cities, however, suggests that while major infrastructure was, indeed, planned, financed and constructed largely through state intervention, when considered as a cohesive whole, urban water systems were a much more complex web of rights, relationships and obligations between the state, distinct neighbourhoods, commercial service providers and private citizens.

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Places of Love and Honour: Cities and Almost-Cities in the Carolingian World

Sam Ottewill-Soulsby

1 Introduction

That Charlemagne's initial conquest of Saxony was not entirely complete by the year 778 is suggested by an incident which took place while he was on his ill-fated Roncesvalles campaign in the Iberian Peninsula.[1] In this year an army of rebellious Saxons crossed the Rhine, sacking towns and burning to the ground a settlement that had been built by the Franks two years earlier in 776 on the river Lippe. A number of Frankish annals refer to the foundation of this settlement, but they differ on its exact nature. Some call it a *castellum* or fort.[2] The *Royal Frankish Annals*,

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[1] François-Louis Ganshof, 'Une crise dans le règne de Charlemagne, les années 778 et 779', in *Mélanges d'histoire et de littérature offerts à Charles Gilliard*, ed. Louis Junod and Sven Stelling-Michaud (Lausanne: F. Rouge, 1944), 133–145.

[2] *Annales Sancti Amandi*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), a.776, 12; *Annales Laubacenses*, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), a.776, 13.

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which is the most extensive and closest to Charlemagne's court, calls it a *castrum* (castle).[3] The *Annals of Moselle*, by contrast, reports that in 776 Charlemagne 'built a city on the river Lippe, called *Karlesburg*'.[4] The *Annals of Petau* agree, stating that 'the Franks built in the country of the Saxons a city called *Urbs Karoli* (City of Charles)'.[5] The *Annales Maximiniani* refers to it as the '*urbs Karoli et Francorum* (the city of Charles and the Franks)'.[6]

This sounds like a much more involved project than putting up a fort. Charlemagne had apparently established a city in these freshly conquered lands, upon which he had bestowed his own name, identifying himself and his reputation with this new foundation. Despite referring to it as a nameless stronghold, the *Royal Frankish Annals* hints at its importance by telling us that in 776 the Saxons came there 'with wives and children, a countless number, and were baptised and gave as many hostages as the Lord King demanded'.[7] This implies that this was intended to be a space of power, where the Saxon people were bound to Charlemagne.

This political significance probably explains events in 778, when, according to the *Annals of Petau*, the rebellious Saxons came 'and burned with fire the city that the Franks had built on the river Lippe'.[8] In doing so they targeted the most visible manifestation of Frankish power and a project that Charlemagne had placed his own name on. The embarrassing

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[3] *Annales regni Francorum* (henceforth ARF), ed. Friedrich Kurze, MGH SRG 6 (Hannover: Hahn, 1895), a.776, 46. *aliud castrum super Lippiam*. On the use of forts, Ingrid R. Rembold, *Conquest and Christianization: Saxony and the Carolingian World, 772–888* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 40, 50. On the annals, Rosamond D. McKitterick, 'Constructing the Past in the Early Middle Ages: The Case of the Royal Frankish Annals', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society Sixth Series* 7 (1997): 101–129.

[4] *Annales Mosellani*, a.776, ed. J.M. Lappenberg, MGH SS 16 (Hannover: Hahn, 1859), 496. *Et aedificavit civitatem super fluvio Lippiae, que appellatur Karlesburg.*

[5] *Annales Petaviani*, a.776, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz, MGH SS 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1826), 16. *Aedificaverunt Franci in finibus Saxanorum civitatem quae vocatur Urbs Karoli.*

[6] *Annales Maximiani*, a.776, ed. Georg Waitz, MGH SS 13 (Hannover: Hahn, 1881), 21. *Franci civitatem fecerunt in Saxonia quae dicitur urbs Caroli et Francorum.*

[7] ARF a.776, 46–48. *ibique venientes Saxones una cum uxoribus et infantibus innumerabilis multitudo baptizati sunt et obsides, quantos iamdictus domnus rex eis quaesivit, dederunt.*

[8] *Annales Petaviani*, a.778, 16, *et igne cremaverunt civitatem, quae Franci construxerunt infra flumen Lipiam.*

nature of the destruction of the city is the likely reason why references to it are so scarce. Having provided a highly misleading description of Charlemagne's misadventure in Spain, the writer of the *Royal Frankish Annals* thought it best to similarly downplay the humiliation of the Saxon rebellion by downgrading the city to a castle and not mentioning that it was subsequently set alight.[9]

The strange case of Charles City sets up two important themes. The first is the slipperiness of settlement categories. Charlemagne's foundation on the Lippe could be categorised as either fort or city depending on the needs of the writer. On the one hand this suggests the ambiguity of the settlements under discussion and the potential for multiple readings of the same place. On the other, that it apparently mattered a great deal whether the presumably tiny collection of buildings the Saxons levelled was a city or a fort indicates the importance of the words used.

The second theme is the impact of ancient and particularly late antique ideas of cities for the Carolingians. In founding a new city with his name on it, Charlemagne was participating in a tradition of Roman rulership that stretched back to Romulus.[10] Constantinople and a whole range of cities named after Justinian attest that this was a habit familiar to Christian Roman emperors.[11] The successor kingdoms of the western Mediterranean had their own equivalents, with Theodoricopolis, Hunericopolis and Reccopolis showing that kings of the Ostrogoths, Vandals and Visigoths could all aspire to be eponymous city-founders.[12]

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[9] ARF a.778, 50–52. Compare with the account of the Reviser, 51–53. For an analogous case, see: Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, ''Those same cursed Saracens': Charlemagne's Campaigns in the Iberian Peninsula as Religious Warfare', *Journal of Medieval History* 42 (2016): 405–428, 427–428.

[10] Laura Bertoldo, 'Le città carolingie battezzate con il nome di un sovrano nell'alto medioevo (secoli VIII-IX): continuità di un toponimo classico?', *Archeologia Medievale* 21 (1994): 657–664; Hendrik W. Dey, *The Afterlife of the Roman City: Architecture and Ceremony in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 236–237. For Romulus, see: Ermold the Black, 'In honorem Hludovici', ed. and trans. Edmond Faral, *Poème sur Louis le Pieux et Épitres au roi Pépin* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1964), 1–201, here 164. Bk.4. *Romulus et Remus Romae ut fundamina ponunt…ut Romana manus crevit et usque polum.*

[11] Efthymios Rizos, 'New Cities and New Urban Ideals, AD 250–350', in *New Cities in Late Antiquity. Documents and Archaeology*, ed. Efthymios Rizos (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 19–38.

[12] 'Ravenna Cosmography' IV.26, *Itineraria Romana Vol 2: Ravennatis Anonymi cosmographia et Guidonis geographica*, ed. Joseph Schnetz and Marianne Zumschlinge

It is important to place Charlemagne within this urban genealogy, because the Carolingian empire is normally seen as a break in the continuity of the idea of the Roman city, in contrast to the more urban-minded Merovingians.[13] This was embodied by Pirenne who observed that 'It is quite characteristic, and quite illuminating, that the palaces (*palatia*) of the Carolingian princes were not located in the towns'.[14] In his view the cities were saved by the bishops, who lived in the old Roman *civitates*, presiding over shrunken populations. Viewing Charlemagne as a city-founder helps rectify the misleading impression given by Pirenne.[15] Even in Pirenne's day it was accepted that cities continued to matter in an economic and political sense in Italy. North of the Alps, the work of scholars such as Adriaan Verhulst have served to challenge the idea that the cities of the Carolingian period were economic vacuums, offering compelling evidence for serious commercial activity and population growth.[16] Indeed, Charlemagne's family had a long history

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(Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), 61; *Concilium Carthaginiense* a. 525, 52, ed. C. Munier, CCSL 149 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1974), 254–282, 272; John of Biclaro, *Chronicle* a.578, ed. Theodor Mommsen, MGH AA 11 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1894), 215. The name *urbs Francorum* seems to echo Isidore of Seville's description of Ologicus, founded by the Visigothic king Suinthila to celebrate victory over the Basques, as the *civitatem Gothorum* (city of the Goths) in his *Historia Gothorum, Wandalorum et Sueborum* c. 63, ed. Theodor Mommsen, MGH AA 11 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1894), 293. I owe this observation to Javier Martínez Jiménez.

[13] Simon Loseby, 'The Role of the City in Merovingian Francia', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Merovingian World*, ed. Bonnie Effros and Isabel Moreira (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 584–610, here 596–597.

[14] Henri Pirenne, *Medieval Cities: Their Origins and the Revival of Trade* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, orig. 1925, 2014), 39. Bonnie Effros, 'The Enduring Attraction of the Pirenne Thesis', *Speculum* 92 (2017): 184–204.

[15] See also: Conrad Peyer, 'Das Reisekönigtum des Mittelalters', *Vierteljahrschrift für Sozial- und Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 51 (1964): 1–21; Carlrichard Brühl, 'Remarques sur les notions de 'capitale' et de 'résidence', pendant le haut Moyen âge', *Journal des Savants* 4 (1967): 193–215.

[16] Adriaan Verhulst, 'The Origins of Towns in the Low Countries and the Pirenne Thesis', *Past and Present* 122 (1989): 3–35; Adriaan Verhulst, *The Carolingian Economy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 21–22, 89–92, 97–104; Frans Verhaeghe, Christopher Loveluck, and Joanna Story, 'Urban Developments in the Age of Charlemagne', in *Charlemagne: Empire and Society*, ed. Joanna Story (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005), 259–288.

developing urban centres, from Liège under Pippin II to Laon under the last Carolingians in West Francia.[17]

Nowhere is the idea of Charlemagne as city-founder more fully expressed than in the poem *Karolus Magnus et Leo Papa*, written in about 800, where the anonymous writer celebrates Charlemagne as the lord 'of the city where a second Rome/flowers anew, its mighty mass rising up to the great heights, /the lofty cupolas on its walls touching the sky'.[18] The city whose buildings are being erected under the Frankish king's watchful eyes is probably Aachen, although some have suggested Paderborn.[19] Textually, it is a description of Carthage, being heavily indebted to Virgil's depiction of the founding of Carthage in the *Aeneid* (1.418–440).[20] But spiritually, as the poet explicitly tells us, this city is clearly Rome come again.

Despite this grandly classical picture of city founding, there are things that make one uneasy about too readily describing the Carolingian realm as an empire of cities. Charlemagne's city on the Lippe was not rebuilt, but was replaced by Paderborn, which may or may not have been on the same site, but was also not a city, being universally described as a

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[17] On Liège, see: Richard A. Gerberding, *The Rise of the Carolingians and the* Liber Historiae Francorum (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 116–139; Frans Theuws, 'Maastricht as a Centre of Power in the Early Middle Ages', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuws (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 155–216, here 174, 190–195. For Laon: Folcuin, *Gesta Abbatum S. Bertini Sithiensium*, c. 99, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH SS 13 (Hannover: Hahn, 1881), 600–635, here 625; Gerbert of Aurillac, *Epistolae* ep.119, ed. Fritz Weigle, MGH Epistolae: Die Briefe der deutschen Kaiserzeit 2 (Weimar: Hermann Bohlaus, 1966), 146–147.

[18] *Karolus magnus et Leo papa*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), 366–379, here 368. *sed et urbe potens, ubi Roma secunda/Flore novo, ingenti magna consurgit ad alta/Mole tholis muro praecelsis sidera tangens*. On the composition of the poem, see: Dieter Schaller, 'Das Aachener Epos für Karl den Kaiser', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 10 (1976): 134–168; Peter Godman, Jörg Jarnut, and Peter Johanek, *Am Vorabend der Kaiserkrönung: Das Epos* 'Karolus Magnus et Leo papa*' und der Papstbesuch in Paderborn 799* (Berlin: Berlin Akademie Verlag, 2002).

[19] Rosamond D. McKitterick, *Charlemagne: The Formation of a European Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 141.

[20] Otto Zwierlein, 'Karolus Magnus—alter Aeneas', in *Literatur und Sprache im Europäischen Mittelalter*, ed. Alf Önnerfors, Johannes Rathofer, and Fritz Wagner (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1973), 44–52.

palace.[21] Charlemagne's second Rome at Aachen was only debatably a city, being inconsistently referred to as such in our surviving sources. Einhard's account of his transfer of the relics of Saints Marcellinus and Petrus from Rome to his new foundation of Seligenstadt in 829 is a case in point.[22] Within a space of two chapters he calls Aachen both a *civitas* and a *vicus* (village), while also being happy to use the word *palatium* (palace) to refer to the whole settlement.[23] Unlike Paderborn, Aachen did not have a bishop until the nineteenth century. This did not prevent it from being a royal seat. Charlemagne called it his *palatium publicum*.[24] In the first decade of the ninth century, the poet Modoin named Aachen the *caput orbis* and New Rome, but he avoided specifically labelling it a city.[25] In the 840s, Nithard described it as 'the palace at Aachen…the *sedes* (capital) of Francia'.[26] This placed Aachen within the hierarchy of the many rural palaces favoured by Carolingian rulers rather than as an urban centre.[27]

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[21] Gerhard Roeder, 'Die Pfalz und die frühen Kirchen in Paderborn nach den schriftlichen Quellen', *Westfälische Forschungen* 19 (1966): 137–160; Klemens Honsel-mann, 'Paderborn 777 'Urbs Karoli': Karlsburg', *Westfälische Zeitschrift* 130 (1980): 398–402; Karl Hengst, 'Die Urbs Karoli und das Blutbad zu Verden in den Quellen zur Sachsenmission (775–785)', *Theologie und Glaube* 70 (1980): 283–299; Charles B. McClendon, *The Origins of Medieval Architecture: Building in Europe, A.D 600–900* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 106–108; McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 165. See the disagreement of Karl Hauck, 'Paderborn, das Zentrum von Karls Sachsen-Mission 777', in *Adel und Kirche*, ed. Josef Fleckenstein and Karl Schmid (Freiburg: Herder, 1968), 91–140, here 140.

[22] Einhard, *Translatio et Miracula SS. Marcellini et Petri,* ed. Georg Waitz. MGH SS 15,1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1887), 238–264.

[23] Einhard, *Translatio*, Aachen as *civitas* II.5, 247, as *vicus* II.6, 247, IV.3, 257, as *palatium* IV.5, 257, IV.13, 261.

[24] Charlemagne, MGH DD Karol. I, ed. Engelbert Mühlbacher (Hannover: Hahn, 1906), no. 55, 81–82, 82; no. 56, 82–83, 83.

[25] Modoin, *Ecloga*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), 382–391, here 386.

[26] Nithard, *Histoire des fils de Louis le Pieux,* IV.1, ed. and trans. Philippe Lauer, rev. Sophie Glansdorff (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 2012), 116. *Aquis palatium, quod tunc sedes prima Franciae erat*.

[27] McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 137.

2 The City and the *Civitas*

This ambiguity makes the importance of cities for the Carolingians unclear. A place like Aachen was both a city and not a city at the same time. One answer to this riddle comes from examining carefully the words used in our sources and the significance they had for their authors. Considering what contemporaries meant when they discussed different types of settlements offers a much clearer sense of how cities were understood and what role they played. Among the large number of words used by people in the Carolingian world when they talked about settlements was *civitas*, a word with a wide range of potential meanings. What follows will examine the way *civitas* was employed in the Carolingian world, the meaning it had for writers in the period, and the types of places the word was applied to. In doing so this chapter will seek to answer the question of whether, even if it was not a city, Aachen was instead a *civitas*.

First, and most obviously, the *civitas* could be a physical urban centre. Although the Carolingian empire is normally understood as an assemblage of kingdoms, people moving through it relied upon an itinerary of *civitates*. Charts such as the Carolingian ancestor of the *Peutinger Map* arranged routes through a network of cities.[28] Such a journey can be observed in Theodulf's tour of the cities of Southern Gaul in his capacity as judge,[29] which started in Lyons and progressed to Aix-en-Provence via Vienne, Nîmes, Narbonne and Marseilles, among others.[30] In each place he described the local people of the area gathering in their city to bring questions to him or attempt to bribe him. These were places dominated by local inhabitants who had a strong sense of themselves as citizens. Theodulf alluded to a rivalry between the citizens of Arles and Narbonne as to which is the greatest (he sided with Narbonne on this matter).[31] A similar view of the world could be applied beyond the borders of the

[28] Emily Albu, *The Medieval Peutinger Map: Imperial Roman Revival in a German Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 42–58, although note the scepticism of Richard J.A. Talbert, *Rome's World: The Peutinger Map Reconsidered* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 135.

[29] On the role of judges as municipal officers, see Javier Martínez Jiménez's contribution to this volume.

[30] Theodulf of Orléans, *Contra iudices*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), no. 28, 493–517, here 497.

[31] Theodulf, *Contra iudices*, 497.

Carolingian world. *Civitates* featured prominently in the catalogue assembled by the anonymous Bavarian Geographer of the peoples north and east of the Danube.[32]

The physical *civitas* could also refer to the lands around the city which fed it and gathered within its walls for commerce and justice. The *civitas* was both a point in a network and a territory that bound the neighbouring countryside to an urban core. This is reflected by the way Charlemagne's descendants traded territories as *civitates*. In 859, Lothar II gave his older brother, Louis II 'the *civitates* of Geneva, Lausanne and Sion, along with the bishoprics, monasteries and counties'.[33] After Lothar's death, his kingdom was divided between his uncles in 870, who broke it down into *civitates*, so that Louis the German took 'Cologne, Trier, Utrecht, Strasbourg, Basel and Metz', while Charles the Bald received 'Lyons, Besançon, Vienne, Liège, Toul, Verdun, Cambrai, Viviers, [and] Uzès'.[34] Theodulf assembled the congregation of Orléans and the people in the country connected to it to perform Mass together.[35]

The urban cores within the *civitates* of the Carolingian realms were not dead relics, but commercial and economic centres. Walls and churches were repaired and plots of land bought and sold, often by the Carolingians themselves.[36] A nervous Alcuin had to appease a furious Charlemagne when the men of Tours attacked a party from Orléans who had

[32] Bavarian Geographer, 'Description of Cities and Lands on the North Bank of the Danube', ed. Erwin Herrmann, *Slawisch-germanische Beziehungen im südostdeutschen Raum* (Munich: Lerche, 1965), 220–221.

[33] *Annales Bertiniani*, a.859 (AB), ed. Léon Levillain, trans. Félix Grat, Jeanne Vielliard and Suzanne Clémencet (Paris: C. Klincksieck, 1964), 82. *Quandam regni sui portionem adtribuit, ea videlicet quae ultra Iuram montem habebat, id est Genuvam, lausonnam et Sedunum civitates, cum episcopatibus, monasteriis et comitatibus.*

[34] AB, a.870, 172. *Coloniam, Treveris, Utrech, Strastburch, Basulum…Mettis…Lugdunum, Vesontium, Viennam, Tungris, Tullum, Viridunum, Cameracum, Vivarias, Uceciam.*

[35] Theodulf of Orléans, *Erstes Kapitular*, ed. Peter Brommer, MGH Capitula Episcoporum 1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1984), 75–99.

[36] See for example Lothar I giving a vassal two vineyards within the walls of Trier in 853: MGH DD Lo I., ed. Theodor Schieffer (Berlin: Weidmann, 1966), no. 127, 288, 289; Charles the Fat paying for a fish trap for the city of Worms in 885 and donating property to fund the repair and maintenance of the walls of Langres in 887, MGH DD Ka III., ed. Paul Kehr (Berlin: Weidmann, 1937), no. 133, 212–213; no. 152, 244–246. For the buying and selling of urban property, Marculf, *Formulae Marculfinae aevi Karolini* II.20, ed. Karl Zeumer, MGH Formulae (Hannover: Hahn, 1886), 32–129, here 81–82.

come to retrieve a criminal. Alcuin explained the fracas by writing that it was thought some insult was intended to St Martin.[37] The support of the same St Martin was offered in an anonymous panegyric celebrating the *adventus* of Louis the Pious into Tours.[38] Local elites gathered in cities in times of peace, but also for war.[39] A poet based in Orléans, possibly Theodulf or Jonas, celebrated 'The faithful nobles [who] guard the city/ by enduring the wars of the enemy'.[40]

The vibrancy of the physical *civitas* mattered for the way writers in the Carolingian understood and used the term. Walls and towers would make appearances in many less material discussions of the *civitas*. But scholars and rulers were also guided by the legacy of ancient and late antique concepts of the *civitas*. Looming large over all Carolingian ideas of the *civitas* was the figure of Augustine. In his *De civitate Dei*, the Bishop of Hippo responded to a classical tradition embodied by Cicero, who defined the *civitas* as a community of people gathered around a shared sense of justice.[41] Augustine agreed that the *civitas* was defined by the ideas that unified their members, asking 'what is a city but a group of men united by a specific bond of peace?'[42] He famously emphasised the importance of love as the key classifying concept of a *civitas*, distinguishing between:

[37] Alcuin, *Epistolae,* ed. Ernst Dümmler MGH Epp. 4.2 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1905), 1–481, no. 245–247, 393–401; no. 249, 401–404, 403.

[38] Theodulf of Orléans, *Carmina*, no. 77, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), 578.

[39] Matthew Innes, *State and Society in the Early Middle Ages: The Middle Rhine Valley, 400–1000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 94–101.

[40] *De adventu Hludowici augusti Aurelianos*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), 529. *Muniunt urbem hanc proceres fideles…hostis adversi tolerando bella.*

[41] Cicero, *De re publica*, 6.13, ed. and trans. Clinton W. Keyes (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1928), 264. *acceptius quam concilia coetusque hominum iure sociati, quae civitates appellantur*. On Augustine's relationship with Cicero: Veronica Roberts Ogle, 'Augustine's Ciceronian Response to the Ciceronian Patriot', in *Augustine's Political Thought*, ed. Richard J. Dougherty (Rochester NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2019), 200–221.

[42] Augustine, *Epistulae,* CCSL 31B, ed. Klaus-Detlef Daur (Turnhout: Brepols, 2009), no. 138.10, 275–290, here 281. *quid est autem civitas nisi hominum multitudo in quoddam vinculum redacta concordiae?*

the two *civitates* [that] were created by two kinds of love: the earthly was created by self-love reaching the point of contempt for God, the heavenly by the love of God carried as far as contempt for self.[43]

Augustine thus emphasised the *civitas* as a community of citizens rather than a fixed place, unified and recognisable by the ideas they held which organised their lives.[44] Augustine was hugely influential for the Carolingians.[45] In his biography of Charlemagne, Einhard tells us that the Frankish ruler 'was fond of the books of Saint Augustine, particularly the one called the *City of God*'.[46] The chronicler Frechulf of Lisieux quoted Augustine on precisely this point in the universal history he dedicated to the West Frankish king Charles the Bald.[47]

Also casting a shadow on the subject was the ubiquitous Isidore of Seville. In addition to agreeing with Augustine that 'a *civitas* is a multitude of people united by a bond of community' he emphasised that '*urbs* is the name for the actual buildings, while *civitas* is not the stones,

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[43] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 14.28, CCSL 48, ed. Bernhard Dombart and Alfons Kalb (Turnhout: Brepols, 1955), 451. *Fecerunt itaque ciuitates duas amores duo, terrenam scilicet amor sui usque ad contemptum Dei, caelestem uero amor Dei usque ad contemptum sui.* Rex Martin, 'The Two Cities in Augustine's Political Philosophy', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 33 (1972): 195–216.

[44] Catherine Conybeare, 'The City of Augustine: On the Interpretation of *Civitas* in Augustine', in *Being Christian in Late Antiquity*, ed. Carol Harrison, Caroline Humfress, and Isabella Sandwell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 139–155, here 144–148.

[45] Sophia Mösch, *Augustine and the Art of Ruling in the Carolingian Imperial Period: Political Discourse in Alcuin of York and Hincmar of Rheims* (Abingdon: Taylor and Francia, 2020), 25.

[46] Einhard, *Vita Karoli Magni*, c. 24, ed. Georg Heinrich Pertz and Georg Waitz. MGH SRG 25 (Hannover: Hahn, 1911), 29. *Delectabatur et libris sancti Augustini, praecipueque his qui de civitate Dei praetitulati sunt.*

[47] Frechulf, *Frechulfi Lexoviensis Episcopi Opera Omnia*, ed. Michael I. Allen, CCCM 169A (Turnhout: Brepols, 2002), I.9, 35. *Aliud enim civitas non est quam hominum multitudo societasque.* See: Graeme Ward, 'All roads lead to Rome? Frechulf of Lisieux, Augustine and Orosius', *Early Medieval Europe* 22 (2014): 492–505 and *History, Scripture, and Authority in the Carolingian Empire: Frechulf of Lisieux* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022); Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, "'Hunting diligently through the volumes of the Ancients': Frechulf of Lisieux on the First City and the End of Innocence', in *Remembering and Forgetting the Ancient City*, ed. Javier Martínez Jiménez and Sam Ottewill-Soulsby (Oxford: Oxbow, 2022), 225–245, here 234–235.

but the inhabitants'.[48] His *Etymologies* were widely employed across the Carolingian world, including in the encyclopaedia assembled by Hrabanus Maurus, who copied Isidore exactly on this point.[49] The Carolingian scholars mentioned here were not isolated figures, but influential men who had access to Carolingian rulers. What they suggest is an understanding of the word *civitas* to mean a community of people living together under a shared law or love.

3 The Non-urban *civitas*

The previous section showed that the *civitas* as urban centre was still a useful concept in Carolingian Europe. But it has also demonstrated that writers in the period inherited a whole range of understandings about the *civitas* from the classical and late antique Christian worlds. As a consequence, Carolingian writers defined the *civitas* as a community of people bound together by a shared love. While this concept was most obviously applicable to a city, it could also be applied to non-urban settings. A key example is provided by the Abbey of Corvey, about thirty miles east of Paderborn, established at its current site in 822, and founded by the brothers Adalhard and Wala, cousins of Charlemagne.[50] Heavily patronised by Carolingian rulers, the most spectacular part of its surviving ninth-century architecture is the Westwerk, erected between 873 and 885, which acted as the main gate, although the towers are later Gothic. On that gate, which resembles the entrance to a city, and probably predates the Westwerk itself, is an inscription that reads 'You, lord, surround this *civitas* and your angels guard its walls'.[51] The text is taken from an

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[48] Isidore of Seville, *Etymologiarum sive Originum libri xx*, ed. W.M. Lindsay (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1911), XV.ii.1. *Civitas est hominum multitudo societatis vinculo adunata… Nam urbs ipsa moenia sunt, civitas autem non saxa, sed habitatores vocantur.*

[49] Hrabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*, PL 111, col.9–614, 14.1, col.375C–376D.

[50] McClendon, *The Origins of Medieval Architecture*, 191–192. On the history of Corvey, *Die Klosterkirche Corvey: 1,1. Geschichte und Archäologie*, ed. Sveva Gai, Karl Heinrich Krüger, and Bernd Thier (Darmstadt: Von Zabern, 2012).

[51] *Civitatem istam tu circumda d[omi]ne/et angeli tui custodiant muros eius.* For the inscription and a discussion, see: Kristina Krüger, 'Nicht verborgen, sondern goldgehöht – doch nur den Wenigsten verständlich: die Corveyer Fassadeninschrift', in *Verborgen, unsichtbar, unlesbar—zur Problematik restringierter Schriftpräsenz*, ed. Tobias Frese, Wilfried E. Keil, and Kristina Krüger (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2014), 59–84, here 62.

antiphon that circulated in the ninth century. Kristina Krüger has examined this inscription and argued that the use of *civitas* here implies a broader understanding of the monastery community, to include the lands and people that supported it beyond the walls.[52] But it also hints at the idea of a monastery as a community of people united by a common purpose, making it a *civitas*.

This identification of the monastery as *civitas* or *polis* had a history that stretched all the way back to Anthony in the Egyptian desert.[53] Corvey is a particularly interesting example because of the existence of a discussion of its founding in a funeral oration for Wala, one of the fraternal founders and a controversial abbot of Corvey, written by Paschasius Radbertus in the 850s.[54] One of the interlocutors in Paschasius' dialogue, Severus, describes the founding in terms drawn from *De civitate Dei*, comparing it to that of Rome and contrasting two cities:

> Rome was founded by two brothers [as was Corvey] in a manner different from the new one in our name. The former was built carnally on the earth, the other spiritually so that it might expand in heaven.[55]

This seems to be a veiled criticism that Corvey, this Rome in the wilderness, was not living up to the expectations of its founders, but rather acting in a corrupt manner. Certainly, the response of Paschasius ' subtly named mouthpiece, Paschasius, suggests that this was to be interpreted critically, as he chides Severus for being overly severe.

Severus' critique indicates that Corvey can be judged by how successfully it performs as a good *civitas*. Paschasius responded to this by

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[52] Krüger, 'Nicht verborgen', 73–74.

[53] Claudia Rapp, 'Desert, City, and Countryside in the Early Christian Imagination', *Church History and Religious Culture* 86 (2006): 93–112.

[54] Paschasius Radbertus, *'Epitaphium Arsenii'*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, in *Abhandlungen der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin, Philosophische und historische Klasse 2* (Berlin, 1900), 1–98, trans. Mayke de Jong and Justin Lake, *Confronting Crisis in the Carolingian Empire: Paschasius Radbertus' Funeral Oration for Wala of Corbie* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2020). See also: Mayke de Jong, *Epitaph for an Era: Politics and Rhetoric in the Carolingian World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019).

[55] Paschasius Radbertus, *'Epitaphium Arsenii'*, I.18, 47. *aliter aedificata est Roma a duobus fratribus, et aliter nova nostro de nomine. Illa siquidem carnaliter in terries, ista spiritaliter, ut dilataretur in caelis*; trans. de Jong and Lake, 118.

asserting that Corvey is not the city 'built on earth through bloodshed'.[56] Instead it is the city Ezekiel saw in his vision of the heavenly Jerusalem:

> For it had the same measurements atop the same foundations, the same length and width, the same number of gates and windows, and no other room for expansion… two extraordinary men [Wala and Adalhard] laid the foundations for this *civitas*, together with its towers and ramparts, among the peoples of the north.[57]

As with Corvey's grand gate, we can observe slippage between the *civitas* as community and as physical environment in Paschasius' towers and ramparts. Nonetheless, in asserting that Corvey was not Rome, but the heavenly Jerusalem, Paschasius accepted the terms on which Severus sought to measure the monastery.[58] What was important about Corvey was that it bound together a community of people with the shared love of God. This is a *civitas* but not an urban centre.

This case of a non-urban *civitas* shows that it was possible to disentangle a civic community from urban infrastructure. Nor was it just monasteries that could be a *civitas*. Another revealing example appears in a letter written by a monk based in Corvey's motherhouse, Corbie, named Ratramnus, to a missionary active in Scandinavia called Rimbert, advising him on what to do about reports he had received of cynocephali (dog-headed people) living nearby.[59] The monk observed of the dog-headed people that 'they follow some laws of society, to which their dwelling in

[56] Paschasius Radbertus, *'Epitaphium Arsenii'*, I.18, 48, *in sanguinibus terrena edificata est*; trans. de Jong and Lake, 119.

[57] Paschasius Radbertus, *'Epitaphium Arsenii'*, I.18, 48. *eisdem itaque mensuris super eadem fundamenta, eadem fundamenta, easdem latitudine et longitudine, totidem habens portas, eademque fenestras, et nullam crescendi aliam rerum magnitudinem.* Ad hoc *quippe duo isti eximii fundamenta in gentibus ad boream civitatis cum ponerent una cum turribus et propugnaculis suis*; trans. de Jong and Lake, 119.

[58] See here also: Yves Christe, "Et super muros eius angelorum custodia", *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 24 (1981): 173–179.

[59] Ratramnus of Corbie, 'Epistolae Variorum', MGH Epp. 6, ed. Ernst Dümmler (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925), no. 12, 155–157; trans. Paul Edward Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization: A Reader*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 452–56. See also: Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, 'City of Dog', *Journal of Urban History* 46 (2020): 1–19, here 5–8.

villages bears witness' which meant that they were rational.[60] Ratramnus linked this to the nature of the settlements they lived in:

> Now since a *civitas* is said to be a collection of human beings living equally under the same law and those cynocephali are said to live together in certain common dwellings in villages, the definition of a *civitas* is believed to agree with that.[61]

These *civitates* did not need to be urban and Ratramnus consistently described these settlements as villages. A *civitas* was therefore a place where rational people lived together under a common law. In placing emphasis on rationality and justice, Ratramnus was working within a long tradition. Both were associated with civic life in classical sources.[62] Cicero perceived justice as both the glue that bound the city together and the fundamental purpose for the city existing.[63] Augustine had defined a human being as 'a rational and mortal animal.'[64] One of the ways that rationality manifested itself was being able to live together in a city.

The distinction between Corvey as a community dedicated to the love of God and the pagan cynocephali as one bound by a shared rational justice speaks to the difficulties in perfectly reconciling Cicero and Augustine, even by those who were inspired by both. As these two examples suggest, non-urban institutions such as monasteries or villages might be considered to be a *civitas* so long as they proved to be united by a common sense of purpose.

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[60] Ratramnus, 156. *scilicet quod societatis quaedam iura custodiant, quod villarum cohabitatio testificatur*; trans. Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization*, 453.

[61] Ratramnus, 156. *Nam cum dicatur civitas esse coetus hominum eodem sub iure pariter degentium, istique simul cohabitare quaedam per villarum contubernia dicantur, civitatis diffinitio talibus. convenire non ab re creditur*; trans. Dutton, *Carolingian Civilization*, 453.

[62] Brent Shaw, "'Eaters of Flesh, Drinkers of Milk': The Ancient Mediterranean Ideology of the Pastoral Nomad', *Ancient History* 13/14 (1982/1983): 5–31.

[63] Cicero, *De Officiis*, 2.4.15, ed. and trans. Walter Miller (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1913), 183.

[64] Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, XVI.8, 508–509. *homo, id est animal rationale mortale*.

4 The Palace as *civitas*

This discussion of the many possible uses of the word *civitas* has taken us through the cities, scriptoria, monasteries and villages of the Carolingian (and cynocephalic) world. It now allows us to return to the problem with which we began, the ambiguous royal capitals that may or may not be cities. These settlements hover somewhere between a city and a palace. The examples of Corvey and the cynocephali suggest that this question can be usefully examined by considering the idea of a palace as *civitas*.

An incident in the long reign of Charles the Bald offers a valuable starting point here. Charles' rule over the kingdom of the West Franks was not always unchallenged and in the year 858 he was invaded by his older brother, Louis the German, while Charles was busy besieging a viking army elsewhere.[65] Charles was saved in this moment of crisis by the refusal of large numbers of the West Frankish elite to recognise Louis, most notably the bishops. Louis summoned the bishops of the provinces of Rheims and Rouen to a meeting at Rheims, but instead they gathered at Attigny. There they sent a defiant letter to Louis, written by Archbishop Hincmar of Rheims.[66] Having failed to garner sufficient support, Louis left West Francia. Of particular interest is the section of the letter where Hincmar condemns Louis for the atrocities his men have committed, all the more damning as they were against Christian Franks occupied fighting pagan vikings. Hincmar called upon Louis to:

> prohibit, restrain and calm these things, because your palace ought to be sacred, not sacrilegious. For the palace of the king is so called on account of the rational people residing there, and not on account of walls or bricks that are incapable of feeling.[67]

[65] AB, a.858 78; *Annales Fuldenses* (AF), a.858, ed. Friedrich Kurze, MGH SRG 7 (Hannover: Hahn, 1891), 50–51; Janet Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (London: Longman, 1992), 186–192; Geoffrey Koziol, *The Politics of Memory and Identity in Carolingian Royal Diplomas: The West Frankish Kingdom (840–987)* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 130–140.

[66] For a summary of the letter: Clémentine Bernard-Valette, ''We are between the hammer and the anvil': Hincmar in the crisis of 875', in *Hincmar of Rheims: Life and Work*, ed. Rachel Stone and Charles West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 93–109, here 94–95. On Hincmar's career more generally, see in the same volume, Rachel Stone, 'Hincmar's World', 1–43.

[67] Hincmar of Rheims, 'Letter of Quierzy', *Die Konzilien der karolingischen Teilreiche 843–859*, ed. Wilfried Hartmann, MGH Concilia 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1984), 408–427,

Hincmar thus declared that a palace is a community of people, defined by their rationality, not by the physical space, bound by a shared sense of the divine. This is remarkably similar to Isidore's description of a *civitas*, which Hincmar had access to at the scriptorium at Rheims.[68] Hincmar was familiar with Isidore as an authority, and had recently been drawing upon the forged Decretals associated with him for his *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis* in 857 or 858.[69] In the letter to Louis, Hincmar was not talking about a *civitas*, but he used precisely those terms associated with a *civitas* when it came to describing the nature of a true palace.

Hincmar's letter to Louis also echoes ideas about law and rationality that we encountered with Ratramnus' discussion of the cynocephali. These characteristics which defined the palace also defined the *civitas*.

The palace was a subject that Hincmar wrote about elsewhere. In 882 he produced an updated version of the *De ordine palatii*, which was originally written for Charlemagne by Adalhard, one of the founders of Corvey.[70] It is hard to tell what is Hincmar and what is Adalhard, but it can be assumed that Hincmar endorsed all of it.[71] Here again, the archbishop emphasises the importance of rationality, stating that kings must choose palace officials who are 'as noble by heart as by body, faithful,

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here 411–412 c. 5. *Propterea talia prohibete, compescite et desate, quoniam palatium vestrum debet esse sacrum et non sacrilegum. Palatium enim regis dicitur propter rationabiles homines inhabitantes, et non propter parietes insensibiles sive macerias.*

[68] Frederick Mason Carey, 'The Scriptorium of Reims during the Archbishopric of Hincmar: 845–822 A.D', in *Classical and Mediaeval Studies in honor of Edward Kennard Rand*, ed. Leslie Webber Jones (New York: Leslie Webber Jones, 1938), 41–60, here 55–56; Jean Devisse, *Hincmar, Archevêque de Reims 845–882* Vol.3 (Geneva: Libraire Droz, 1976), 1497.

[69] Hincmar of Rheims, *Collectio de ecclesiis et capellis*, ed. Martina Stratmann, MGH Fontes iuris 14 (Hannover: Hahn, 1990), 41; Detlev Jasper and Horst Fuhrmann, *Papal Letters in the Early Middle Ages: History of Medieval Canon Law* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), 176. See also: Mayke de Jong, 'Hincmar, priests and Pseudo-Isidore: The case of Trising in context', in *Hincmar of Rheims: Life and Work*, ed. Rachel Stone and Charles West (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 268–288, here 276.

[70] Janet Nelson, 'Aachen as a Place of Power', in *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Mayke de Jong and Frans Theuws (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 217–242, here 226–230.

[71] Steffen Patzold, 'Konsens und Konkurrenz: Überlegungen zu einem aktuellen Forschungskonzept der Mediävistik', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 41 (2007): 75–103, 77; McKitterick, *Charlemagne*, 142–155.

rational, discrete and sober'.[72] This would ensure a palace built around those values. This was particularly important for the Count of the Palace, whose job it was to hear legal trials that had reached the palace 'according to justice and reason'.[73]

The idea of a palace as a place of common purpose appears elsewhere. In his encyclopaedia, *De Rerum Natura*, compiled in the 840s and dedicated to Louis the German, Hrabanus Maurus wrote 'We speak of a single palace, when it is bounded by many wings and open spaces'.[74] He was quoting here Cassiodorus' commentary on Psalm 148, which repeatedly refers to 'heavens'.[75] The sixth-century exegete explained this pluralisation in the psalm by comparing heaven to a palace, 'so we can perhaps speak of parts of heaven as heavens, since its constituent parts and its folds are demonstrably one', just as a palace could be described as one despite the variety of the pieces that made it.[76] Hrabanus copied this commentary completely. The palace was therefore a space where unity emerged from multiplicity. Although Cassiodorus and Hrabanus were here thinking of physical structures, the same idea could be applied to the palace as a community of people, as we shall see.

In the second half of the reign of Charles the Bald, the most important palace where some of these ideas might have been applied was

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[72] Hincmar of Rheims, *De ordine palatii*, ed. Thomas Gross and Rudolf Schieffer, MGH Fontes iuris 3 (Hannover: Hahn, 1980), c. 18, 66. *Nobili corde et corpore constans, rationabilis, discretus et sobrius eligeretur.*

[73] Hincmar, *De ordine palatii*, c. 21, 70. *juste ac rationabiliter determinaret.*

[74] Hrabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis*, IX.3, col.264D. *Dicimus unum esse palatium, quod multis membris, multisque spatiis ambiatur*; trans. Patrick G. Walsh, *Cassiodorus, Explanation of the Psalms* 3 (New York: Paulist Press, 1991), 451. On Hrabanus, see: *Hrabanus Maurus: Gelehrter, Abt von Fulda und Erzbischof von Mainz*, ed. Franz J. Felten (Mainz: Bistum Mainz, 2006); *Rabanus Maurus: Auf den Spuren eines karolingischen Gelehrten*, ed. Hans-Jürgen Kotzur (Mainz: Von Zabern, 2006).

[75] Cassiodorus, *Expositio Psalmorum* 148.4, ed. M. Adriaen, CCSL 98 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1956), 1316.

[76] Cassiodorus, *Expositio*, 1316; Hrabanus Maurus, *De rerum naturis,* col.264D. *ita forsitan et coeli partes dicimus coelos, dum complexio atque sinus eius unus esse monstretur.* On the palace as heaven, see: Maria Cristina Carile, *The Vision of the Palace of the Byzantine Emperors as a Heavenly Jerusalem* (Spoleto: Fondazione Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 2012).

Compiègne.[77] Compiègne took an increasingly central role from the late 860s, hosting assemblies and celebrating major feasts there such as Christmas and Easter.[78] Charles launched a major building campaign there. That he saw Compiègne as his Aachen is suggested by his statement on the founding of a monastery there in 876:

> Because our grandfather [Charlemagne], to whom divine providence granted the monarchy of this whole empire, established a chapel in honour of the Virgin in the palace of Aachen, we therefore, wanting to imitate the pattern set by him…have built and completed within the territory under our sway, the palace of Compiègne, a new monastery, to which we have given the name 'royal' in honour of the glorious mother of God and ever virgin Mary.[79]

Compiègne resembled Aachen in a number of ways. It was a royal centre with a collection of monumental infrastructure based around a hall and a church, intimately connected in life and in memory with one particular ruler. Charles was associated with Compiègne after his death, as later annalists placed events of his reign in Compiègne despite evidence that they had happened elsewhere.[80]

Later sources from the tenth century name Compiègne 'Carlopolis', and it may have been called that in the time of Charles.[81] A letter from Pope Hadrian II in 871 observed that Charles had done so much work on Tours, that he could name it 'Karolidonum', just as in ancient times it had been called 'Cesarodunum' after the emperors, so the idea of naming a place after a monarch who had done a lot of building work there was

[77] Dietrich Lohrmann, 'Trois Palais Royaux de la Vallée de l'Oise d'après les travaux des érudits mauristes: Compiègne, Choisy-au-Bac et Quierzy', *Francia* 4 (1976): 121–139, here 124–129.

[78] Nelson, *Charles the Bald*, 36, 235.

[79] *Recueil des actes de Charles II de Chauve, roi de France,* 2, no. 425, ed. Georges Tessier (Paris: Impr. Nationale, 1952), 448–454, 451.

[80] Regino of Prüm, *Chronicon*, a.861, ed. Friedrich Kurze, MGH SRG 50 (Hannover: Hahn, 1890), 79.

[81] *Ex Sermone in Tumulatione SS. Quintini, Victorici, Cassiani*, ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH SS 15.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1888), 271–273, here 271. *Carlopoli Compendio.*

clearly familiar to Charles.[82] This implies that the palace of Compiègne was also perceived as becoming city-like through the development of physical architecture such as the chapel to the Virgin. But emotional and communal ties were also essential for defining its status.

In the Capitulary of Quierzy of 877, Charles called upon the West Frankish elite to finish the fortress he had started building at Compiègne. Charles was going on campaign in Italy and this was part of a series of fortifications designed to fend off vikings while he was away. While the other measures are fairly pragmatic, this one is described in terms of emotional bonds, 'That the fortress of Compiègne, begun by us, should be perfected for our love, and your honour, as a testimony of your love towards our Kindness'.[83] Compiègne was portrayed as a place where Charles and his people labour together out of a shared love between monarch and subjects, where Charles ruled with kindness, and his followers earned honour through their service. It was a fortress rather than a city, but it was also a space where a community defined by love came together, fusing the ideas associated with a *civitas* with the concept of a palace.

This did not begin with Charles the Bald, even if it saw some of its clearest manifestation during his reign. As we have seen, Compiègne was intended as a response to Aachen, and the ideas discussed by Hincmar in his issuing of the *Ordinances of the Palace* probably originated in the time of Charlemagne. It has long been recognised that Charlemagne and Louis the Pious were trying to create a particular environment in Aachen. It has been described as a 'courtly society' in the sense of Norbert Elias; a place of education and discipline; a sacred community; a select society in and of itself and yet also a model for the rest of the empire.[84] In his biography of

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[82] Hadrian II, *Epistolae*, no. 35, ed. Ernst Perels, MGH Epp. 6 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1925), 741–743, here 743. *Ut non vocetur ut antiquitus Cesaredunum ulterius, sed Karolidonum in perpetuum*; see also: no. 36, 743–746, 745.

[83] Charles the Bald, *Capitulare Carisiacense*, ed. Alfred Boretius and Victor Krause, MGH Capit. 2 (Hannover: Hahn, 1897), no. 281, 355–361, c. 26, 360. *Ut castellum de Compendio a nobis coeptum pro nostro amore et vestro honore perficiatur in testimonium dilectionis vestrae erga nostram benignitatem.*

[84] Stuart Airlie, 'The Palace of Memory: The Carolingian Court as Political Centre', in *Courts and Regions in Medieval Europe*, ed. Sarah Rees Jones, Richard Marks, and A.J. Minnis (Woodbridge: York Medieval Press, 2000), 1–20; Janet Nelson, 'Was Charlemagne's Court a Courtly Society?', and Matthew Innes, ''A Place of Discipline': Carolingian Courts and Aristocratic Youth', in *Court Culture in the Early Middle Ages,* ed.

Charlemagne, Einhard presents Aachen as a model of sociability.[85] Notker the Stammerer would later depict Aachen as a sort of Panopticon under Charlemagne's watchful eye, its members being carefully managed and corrected as needed.[86] The idea of a civic society, or *civitas*, offers a lens through which these multiple Aachens can be understood.

Aachen as a place where people are united by a shared love appears in a number of places. Round the interior of the rotunda of the chapel in Aachen that Charles the Bald sought to emulate in Compiègne, runs the inscription, inspired by 1 Peter 2 and reportedly composed by Alcuin:

> When the living stones are fastened together in peace,
>   And in even number all come together,
>   The work of the Lord who has built this whole hall shines,
>   And the pious labour of mortal men is crowned with success.[87]

The living stones here stand for the people quarried from across Europe and brought together to Aachen. The living community is fundamentally tied here to the physical building.

Something similar can be observed by returning to *Karolus Magnus et Leo Papa*. The poem celebrated the physical structures being built, particularly the high walls. But the longest passages focus on the nameless people constructing the nameless city called Rome. Workers are carving and moving stone, digging baths, building the church, raising the stones to elevate the walls, making tools and warehouses:

> there is an uproar, a hubbub rises in the great city;

Catherine Cubitt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 39–57, here 40–42, 59–76; Mayke de Jong, '*Sacrum Palatium et ecclesia*: L'autorité religieuse royale sous les Carolingiens (790–840)', *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales* 58 (2003): 1243–1269.

[85] Einhard, *Vita Karoli*, c. 22, 27.

[86] Notker the Stammerer, *Gesta Karoli Magni imperatoris*, ed. Hans F. Haefele, MGH SRG NS 12 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1959), 72; Paul Edward Dutton, *Charlemagne's Mustache and Other Cultural Clusters of a Dark Age* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 132–133. On the concept of 'living stones', see the contribution by Megan Welton to this volume.

[87] Alcuin, *Versus in Aula Ecclesiae in Aquis Palatio*, ed. Ernst Dümmler, MGH Poet. 1 (Berlin: Weidmann, 1881), 432. *Cum lapides vivi pacis conpage ligantur, / Inque pares numeros omnia conveniunt, / Claret opus domini, totam qui construit aulam, / Effectusque piis dat studiis hominum.*

the busy throng comes and goes, scattered throughout the city, enthusiastically gathering material to build lofty Rome.[88]

This is a depiction of a community of people working seamlessly and enthusiastically together under Charlemagne's direction to make a new city. Clearly the physical structures matter, but it is the vision and the human participation that makes it work. Much of the language is taken from the *Aeneid*, but the fact that it was chosen, taken and then rearranged says something about what our anonymous poet wanted to convey. The language of the poem may be that of *urbs*, but the community it describes is that of a *civitas*.

The language of the physical city is not without significance here. Writers and rulers were comfortable with the non-urban *civitas*. But they were also intimately familiar with the living cities that were also called *civitas*. Despite Isidore's best efforts to separate the two concepts, slippage took place.[89] Spaces like Corvey or Aachen, which were *civitates* by virtue of their united communities, were then reimagined in urban terms. Both cases show how the language of construction, of walls and towers, was then pressed into service to explain the unity and purpose of a community of people. In this way, a non-urban *civitas* could acquire connotations of the city, even if that was far from an accurate description of the physical armature of the settlement in question.

5 Conclusion

It seems clear that in 776 Charlemagne wanted to found a city on the river Lippe, before trying to downplay the significance of the project after it went up in flames in 778. The unfortunate city was undoubtedly a physical settlement, intended to be impressive and probably in possession of churches and walls, even if the latter were sadly lacking when the Saxon rebels arrived. But this chapter has argued that Charlemagne and his advisers also thought about cities as *civitates*, communities of people united by their love and their honour. This was possible not just because

[88] *Karolus magnus et Leo papa*, 369. *Fit strepitus, magna consurgit stridor in urbe; / Itque reditque operosa cohors, diffusa per urbem, / Materiam Romae certatim congregat altae.*

[89] For the difficulties Isidore himself had with the distinction, see Ottewill-Soulsby, 'Hunting diligently', 229–230.

of the glamour of Antiquity, but also because the Carolingian empire was filled both with cities that acted like *civitates*, such as Tours and Orléans, and with non-urban institutions such as monasteries that nonetheless embraced the concept of *civitas*. Under this definition of a *civitas*, the ambiguities that surround places like Aachen and Compiègne begin to make more sense. These palace centres were understood in the same terms as the *civitas*, as permanent communities bound by their shared love and honour. One consequence of this is that definitions of palaces might come to resemble that of the *civitas*, as we saw in the case of Hincmar. Another is that even a fairly rural palace centre might be referred to and thought of in terms that resemble a city because of slippage between the multiple concepts of the *civitas*.

In order to understand the Carolingian city, we need to do so by thinking about it in terms of the words they used and the meanings they attached to them, while accepting that these could be ambiguous and prone to change and really important all at the same time. Following this approach, it becomes evident that people in the Carolingian world took ancient ideas of the city, mediated by late Antiquity and by the example of still vibrant urban communities in their own times, and applied them to their much less urbanised landscape, even if that meant using them for settlement types that may not strike us as strictly speaking urban. In doing so, they identified a quality that struck them as a defining characteristic of a city, that of a community with shared goals and values, which continued to matter in the Carolingian world. Much like Charlemagne contemplating the burned ruins of his city on the Lippe and deciding that a rebranding was in order, the Franks as a whole adapted to changing conditions, making use of the ancient past in a new context.

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Expressing Civic Pride in Stone: Church Towers and Town Halls in the Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Low Countries

Merlijn Hurx

1   INTRODUCTION

Several years before the completion of Utrecht's Dom tower in 1382, the cathedral's preacher and canon Geert Groote penned a protest against its construction, '*contra turrim Trajectensem*' (Fig. 1). His well-known treatise condemned the expensive project as not only a waste of money, but also an impetus for all manner of vices. In particular, he wrote, it would feed the vanity of the citizens of Utrecht, because the tall tower would fill visitors with awe and make them desirous to know its height. The burghers surely welcomed the praise of foreigners and prided themselves

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on the construction of this marvel in their city.[1] And yet, the cathedral did not serve as the city's parish, for their daily services citizens had their own parish churches. Groote's account testifies that although the Dom tower was not commissioned by the city, but by the bishop and the cathedral chapter, Utrecht's inhabitants identified with the building. His warning that the tower would attract admiration far and wide is borne out by its frequent portrayal by fifteenth-century painters, most famously Jan van Eyck in the *Madonna of Chancellor Rolin*. In this paper, I will examine monumental architecture in the Low Countries in the late Middle Ages as an important visual expression of civic pride.[2]

The swell in civic building on a monumental scale in the Low Countries in this period was to a great extent spurred by inter-urban competition. Architecture became a matter of urban prestige and a measure by which cities and towns were compared with each other. The example of the Dom, however, reminds us that civic pride is also an elusive concept, which is hard to pinpoint: in this case the tower was cherished by a wider urban community, even though the tower was not a communal project stricto sensu. Instead, the cathedral's direct relevance to the city was limited since it did not serve as one of the city's parishes. In a way, Utrecht citizens 'appropriated' a monument that was not strictly theirs. That raises the question in which ways civic pride was expressed in stone? Architectural historians have long acknowledged that it was an important catalyst for the erection of monumental architecture, however

[1] Geert Groote, *Geert Grootes Tractaat 'Contra turrim Traiectensem' teruggevonden*, trans. and ed. R.R. Post (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967), 26. *Omnis ergo vanus appropinquans civitati vel eam pertransiens hac altitudine et magnitudine visa ammirabitur et intuitu turris subsistet, oculos curiose girabit ad singula, altitudinis quantitatem nitetur perpendere et que apprehendere curiositate non potuerit, ab incolis vestigabit. Consurgent laudes turris male mirande, gloriantur cives quamvis inaniter, superbit vulgus de turri, in glora iactant structores ad mala scioli, similiter et provisores ad superbiam construendam archetectonici.*

[2] Merlijn Hurx, *Architecture as Profession. The Origins of Architectural Practice in the Low Countries in the Fifteenth Century*, Architectura Moderna 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

Fig. 1   Utrecht, tower of the cathedral (Domtoren) with on the foreground one of the city's four parish churches, the Buurkerk, 1321–1382 (Hurx)

interpretations are often difficult to substantiate, because documentation for the late medieval period is often erratic. Written sources are usually ambiguous or inarticulate: An often-repeated commonplace in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries is that a new project was to be an 'adornment (*cirate*) to the city'.[3] An obvious explanation for the lack of sources, is that monuments spoke for themselves; the society in which they were erected was likely well-aware of the power balances behind their construction. Buildings could convey multi-layered messages and represent various groups of the community. The example of the meat hall of Brussels erected in between 1566 and 1570 shows how complicated matters could be. Due to their monumentality, meat halls are usually regarded as an important expression of civic prestige and the might of the butchers' guilds.[4] However, in Brussels the meat hall, which stood behind the Maison du Roi, was owned by the king. Because of the dilapidated state of the medieval building, the butchers of the guild sent a petition to Philip II in 1565 in which they asked for the erection of a new hall. They not only needed the king's permission, but it was his administration that was to organise the work. A committee formed by a member of the Council of Brabant, the Chamber of Accounts, the king's receiver of Brussels and the master craftsmen of the king agreed that the old building could not be saved, and soon produced a design for an entirely new building. Before construction started, negotiations took place on the financial contributions by each of the parties involved: the butchers pledged to contribute 2000 pounds, while the city supported the project with 1200 pounds as it was regarded to be a great adornment to the city and would be convenient for its citizens (*grootelycken ten cirate vander stadt ende orbore vand gemeynten*).[5] In total, their contribution was expected to cover about one-third of the cost, the remaining sum came from the king's coffers. In turn for their support, both the guild

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[3] This term was common and continued to be used well into the eighteenth century. Merlijn Hurx, 'De zeventiende-eeuwse modernisering van het stadhuis van's-Hertogenbosch', *Bulletin KNOB* 106 (2007): 53–67, here 54.

[4] Konrad Ottenheym, 'Meat Halls and Fish Markets in the Dutch Republic', in *Public Buildings in Early Modern Europe*, Architectura Moderna 9, ed. Konrad Ottenheym, Krista De Jonge, and Monique Chatenet (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 273–284.

[5] Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels, Rekenkamer, 140, f. 249r; Alexandre Henne and Alphonse Wauters, *Histoire de la ville de Bruxelles* (Brussels: Éditions "Culture et civilisation", 1968, first printed in 1845), 3 vols, here vol. 3, 69–70.

and the city wanted several adjustments to be made to the first design. Their wishes concerned the position and accessibility of the building and not the decorative programme. The building was lost in the bombardment of 1695 by the French troops of Louis XIV, but a remaining plan of the building shows that the entrances of the 28 shops were decorated by coloured coat-of-arms and gilded letters of all the territories of Philip II, thus presenting the meat hall as an exclusively royal building (Fig. 2).

My aim in this paper is to consider architecture as a medium of discourse between cities and the various groups within the city. I will explore several case studies in the Low Countries in which this becomes more tangible. I will first briefly treat church towers and then turn to town halls, which were generally regarded as the prime markers of urban autonomy in the late medieval Low Countries.
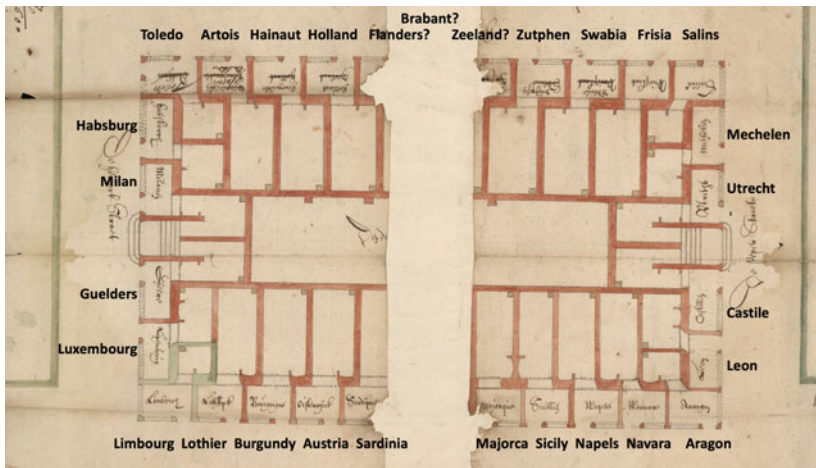
Fig. 2 Jan van Hovele, plan of the meat hall of Brussels with the surrounding streets. The north is at the bottom, ca. 1568. I have indicated all the mentioned territories of Philip II (Algemeen Rijksarchief, Brussels, Kaarten en plattegronden in handschrift, 844, edited by the author)

2   Prodigy Towers

Late medieval prodigy towers are one of the most remarkable architectural features in the Low Countries. Nowhere else in Europe existed such a high density of colossal west towers of churches. Some were intended to be more than 150 metres tall. Very few were completed, but their massive unfinished trunks testify to the overly ambitious spirit in which they were conceived. The surviving drawing of the tower of St. Rumbold's in Mechelen, for example, shows that it was intended to be almost 170 metres tall (Fig. 3). Soon, even small towns such as Zierikzee and Veere in the county of Zeeland undertook to build towers on a similarly massive scale. Even more conspicuous was the projected west front of the church of St. Peter in Leuven. Two preserved elevation drawings and an eight-metre-tall model reveal that it was to have three towers ascending to heights of approximately 150 metres. The only prodigy tower started in the fifteenth century that did reach its intended height, was Our Lady in Antwerp. Here only the north tower of the twin-towered west front was built: it reached the height of 123 metres.[6] While church towers served various important functions to the city, their size was clearly not prompted by functional needs. They were used as bell tower but could also serve the city as a lookout for fires, and their thick walls provided safe storage for the city's most important documents.[7] Yet, in the eyes of Groote their monumentality was completely unnecessary: and interestingly, when he was writing the Dom's stone lantern was under construction. There was no functional need for this third storey, as already the blocky second storey housed the bells. To hang the church bells, a far more modest timber structure could suffice, as St. Bavo's in Haarlem shows: a free-standing timber bell tower that stood behind the church was constructed in 1479. After 1520 when the new crossing tower was finished, both towers served as bell tower, until the timber structure was taken down in 1804.[8]

[6] Hurx, 'Architecture', 120–122.

[7] Jan Kuys, 'Weltliche Funktionen spätmittelalterlicher Pfarrkirchen in den nördlichen Niederlanden', in *The Use and Abuse of Sacred Places in Late Medieval Towns*, ed. Paul Trio and Marjan De Smet (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2006), 27–45.

[8] Henk Verhoef, '"Van sonderling geluyd, van kostelijk metael". De klokken van de Bavo', in *Het grote Bavoboek. Vijf eeuwen Grote of St.-Bavokerk in Haarlem*, ed. Daan den Hengst, Henk Kaan, and Koen Vermeij (Zwolle: Wbooks, 2021), 511–521, here 513–514.

Fig. 3 Mechelen, the unfinished tower of St. Rumbold reaches the height of 97 metres, 1452-circa 1465, 1482-circa 1530 (Hurx)

The oldest examples of such heavy church towers were erected in Bruges at Our Lady and St. Salvator's church. Of the two, the tower of Our Lady is the tallest, surpassing the height of 115 metres (Fig. 4). In contrast to most other towers in the Low Countries, it was not built on the axis of the church, but it was attached to the north side aisle. Dendrochronological research reveals that construction started somewhere at the end of the thirteenth century.[9] It went up quickly and in the third quarter of the fourteenth century the trunk was finished. The original tall spire was added in the first half of the fifteenth century. Possibly the tower was meant as a challenge to the tall belfry of the cloth hall, which was the most monumental civic building of the city.[10] It went up in

[9] Vincent Debonne, 'Uit de klei, in verband. Bouwen met baksteen in het graafschap Vlaanderen 1200–1400' (PhD diss., KU Leuven, 2015), vol. 2, 14.

[10] Thomas Coomans, 'Belfries, Cloth Halls, Hospitals and Mendicant Churches: A New Urban Architecture in the Low Countries Around 1300', in *The Year 1300 and*

roughly the same period, the brick trunk dates from the last decades of the thirteenth century and was raised in the middle of the fourteenth century with a second storey. Only the octagonal lantern, which was clad with stone, was added later, in the 1480s (Fig. 5). The towers in Bruges did not immediately lead to contest in the construction of vast towers in the county of Flanders. In Kortijk (St. Martin's), Oudenaarde (St. Walurga's) and Ghent (St. Bavo's, formerly St. John's, and St. Michael's) the axial towers were built all in the fifteenth century. Also, in the neighbouring duchy of Brabant, the oldest large church towers date from the end of the fourteenth century. St. Gommarus' in Lier was built from 1378 on and the towers of Bergen op Zoom and Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe-over-de-Dijle were likely begun in the same period.

Interestingly, rather than in the prosperous urban centres in the southern Low Countries, the competition to erect such heavy church towers took off in the north (Fig. 6). In Holland, the axial towers of the Old Church in Delft and Our Lady in Dordrecht were begun some fifty years earlier, in the first half of the fourteenth century. They were substantially larger than the early towers in Brabant. The tower at Dordrecht was the most ambitious early project in Holland: the dimensions of its base of 15 by 15 metres suggest that it was originally intended to rise over 100 metres (Fig. 7).[11] It seems likely that the fourteenth-century Dom tower inspired patrons in Holland to embark on such ambitious projects. At the end of the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries several other towers were begun in the upcoming towns of Leiden, Delft and The Hague. St. Peter's in Leiden collapsed in 1512, but foundations show that it had a ground plan of at least 11 by 11 metres.[12] In The Hague the trunk of the hexagonal tower, which had a diameter of 14 metres,

the Creation of a New European Architecture, Architectura Medii Aevi I, ed. Alexandra Gajewski and Zoë Opačić (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 185–202.

[11] Hurx, 'Architecture', 119.

[12] John Veerman, '"Den thorn valt"', in *De Pieterskerk te Leiden. Bouwgeschiedenis, inrichting en gedenktekens*, ed. Elizabeth den Hartog and John Veerman (Zwolle: Wbooks, 2011), 72–90, here 87.

Fig. 4 Bruges, choir and tower of Our Lady, the tower was begun around 1290 and the trunk was finished in the third quarter of the fourteenth century. The spire was built in the first half of the fifteenth century, but the current spire dates from the nineteenth century (Hurx)

Fig. 5 Bruges, belfry of the cloth hall, begun in the last decades of the thirteenth century, second storey dates from the middle of the fourteenth century, and the octagonal lantern was added in the 1480s (Hurx)

was constructed rather quickly, between 1420 and 1424.[13] The tallest axial tower, however, is that of the New Church in Delft. Built between 1396 and 1496 it soared about 108 metres upon its completion, and thus was almost as tall as the tower of Utrecht Cathedral itself (112 metres) (Fig. 8).

Our Lady, Bruges begun late 13th century

Utrecht Cathedral 1321-1382

Old Church, Delft, begun 1st half 14th century

Our Lady, Dordrecht, begun 1st half 14th century

St Gommarus, Lier begun 1378

Onze-Lieve-Vrouwe -over-de-Dijle, Mechelen, begun late 14th century

St Gertrudis, Bergen op Zoom begun late 14th century

Nieuwe Kerk, Delft 1396-1496

St. James, The Hague begun 1420

5m 10m 15m

Fig. 6 Selection of plans of the largest church towers in the Low Countries begun between the end of the thirteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century drawn to the same scale. Not included are the twin-towered west fronts of St. Gudule's in Brussels, begun in 1415, and Our Lady in Antwerp, started in 1422 (Hurx)

[13] Charles Boissevain and Chris Nigten, *De Grote- of Sint Jacobskerk van 's-Gravenhage* (Zwolle: Waanders, 1987), 83–85.

Fig. 7   Dordrecht, tower of Our Lady, begun first half of the fourteenth century (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

Fig. 8   Delft, tower of the New Church/St Ursula, 1396–1496 (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

2.1   Tower Competition in Delft

No sources exist that unambiguously confirm that the tower of the New Church in Delft was built to outdo Utrecht, but the continual struggles of the county of Holland with the prince bishopric of Utrecht, both in political and economic terms, may have provided a particular impetus for its construction. It is interesting that the seventeenth-century city description of Delft, *Beschryvinge der stadt Delft* (1667), written by the Delft politician and writer Dirck van Bleyswijck not only mentions that the tower was taller than all other towers in Holland, but that he also recounts that from the top of the tower on a clear day it was possible to see the Dom tower on the horizon, thus invoking a kind of image of two opposing towers.[14] In addition, he mentions that the tower of the New Church was so admired that even in the prince bishopric of Utrecht it served as a model for the axial tower of St. Cunera's in Rhenen.[15] In reality the tower closely followed the model of the Dom tower, with its two distinctive blocky storeys and a tall, open octagonal lantern. However, Van Bleyswijck was usually well-informed and made use of medieval sources, and therefore his remark likely provides insight into the competitive climate of fifteenth-century Delft. A contemporary clue is provided by the Chronicle of the New Church, written in the early sixteenth century. It recounts the interdict of the church by the Bishop of Utrecht in 1498, just two years after the tower was finished. The sanction lasted for several weeks, and fully disrupted the religious services of the parish. Interestingly, the chronicle explains that the interdict was the work of a rich Utrecht burgher who was close to the episcopal court. Allegedly, he was owed money by several cities of Holland and to force them to settle their debts, the New Church was sanctioned. The chronicler explains that the reason why only the New Church was affected was because the church was the most prominent and best-known church of Holland. This explanation seems hardly credible, but it shows that the chronicler, who was

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[14] Dirck van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge der stadt Delft* (Delft: Arnold Bon, 1667), 222. For the construction of the New Church see: Herman van der Kloot Meyburg, *De Nieuwe Kerk te Delft, haar bouw, verval en herstel* (Rotterdam: Brusse, 1941).

[15] Van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge*, 222.

likely himself a parishioner of the New Church, believed the church to surpass all other churches in Holland.[16]

As well as rivalry between cities, the fervour for tower-building was also fired by competition between churches in the same city. The wardens of the New Church were probably not only thinking of Utrecht when they erected their tower, but also wanted to outstrip the 75-metre tower of the Old Church. Indeed, this church was more prominent than the New Church, because of its age and the fact that it belonged to the most affluent parish of the city. The wardens of the Old Church did not lack ambition themselves, as is testified by a papal bull issued by Pius II in 1459. In response to a supplication from Delft to obtain the remains of saints for the Old Church, Pius granted permission to collect relics, considering that the church had very few of its own, despite being 'renowned, large, imposing and adorned as a cathedral'.[17] The formulation seems to suggest the wish to elevate the status of the church to a level equal to cathedrals. This description was doubtless prompted by the Delft churchwardens themselves, and its competitive tone was not lost on the bishop of Utrecht. His letter approving the proclamation of an indulgence for future worshippers of the new relics repeats the papal bull's reference to the Old Church almost verbatim but avoids comparison with a cathedral. Indeed, none of the prosperous cities in the western Low Countries had a church with the status of a cathedral in the Middle Ages. It would take until in 1559 when, as part of king Philip II's efforts to combat the spread of Protestantism, fourteen new dioceses were established. Several of the largest parish churches were promoted to the rank of cathedral, among them St. Bavo's in Haarlem, St. John's in 's-Hertogenbosch, St. Rumbold's in Mechelen, St. Bavo's in Ghent and Our Lady in Antwerp.[18]

[16] Dinant Oosterbaan, 'Kroniek van de Nieuwe Kerk te Delft', *Haarlemse Bijdragen* 65 (1958): 1–326, here 250.

[17] Gerrit Verhoeven, *Devotie en negotie. Delft als bedevaartplaats in de late middeleeuwen* (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij, 1992), 34. *insignis, ampla, speciosa et plurimum etiam ad instar cathedralis ecclesie adornata existit.*

[18] Jan Kuys, *Kerkelijke organisatie in het middeleeuwse bisdom Utrecht* (Nijmegen: Valkhof Pers, 2004), 43.

2.2   The New Church's Tower in Delft as a Joint Effort

While competition with Utrecht likely played a role in the erection of the tower of the New Church, the commemorative inscriptions of the eight gables crowning the tower, which celebrate the tower's completion, remain silent on such a rivalry (Fig. 9). These verses in Middle Dutch are unique in the Low Countries: no considerably lengthy texts adorning monuments are found elsewhere in the Low Countries. They were installed together with twenty escutcheons in 1496. Together, they give dues to all political powers and parties who took part in the completion of the tower. The then ruler of the Burgundian Netherlands, Philip the Handsome, is mentioned and represented by three coats of arms, that of the count of Holland, the duchy of Burgundy and the Archduchy of Austria. In Van Bleyswijck's city description the verses are recorded. They recount that Philip was eighteen when the gables were made, and they celebrate him as the count of Holland, and wish him protection against his enemies.[19]

The verses and escutcheons of Philip are followed by the coat of arms of the schout or bailiff of Delft and his wife, the parish priest and two churchwardens, the recently deceased bishop of Utrecht, David of Burgundy (d. 1496) and his successor Frederick of Baden. Finally, the city of Delft and the craftsmen who built the tower are also honoured by their coat of arms (Fig. 10).[20] Dirk de Vries proposed that the order in which these parties are represented may be interpreted as a political statement, because the bishops do not immediately follow upon the ruler despite their high status. However, it is unclear if the sequence was meant to challenge the bishops' authority, because the verses speak rather positively

[19] Van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge*, 218–219.
Den Hartoge Philips Edel Lants-Heere,
Van den Roomschen Edelen Coninck geboren,
Hy was 18. Jaren oudt luttel meere,
Doen dit gemaect wert, elck macht horen,
Dat die Edele jonge Jeucht vercoren,
Was Prince ende Grave van dese Landen,
God behoede hem voor tsviants handen.

[20] Dirk J. de Vries, *Met het oog op het Laatste Oordel. De geboorte van het individu in de westerse kunst*, Clavis Kleine Kunsthistorische Monografieën Deel XVII (Utrecht: Clavis, 2014), 37–40.
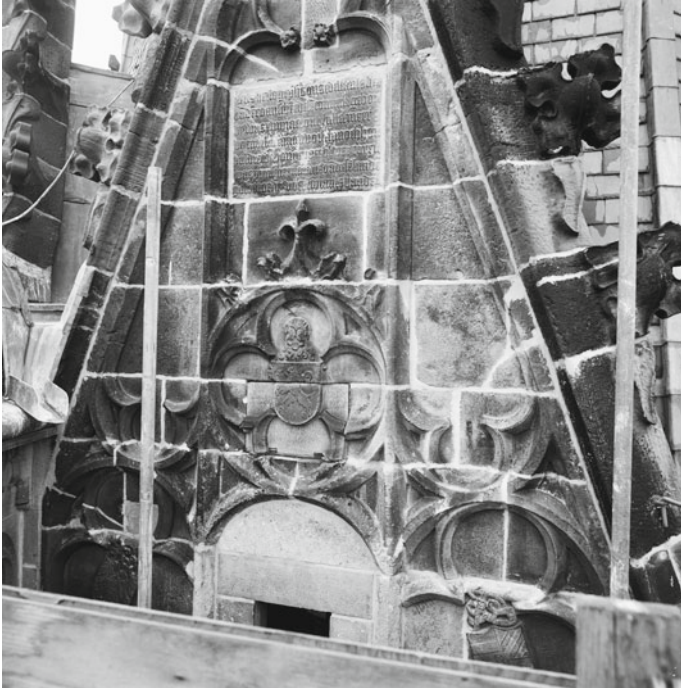
Fig. 9 Delft, New Church: commemorative inscription, and escutcheons of Philip the Handsome on the northern gable crowning the tower the New Church. It shows the lion of Holland in the centre immediately below inscriptions. On the lower left the eagle of the Archduchy of Austria is depicted and the coat of arms of the duchy of Burgundy is visible on the lower right. The photo was made by G. J. Dukker during the restauration works in 1987 (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

about them: David of Burgundy is praised, while Frederick is referred to as being 'very beloved'.[21]

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[21] Van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge*, 219.
  Davit Heer van Utrecht die gepresen,
  Sterft int selffde Jaer dats wel bekendt,
  Ende weder eendrachtich gecoren Heer te wesen,
  Den Heer van Baten seer bemint,
  Een Heer tot Utrecht wel versint.

Fig. 10 Delft, New Church: escutcheons of the masons and the master builder on the southeast gable (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, Amersfoort)

The inscriptions are impossible to read from street level, and even from the top level of the tower they must have been difficult to decipher. It is unclear what the intended audience is, other than that the verses were evidently made to honour God, and Mary in particular, and therefore were not primarily intended for human eyes. However, an abbreviated adaptation of these verses was also recorded by Van Bleyswijck. According to him it was composed by the same rhetoricians' chamber that provided the verses for the tower. Possibly multiple variations circulated in Delft, and the contents of the commemorative inscriptions were known in the town at the time when the tower was completed.[22]

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[22] Van Bleyswijck, *Beschryvinge*, 220–221.

What is important here, is that both the texts and coats of arms present the tower as a joint effort. They represent the natural political order, rather than giving voice to the pride of its citizens.

3   Architecture for the Civic Administration

The second category of architectural projects that I want to discuss are town halls. They have often been seen as the prime architectural expression of urban prestige, mirroring a growing self-awareness of the cities. Until the fourteenth century, city authorities often gathered in various places, but from the second half of the century purpose-built town halls were erected to accommodate a diversity of government functions that had previously been scattered across cloth halls, patrician homes and inns. As multifunctional complexes that housed council halls for the burgomasters and aldermen and the court of justice, town halls often also incorporated commercial functions such as a city meat hall, cloth hall and public weigh house. The growing political importance of town halls over cloth halls owes not only to the collapse of the cloth trade, but also reflects a shift towards a more professional form of government, leading cloth merchants to be gradually supplanted by other groups, especially university-educated professionals, in the civic administration.[23]

An early example of the sudden ardour for erecting government buildings is the new aldermen's house in Mechelen begun in 1374 (Fig. 11). Its freestanding position on the market square gives it a monumental presence, but architecturally it still harks back to the design of private residences, with its stepped gables, corner turrets and crenelations all characteristic of contemporary patrician houses.[24] In the same years, a new and influential architectural model was developed in Bruges. It iterates several conventional features such as corner turrets and battlements, but joins them with a lavishly decorated façade featuring alternating tall windows and strips of superimposed pairs of monumental statues. The overall effect has often been compared in the literature to a metalwork

[23] Raymond Van Uytven, 'Flämische Belfriede und südniederländische städtische Bauwerke im Mittelalter: Symbol und Mythos', in *Information, Kommunikation und Selbstdarstellung in mittelalterlichen Gemeinden*, ed. Alfred Haverhamp and Elisabeth Müller-Luckner (Munich: R. Oldenbourg, 1998), 125–159, here 153.

[24] Krista De Jonge, 'Bouwen in de stad', in *Gotiek in het hertogdom Brabant*, ed. Krista De Jonge, Piet Geleyns, and Markus Hörsch (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), 101–136, here 122.

reliquary shrine (Fig. 12).[25] This sculptural screen provided a fitting ceremonial background for official public events, and particularly for 'Joyous Entries', when the new prince stood in front of the town hall on Burg square and confirmed the city's privileges, and the citizenry swore an oath of fealty to their sovereign in return. The iconographic programme of the façade well expresses the magistrate's loyalty to the rightful ruler: apart from biblical figures it depicted the consecutive Flemish counts. At the same time the façade conveys the city's legitimate authority as the deputy of the count of Flanders, going back to the semi-legendary founding father of the county, Baldwin Iron Arm.[26] Sasha Köhl has argued that this new feature could have been prompted by the specific political circumstances of the time. With the marriage of Margaret of Flanders with Philip the Bold in 1369, the Valois prince became heir apparent as count of Flanders. This meant not only the arrival of a new dynasty, but also that the county was to become part of a larger territorial complex. The façade was to underline Bruges as seat of the Flemish counts, but it was also intended to remind Philip and his wife of keeping in mind the political and economic interests of the city.[27]

3.1   A Town Hall for the Capital

The town hall of Bruges served as an example for the town halls of both Brussels and Leuven. The former was constructed in two campaigns between 1401 and 1455 and surpassed every other civic building in the Low Countries in terms of sheer size, ornate façades and number of statues (Fig. 13).[28] The design introduces several features that were new in secular architecture, such as the ground-level arcade that spans the entire length of the façade, interrupted only by the base of the tower,

[25] Sasha Köhl, 'Princely Architecture: Town Halls in the Burgundian Netherlands', in *Staging the Court of Burgundy. Proceedings of the Conference "The Splendour of Burgundy"*, ed. Anne van Oosterwijk et al. (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 191–200, here 192.

[26] Köhl, 'Princely Architecture'; Van Uytven, 'Flämische Belfriede', 154.

[27] Sasha Köhl, 'Brussels Town Hall in Context. Architectural Models, Historical Background, Political Strategies', *Studia Bruxellae* 12 (2018): 236–254.

[28] Sasha Köhl, *Das Brüsseler Rathaus. Repräsentationsbau für Rat, Stadt und Land* (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2019); Alphonsine Maesschalck and Jos Viaene, *Mensen en bouwkunst in Boergondisch Brabant—Het stadhuis van Brussel* (Kessel-Lo: private publisher, 1960).

Fig. 11 Mechelen, aldermen's house, begun in 1374 (Hurx)

Fig. 12   Bruges, town hall, 1376–1421 (Hurx)

and the openwork parapet crowning the façade. The conspicuous tower is another new feature that reappears at several later town halls, although the one in Brussels is exceptional for its lofty height of 96 metres and its pierced tracery spire.[29] Although the current statues of all the dukes of Brabant that decorate its façade are all reconstructed, the sculptural programme was intended to show the city's allegiance to the ruler, just

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[29] Earlier and contemporary examples of town halls with a tower in Flanders include those in Dendermonde (1377–1395), Sluis (1390–1396 and 1423–1427) and Aalst (tower, early fifteenth century). However, their fortified character belongs more to the Flemish tradition of robust belfry towers.

like in Bruges. As Sascha Köhl argues, the monumentality of the façade and its decoration conveyed multiple messages to a variety of audiences. They marked the building as a public site and emphasised the legitimacy of the magistrate to its own citizens, but at the same time the town hall presented Brussels as the capital of Brabant.[30] Like in Bruges, the end of the dynasty of the Dukes of Brabant and the arrival of the Valois, may have prompted the magistrate, to erect the new town hall to express the central importance of Brussels in the duchy.[31]

It is therefore no surprise that Brussels' vast new town hall provoked an immediate reaction from the oldest city of Brabant. In the very first year of construction, the city of Leuven sent its workmen to visit the building site in Brussels.[32] It would take until 1438, however, before the first stone of Leuven's new town hall was laid. Documents show that it was originally planned to have a large tower, 'just as in Brussels' (*gelijc te Bruxele*).[33] However, in 1448 this design was abandoned, probably due to foundation problems, and instead six lower octagonal turrets came to crown the building. In its architectural competition with Brussels, the smaller dimensions of Leuven's town hall were compensated by its even more lavishly decorated façades (Fig. 14), which were completely covered with statues in ornate-canopied niches. Ultimately, the result looks more like an emulation of Bruges, resembling even more closely the features of a blown-up reliquary shrine. Leuven did not simply wish to compete with Brussels on an architectural level, but the project stressed its position as the first capital city of Brabant, and the ancient seat of the ducal court. Interestingly, the other two capital cities in the duchy, Antwerp and 's-Hertogenbosch did not join this competition and continued to rely on existing buildings that were adapted to their function as town hall well into the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Köhl proposes that this lack of enthusiasm can be explained by the fact that these cities could not claim similar close ties with the ducal court.[34]

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[30] Köhl, 'Das Brüsseler Rathaus', 146–148.

[31] Köhl, 'Brussels Town Hall'.

[32] Alphonsine Maesschalck and Jos Viaene, *Mensen en bouwkunst in Boergondisch Brabant—Het stadhuis van Leuven* (Leuven: Vrienden Stedelijke Musea, 1977), 57–58.

[33] Maesschalck, 'Viaene, Stadhuis van Leuven', 79. ...*groten thorne, gelijc te Bruxele in middel vander stat huys aldaer steet...*

[34] Köhl, 'Das Brüsseler Rathaus', 148–149.

Fig. 13   Brussels, Jacob van Tienen and Jan van Ruysbroek, town hall, 1401–1455 (Hurx)

Fig. 14 Leuven, Matheus de Layens, town hall, 1438–1468 (Hurx)

3.2   *Expressing Autonomy or Loyalty?*

Both the Brussels and Leuven town halls prompted civic authorities in a number of smaller centres in the Low Countries around the middle of the fifteenth century to undertake the construction of new monumental government buildings of their own. In the north, in Holland, Gouda erected a freestanding structure in the centre of a triangular market square (Fig. 15). The front façade combines several conventional elements such as corner turrets and a stepped gable, but the pinnacles and crowning turret at the top of the gable clearly distinguish it from residential architecture. Construction of a new town hall likewise started in this period in Middelburg, in Zeeland (Fig. 16).[35] There, the elaborate sculptural programme and central tower are reminiscent of Brussels, but it also introduced a prominent new feature in the form of highly ornate gables that were added in the early sixteenth century, and which marked the position of the entrance to the meat hall on the market side and the main entrance to the council halls on Noordstraat.

With their growing economic importance as outports of Antwerp, even small centres in the Scheldt estuary such as Veere could afford to build lavish edifices for their governments.[36] In Veere, the enterprise was undertaken with the support of the lord of Veere (Fig. 17).[37] The façade's alternating scheme of windows and statues resembles Bruges, but in this case the seven figures represent the House of Borssele and their successors of Burgundy-Beveren, underlining the town's dependence on the lords of Veere for its privileges.[38] The prominence of small centres such as Veere in town hall construction testifies that these buildings should not be understood as simply the ultimate expression of civic autonomy. On the contrary, their sculptural programmes usually exalted a city's loyalty to the rightful prince.[39] In several other cases, the erection of a new town

[35] Ruud Meischke, 'De stedelijke bouwopgaven tussen 1450 en 1530', in *Keldermans, een architectonisch netwerk in de Nederlanden*, ed. Jan van Mosselveld et al. (The Hague: Staatsuitgeverij, 1987), 87–103.

[36] Meischke, 'De stedelijke bouwopgaven'.

[37] Willem Unger, *Het stadhuis van Veere* (Middelburg: Gemeente Veere, 1934), 9–11.

[38] Marloes Matthijssen, *Zeven heren en vrouwen verbeeld. De zestiende-eeuwse stadhuis-beelden van Veere* (Veere: Museum De Schotse Huizen, 2013), 17.

[39] Köhl, 'Princely Architecture'; Van Uytven, 'Flämische Belfriede'.

Fig. 15   Gouda, town hall, circa 1448–1459 (Hurx)

hall was even undertaken jointly by the civic authorities and the territorial lord. In smaller places like Hoogstraten and Culemborg (Fig. 18), it was the local lord—Lalaing—who initiated the construction of a prestigious new building for the civic administration.[40] Indeed, many larger and more powerful cities such as Antwerp, Lille, Ghent,'s-Hertogenbosch and Amsterdam were rather late in joining the competition.

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[40] Köhl, 'Das Brüsseler Rathaus', 159; L. Sillevis and Piet Beltjes, *De bouwgeschiedenis van het stadhuis te Culemborg*, Culemborgsche Historiebladen, eerste serie, nr. 1 (Culemborg: A.T Verschoor v/h Blom & Olivierse, 1939).

Fig. 16 Middelburg, Anthonis I Keldermans and Rombout II Keldermans, town hall, 1452–1521. The building was reconstructed after the bombing of 1940 (Hurx)

Fig. 17   Veere, Evert Spoorwater, town hall, begun 1474 (Hurx)

Fig. 18   Culemborg, town hall, begun 1534 (Hurx)

4   Conclusion

Written sources remain usually mute on the intentions for erecting monumental architecture in this period. However, the starting dates of construction and recurring architectural features show that cities were closely following developments elsewhere. In some cases, as in Leuven, the wish to emulate a nearby project, the town hall of Brussels, is even clearly articulated in the accounts. Both church towers and town halls were an expression of the prosperity of their respective communities. These monuments should be understood as an instrument of inter-urban competition, but as well as a means of maintaining a power balance *within* the city. Rather than merely articulating civic pride, they conveyed multi-layered meanings, challenging and acknowledging the existing power balance at the same time. For instance, the initiative for constructing ornate new town halls in the fifteenth century lays with the towns. While these buildings clearly expressed their power, the iconographical programme of their façades often acknowledged the dependence of the city on the prince for their privileges. However, their buildings were also a message to the ruling lord to keep the city's interests in mind. In contrast, in smaller towns founded by high nobility, it was clearly the local lords who were the driving force behind the erection of town halls in the late fifteenth century. They were therefore not meant to underline the freedom of the town, but rather their dependence on their lord. This ambiguity seems to have been convenient or even strategic, after all, pride, as Geert Groote reminds us, was basically a sin.

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Participating in the City

The Saint and the Citizens: Scripting Civic Behaviour in Early Medieval Hagiography

Robert Flierman

1 Introduction

By his own admission, Saint Severinus of Noricum (d. 482) did not much care for being a citizen in the world. He had turned up at the Danube frontier in the 450s, a stranger of unknown provenance, whose authority stemmed from his actions rather than his status, office or birth. When one of his close associates had finally plucked up the courage to ask him where he was from, the holy man had first responded with a very Roman joke: if you think I am a runaway slave, then you'd better get some funds together to pay my ransom when they come to collect me. He had then rounded on his questioner with a stern rebuke: the true servant of God cares only to be inscribed on the citizen-list of the heavenly fatherland, so why inquire about worldly credentials? No one had dared to ask Severinus about his background ever again.

This anecdote is recorded in the prologue to the *Commemoratorium vitae sancti Severini*, a hagiographical account of Severinus' life that was

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published in 511, three decades after the saint's death.[1] Its author, Eugippius, offered the story as a justification for failing to report on Severinus' parentage and place of birth.[2] He knew such details were required in a hagiography, but as the story was meant to show, he simply did not know, nor did anyone else. In the context of this volume, the anecdote is noteworthy principally for another reason: it is the first of many passages in the *Commemoratorium* that touch on the issue of citizenship. In fact, the story formed the opening salvo to a sustained reflection, kept up throughout the work, on what it meant to be citizen in a Christian and de-Romanizing world, and whether citizenship in such a world was still possible and desirable.

My aim in this contribution is to sketch the outlines of this reflection and to situate it in its historical context. On the one hand, I seek to understand Eugippius' thinking about citizenship as a response to specific historical circumstances. In 488, after decades of barbarian pressure and weakening of Roman control, Noricum had been abandoned as a Roman province, with many of its inhabitants crossing the Alps to resettle in Italy. The members of Severinus' community, too, had been among the evacuees, leaving Eugippius and his brothers wandering about Italy for years before founding a new monastery in the Bay of Naples. This

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[1] The prologue takes the form of a letter, Eugippius, *Commemoratorium Vitae Sancti Severini*, ed. and trans. Rudolf Noll, *Das Leben des heiligen Severin* (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 1963), 42–45. The other scholarly edition currently in use is by Philippe Régerat, ed., *Vie de Saint Séverin*, Sources Chretiennes 374 (Paris: Cerf, 1991) with accompanying French translation. The most recent English translation is by Ludwig Bieler in collaboration with Ludmilla Krestan, *The Life of Saint Severin* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1965). This chapter was written as part of the project NWO VICI-Rose 277-30-002 *Citizenship Discourses in the Early Middle Ages, 400–1100*, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO, carried out at Utrecht University 2017–2023.

[2] On Eugippius, see: Abigail Kathleen Gometz, 'Eugippius of Lucullanum: A Biography' (PhD diss., University of Leeds, 2008); Johannes Hofmann, 'Das Werk des Abtes Eugippius. Zum literarischen Vermächtnis eines spätantiken Augustinus-Kenners und die frühmittelalterliche Kirche des Abendlandes', *Zeitschrift für Kirchengeschichte* 109 (1998): 293–305. For Severinus: István Bóna, 'Severiniana', *Acta antiqua Academiae scientiarum Hungaricae* 21 (1973): 281–338; Friedrich Lotter, *Severinus von Noricum, Legende und historische Wirklichkeit: Untersuchungen zur Phase des Ubergangs von spätantiken zu mittelalterlichen Denk- und Lebensformen* (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1976); Andreas Schwarcz, 'Severinus of Noricum between Fact and Fiction', in *Eugippius und Severin: der Autor, der Text und der Heilige*, ed. Walter Pohl and Maximilian Diesenberger (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2001), 25–31.

experience of exile and resettlement shaped Eugippius' thinking about citizenship in the *Commemoratorium*. The work can be read as an attempt at community-building in post-Roman Italy, an environment that Eugippius recognised as familiar and in many ways more Roman than that of late-Roman Noricum, but that was home also to complex political and religious tensions.

On the other hand, my contribution looks beyond the specific context in which Eugippius lived and worked. I aim to situate him in a broader tradition of Early Medieval Christian authors who took ancient models of citizenship—Roman and above all Biblical—and developed them for their own ends. Recent studies have made it clear that the Latin language of citizenship remained a powerful rhetorical resource in the Early Medieval West, even for those who renounced its worldly aspirations.[3] Eugippius too was aware of this rhetorical potential, though renunciation was not what he was after. His account of Severinus' life celebrated the ideal of a heavenly fatherland, while stressing that becoming a citizen of that *caelestis patria* required a committed performance on earth. He did not want his readers to renounce the world. He wanted them to act in it.

What follows consists of three parts. A first section explores, succinctly, the ancient roots of Eugippius' thinking about citizenship. A second section looks into the circumstances in which he composed his *Commemoratorium* and asks who were his intended readers. In brief, I will argue for a politically engaged work with a diverse readership that reached well beyond the confines of Eugippius' monastery. The third and longest section turns to the text itself. We will see how Eugippius framed Severinus as an ambivalent figure: a stranger who himself refused to be a citizen on earth, yet spent his life going from town to town, instructing Noricum's Roman inhabitants about civic responsibility, participation and community.[4] This ambivalence suited Eugippius' diverse audience: his readers were left to follow the civic model that best fitted their station. All, however, were invited to read the story of Severinus with an eye to

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[3] Els Rose, 'Citizenship Discourses in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 55 (2021): 1–21; Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose, eds., *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021); Robert Flierman and Megan Welton, 'De Excidio Patriae: Civic discourse in Gildas' Britain', *Early Medieval Europe* 29 (2021): 137–160; Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civitas Romana: the Fluidity of an Ideal', *Al-Masaq* 32, no. 1 (2020): 18–33.

[4] See also the contribution by Merel de Bruin-van de Beek in this volume.

the present. Situated in a late-Roman frontier province, the saint's life-story offered a script for how to act as a good citizen in a post-Roman world.

2   Ancient Citizenship: A Complex Heritage

When Eugippius had his saintly protagonist speak of a 'heavenly father-land' (*supernae patriae*) in which he hoped one day 'to be enrolled as a citizen' (*civis inscribi*), the author invoked the language of two overlapping civic traditions: that of Rome and that of Christianity. Neither was straightforward.

The Romans had governed their polity as a network of city-states under Roman rule.[5] Within this polity, one could be a citizen of a local city or of the city of Rome, with the latter being the more prestigious. Cicero, writing at a time when dual citizenship was almost but not quite legal, famously spoke of two *patriae*: the city of one's birth and the city of Rome.[6] Both inspired loyalty and pride, both came with rights and duties. In practice, however, local and Roman citizenship operated in different ways.[7] Given the territorial dimensions of the Roman polity, only a small minority could ever participate fully in Rome's political institutions. For most, the participatory side of citizenship—voting in urban assemblies, holding office and engaging in public works—was thus acted out on a local level, as part of their local citizenship. Roman citizenship, by contrast, came to function principally as a legal status, conferring protection, tax-exemptions and access to Roman private law.[8] Though this status was valid anywhere in Roman territory, few outside of central Italy enjoyed it at first: being listed as a citizen on the Roman census lists was a privilege, coveted by many yet granted to few. It became more

[5] Clifford Ando and Myles Lavan, 'Introduction', in *Roman and Local Citizenship in the Long Second Century CE*, ed. Clifford Ando and Myles Lavan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 6–11.

[6] Cicero, *De legibus* II.5. On dual citizenship, see: Adrian Nicholas Sherwin-White, *The Roman Citizenship*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), 292–306.

[7] Clifford Ando, 'Local Citizenship and Civic Participation in the Western Provinces of the Roman Empire', in *Civic Identity*, 39–64; and Cédric Brélaz, 'Democracy, Citizenship(s), and "Patriotism". Civic Practices and Discourses in the Greek Cities under Roman Rule', in *Civic Identity*, 65–92.

[8] Wallace-Hadrill, 'Civitas Romana'; Jed W. Atkins, *Roman Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 63–90.

widely accessible over the centuries, until in 212 CE the Emperor Caracalla extended Roman citizenship to all free inhabitants of the empire.[9] This situation persisted until the end of the West-Roman Empire and beyond.[10] In many post-Roman successor kingdoms, the Roman citizen (*civis Romanus*) remained a distinct legal category with affiliated rights and duties, even if it was no longer associated with a Roman state.[11]

By that point, Christianity had become the dominant religion in the West, opening up yet other avenues of civic expression. As noted by Rowan Greer in a famous 1986 essay, early Christian thinking on citizenship was full of paradox, the roots of which can be traced back to the Christian Scriptures.[12] The biblical world is a world of cities and citizens. Many of its foundational stories are set in an urban landscape. Yet embedded in the Scriptures is the idea of the city as a locus of sin: the first city on earth was founded by Caïn, mankind's first murderer, and this moral stigma on urban life recurs throughout the Old Testament, from the fiery rains of Sodom to the righteous destruction of God's own Jerusalem.[13] The New Testament epistles deepen the case for renunciation by framing the Christian as an alien or stranger on earth, cut loose

[9] Myles Lavan, 'The Foundation of Empire? The Spread of Roman Citizenship from the Fourth Century BCE to the Third Century CE', in *In the Crucible of Empire: The Impact of Roman Citizenship Upon Greeks, Jews and Christians*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Jonathan Price (Leuven, Paris: Peeters, 2019), 21–54.

[10] It remains debated how meaningful Roman citizenship status still was by this point, see for instance: Clifford Ando, 'Introduction: Sovereignty, Territoriality and Universalism in the Aftermath of Caracalla', in *Citizenship and Empire in Europe 200–1900*, ed. Clifford Ando (Stuttgart: Steiner, 2016), 7–27; Ralph Mathisen, 'Peregrini, Barbari, and Cives Romani: Concepts of Citizenship and the Legal Identity of Barbarians in the Later Roman Empire', *The American Historical Review* 111 (2006): 1011–1040; Peter Garnsey, 'Roman Citizenship and Roman Law in the Later Empire', in *Approaching Late Antiquity: The Transformation from Early to Later Empire*, ed. Simon Swain and Mark Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 133–155.

[11] See Javier Martínez Jiménez and Robert Flierman, 'The Uses of Citizenship in the Post-Roman West', in *Citizenship in Antiquity. Civic Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Jakub Filonik, Christine Plastow, and Rachel Zelnik-Abramovitz (London: Routledge, 2023), 669–690.

[12] Rowan Greer, 'Alien Citizens. A Marvellous Paradox', in *Civitas. Religious Interpretations of the City*, ed. Peter Hawkins (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 39–56.

[13] On Caïn and Sodom: Genesis 4:17, 18:24. For Jerusalem as a place of sin: Isaiah 1:21, 64:10; Jeremiah 6:6, 19:8–15; Ezekiel 24:6–9. See furthermore the lemma 'City', in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception*, vol. 5, *Charisma – Czaczkes*, ed. Allison Dale et al. (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2012), 361–379.

from worldly ties.[14] At the same time, the New Testament also sets the stage for Christian appropriation of Roman models of citizenship and associated civic idiom. The Apostle Paul had not been above invoking his privileged status as a Roman citizen to avoid a public whipping and bring his case before the emperor.[15] The Book of Revelation visualises the eternal abode of the faithful as a perfectly squared city, reminiscent in outline to a Roman colony, turning the city from a locus of sin into one of salvation.[16] This city is the heavenly fatherland (*patria superna*) in which Christians like Severinus hoped eventually to be enlisted.

Christianity's rise to dominance in the fourth century AD did not resolve the tensions presented by the Bible. Patristic authorities like Augustine chose rather to embrace them, developing further the notion of the Christian as a temporary resident in the world whose true fatherland was in heaven, while simultaneously manifesting themselves as energetic urban leaders and community-builders.[17] The Pauline suggestion that the legal instrumentarium of the state could be made to serve the Christian when needed, was similarly taken to heart. In late imperial legislation bishops and emperors worked together to disenfranchise heretics and other religious deviants, who were banished from the empire's cities and

[14] Paradigmatic passages include 1 Peter 2:11 and Ephesians 2:18–19. See also Benjamin Dunning, *Aliens and Sojourners: Self as Other in Early Christianity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009), 1–45.

[15] Acts 22:22–29, 25:10–13; Sean Adams, 'Paul the Roman Citizen: Roman Citizenship in the Ancient World and Its Importance for Understanding Acts 22:22–29', in *Paul: Jew, Greek, and Roman*, ed. Stanley Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 309–326.

[16] Revelation 3:12, 21:2–27. On the distinctly Roman grid of Heavenly Jerusalem: Francis Haverfield, *Ancient Town Planning* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1913), 55. More generally on ancient and medieval representations of Heavenly Jerusalem: Bianca Kühnel, *From the Earthly to the Heavenly Jerusalem: Representations of the Holy City in Christian Art of the First Millennium* (Rome: Herder, 1987) and the contribution by Megan Welton in this volume.

[17] Hervé Inglebert, 'How to Define the Citizenship of the City of God: An Augustinian Problem', in *In the Crucible of Empire*, ed. Berthelot and Price, 283–300; Catherine Conybeare, 'The City of Augustine: On the Interpretation of Civitas', in *Being Christian in Late Antiquity. A Festschrift for Gillian Clark*, ed. Carol Harrison, Caroline Humfress, and Isabella Sandwell (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 139–155; Arie J. Vanderjagt, 'Political Thought', in *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, ed. Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1561–1569.

deprived of such rights as were still associated with citizenship status.[18] Christianity, in other words, could place itself in rhetorical opposition to Roman civic ideals, but could just as easily exist alongside them or even be mapped onto them.

3   Eugippius and the Citizens of Post-Roman Italy

Eugippius' thinking on citizenship was indebted to the civic traditions just outlined, above all to the Bible and Augustine. Yet it was also situational. That is, his *Commemoratorium* was crafted in response to specific circumstances and with a specific audience in mind. We will look at these two points in turn.

Eugippius was born around 460 CE, a Roman citizen of uncertain geographical provenance. He joined Severinus' community in Favianis, on Noricum's northern frontier in modern-day Austria, around the time of the saint's death in 482. It is possible, therefore, that he never met Severinus in person.[19] Eugippius' stay at Noricum was at any rate not destined to be a permanent one. Roman control over the province had been slipping for decades. By the early 480s, many of its forts and towns had been abandoned by its inhabitants; others had come under barbarian dominion, principally that of the Rugians. In 487, the Rugian kingdom was itself overthrown by the Italian king Odoacer, who promptly ordered Noricum to be evacuated and its Roman inhabitants to move to Italy. Many heeded the call, including the monks of Severinus' community. Eugippius later came to frame their journey as a second Exodus from Egypt, freeing the monks and their fellow Romans from barbarian servitude and delivering them to a new *patria*.[20] Yet leaving their monastery in Noricum had clearly been a major upheaval for the community. For several years Eugippius and his brothers moved about Italy, all the while carrying with them the saint's allegedly uncorrupted body. They were

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[18] Robert Flierman and Els Rose, 'Banished from the Company of the Good. Christians and Aliens in Fifth-Century Rome', *Al-Masāq* 32 (2020): 64–86; Maria Escribano Paño, 'The Social Exclusion of Heretics in Codex Theodosianus XVI', in *Droit, religion et société dans le Code Théodosien*, ed. Jean-Jacques Aubert and Philippe Blanchard (Geneva: Droz, 2009), 39–66; Christina Lo Nero, 'Christiana Dignitas: New Christian Criteria for Citizenship in the Later Roman Empire', *Medieval Encounters* 7 (2001): 146–164.

[19] Lotter, *Severinus*, 21–37.

[20] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 44.

finally able to settle down near the Bay of Naples in the 490s. There, at the newly founded monastery of Castellum Lucullanum, Eugippius remained until his death in the late 530s or early 540s, serving as the community's abbot for the last three decades or so.

Finding a new *patria* in Italy did not entail a return to Roman territory. Lucullanum, like the rest of Italy, stood under Ostrogothic rule by this point and the site encapsulated well the continuities and discontinuities of living in a post-Roman kingdom. Located on the former estates of the Roman senator Lucius Licinius Lucullus, the site had become the residence-in-exile of Romulus Augustulus when he had been assigned a villa there upon his forced retirement in 476.[21] The last Roman emperor in the West may still have been alive when Eugippius and his fellow brethren arrived.[22] The monastery was on the outskirts of Naples, which remained a prominent city at the turn of the century, though it now housed a large Gothic cohort and was under the civil and military authority of a Gothic official, the *comes civitatis*.[23] The community's commercial and legal transactions were conducted under Roman law, guaranteed by the Gothic king Theoderic.[24] Latin served as the go-to language for most official and day-to-day communications.[25] There were tensions of course. The long-standing theological debate on the nature of Christ had gained new urgency in post-Roman Italy, where an Arian Gothic elite now ruled over a predominantly Nicaean Roman population. For the time being, Theoderic managed to avoid open conflict through a policy of religious tolerance and co-existence. Naples, like other Italian

[21] Geoffrey Nathan, 'The Last Emperor: the Fate of Romulus Augustulus', *Classica et mediaevalia* 43 (1992): 261–271.

[22] Legally, the last emperor in the West was not Romulus Augustulus but Julius Nepos, who was assassinated in AD 480. Eugippius seems to have considered the Western Empire to have continued up to that year as well, see: Katharina Winckler, '"Wie aus dem Hause der Ägyptischen Knechtschaft": Römer, Barbaren und Migration im Donauraum nach der Vita Severini', in *Wandel durch Migration? 26. internationales Symposium "Grundprobleme der frühgeschichtlichen Entwicklung im mittleren Donauraum, Straubing"*, ed. Hans Geisler (Büchenbach: Faustus, 2016), 29–38, here 31–32.

[23] Paul Arthur, *Naples. From Roman Town to City-State: An Archaeological Perspective* (London: British School at Rome, 2002), 12–13.

[24] Sean Lafferty, *Law and Society in the Age of Theoderic the Great: A Study of the Edictum Theoderici* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 54–100.

[25] Patrick Amory, *People and Identity in Ostrogothic Italy, 489–554* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 86.

cities, would have housed churches of both denominations.[26] Other religious tensions were less easily kept at bay. In 498, the city of Rome witnessed the consecration of two rival candidates for the papal dignity: Symmachus and Laurentius. This so-called Laurentian Schism quickly became a proxy for other contemporary issues and was further politized by what some partisans perceived as the high-handed interventions of the Ostrogothic court.[27] All in all, the monks of Lucullanum found in Italy a world that was more Roman than the one they had been forced to abandon, but also a world that was still coming to terms with barbarian rule and religious difference, where tempers were flaring and party lines being drawn up.

Such was the situation in Italy when Eugippius began working on his *Commemoratorium Vitae Sancti Severini*. He started in 509, when he was already Lucullanum's abbot, and finished it by 511. The resulting hagiography has long fascinated historians of the migration period. Gritty, bleak, yet rich in detail, it offers a visceral recollection of the disintegration of a Roman frontier province. All the same, the prevailing view is that Eugippius was an ingenious story-teller, who used the story of Severinus and fifth-century Noricum to say something about his own times. *What* exactly he was trying to say, and *who* among his contemporaries he was saying it to, are questions that are not so easily answered.

One type of answer is to read the *Commemoratorium* as an attempt at monastic community-building, addressed first and foremost to Eugippius' fellow brethren, in dire need of guidance following their forced retreat from Noricum.[28] This is a valid reading, but incomplete. That the monks of Lucullanum were among the text's intended audience is evident: the monks appear at crucial moments in the text, including a

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[26] Samuel Cohen, 'Religious Diversity', in *A Companion to Ostrogothic Italy*, ed. Jonathan Arnold, Michael S. Bjornlie, and Kristina Sessa (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 503–532.

[27] Kristina Sessa, *The Formation of Papal Authority in Late Antique Italy: Roman Bishops and the Domestic Sphere* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 208–246.

[28] Andreas Merkt, 'Splendens patria: die "Vita Severini" um 511 über irdische und himmlische Heimat', *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Bistums Regensburg* 43 (2009): 13–18; Ian Wood, 'The Monastic Frontiers of the Vita Severini', in *Eugippius und Severin*, ed. Pohl and Diesenberger, 41–51; Maximilian Diesenberger, 'Topographie und Gemeinschaft in der Vita Severini', in *Eugippius und Severin*, ed. Pohl and Diesenberger, 77–97; Harald Dickerhof, '*De instituto sancti Severini*. Zur Genese der Klostergemeinschaft des Heiligen Severin', *Zeitschrift für bayerische Landesgeschichte* 46 (1983): 3–36.

prolonged deathbed-scene in which Severinus gives his followers advice for the future.[29] Yet the text, and the circumstances in which Eugippius composed it, clearly hint at a wider readership. As outlined above, Lucullanum lay on the outskirts of Naples. The monks and their abbot would have been in frequent contact with the city's inhabitants. In fact, it had been the Neapolitan noblewoman Barbaria who had invited the wandering congregation to settle in Lucullanum in the first place.[30] It merited her a place of honour in the story.[31] Eugippius also took care to stress the eagerness with which the Neapolitan citizen-body as a whole had received the saint in their midst and to highlight some of the miracles that the worthy among them had experienced at Severinus' tomb.[32] If the *Commemoratorium* was an attempt at community-building, then the citizens of Naples were to be included in that community.

There are indications, however, that Eugippius intended his story to be read beyond the Bay of Naples and even Italy. Upon completing the work in 511, he sent it off to an influential contemporary, the Roman deacon Paschasius, for correction and validation. His dedicatory letter and Paschasius' response came to serve as the work's prologue and postscript respectively.[33] This was not the first time Eugippius reached out to the elite of Rome. In the 490s, he had compiled a major florilegium of the works of Augustine, which he had dedicated to the Roman virgin Proba, a member of the illustrious Anicii family.[34] Other prominent acquaintances in Rome included Dionysius Exiguus, the instigator of the anno-Domini system and the senator Cassiodorus, who also served

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[29] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 43.

[30] Kate Cooper, 'The Widow as Impresario: Gender, Legendary Afterlives, and Documentary Evidence in Eugippius' Vita Severini', in *Eugippius und Severin*, ed. Pohl and Diesenberger, 53–63; Nathan, 'The Last Emperor', who argues that Barbaria was in fact related to Romulus Augustulus.

[31] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 46.

[32] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 46. Some of these miracle stories were probably added to the text by Eugippius at a later stage, Noll, *Das Leben*, 36.

[33] The letters are included in the earliest manuscripts, which date from the tenth century onwards, see: Karl Rehberger, 'Die Handschriften der Vita S. Severini', in *Severin. Zwischen Römerzeit und Völkerwanderung*, ed. Dietmar Straub (Linz: Landesverlag, 1982), 21–39.

[34] Eugippius' dedicatory letter to Proba survives as an introduction to the work, Eugippius, *Excerpta ex Operibus Sancti Augustini*, ed. Pius Knöll, CSEL 9.1 (Vienna: C Gerold, 1885), 1–4.

as *magister officiorum*, the most senior administrative official at Theoderic's court in Ravenna.[35] Beyond Italy, Eugippius' network extended towards North-Africa.[36] He corresponded with the renowned bishop Fulgentius of Ruspe, a fellow aficionado of the works of Augustine.[37] Fulgentius' deacon and hagiographer, Ferrandus of Carthage, kept up the correspondence after his bishop's death.[38]

While none besides Paschasius can with certainty be said to have read the *Commemoratorium*, this was a group of people who took pride in learning and engaged in a lively exchange of ideas and books. Dionysius sent Eugippius his Latin translation of Gregory of Nyssa's *De opificio hominis*.[39] Fulgentius' letter to Eugippius consisted of an in-depth exploration of the virtue of *caritas*, which was also one of the principal civic virtues extolled in the *Commemoratorium*. Fittingly, Fulgentius concluded his letter on a more mundane note of charity, promising Eugippius to send him the books that he had requested and asking that his friend return the favour by having his scribes copy and send over whatever he deemed of use in Lucullanum's library.[40] Beyond their shared reading culture, these correspondents also shared with Eugippius the experience of living in foreign lands and being uprooted from their *patria*.[41] Fulgentius spent much of his episcopal career as an exile on

[35] Dionysius, *Epistula ad Eugipium presbyterum*, ed. Jacques-Paul Migne, PL SL 67 (Paris, 1848), col. 345C–346B. Cassiodorus spoke of Eugippius as if he knew him personally, *Institutiones*, ed. Roger Mynors (Oxford: Clarendon, 1961), 1.23.1. *presbyteri Eugippii… quem nos quoque vidimus.*

[36] A link to southern Gaul and the monastic powerhouse of Lérins is more hypothetical, see Gometz, 'Eugippius', 94–96, 129–148; Lotter, *Severinus*, 33–34.

[37] Fulgentius, *Epistulae*, ed. Jean Fraipont, CCSL 91 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1968), no. 5. On Fulgentius and his network, see: Susan Stevens, 'The Circle of Bishop Fulgentius', *Traditio* 38 (1982): 327–341.

[38] Ferrandus, *Epistola dogmatica adversus Arrianos aliosque haereticos ad Eugippium*, ed. Angelo Mai, Scriptorum veterum nova collectio 3.2 (Rome, 1828), 169–185. This letter was printed once more, together with another earlier letter by Ferrandus in *Florilegium casinensis*, ed. Angelo Mai and August Reifferscheid, vol. 1 (Monte Cassino, 1873), 194–202.

[39] Dionysius, *Epistula ad Eugipium presbyterum*.

[40] Fulgentius, *Epistulae*, no. 5.

[41] On the importance of exile in late antique Christian discourse, see Julia Hillner, Jörg Ulrich, and Jakob Engberg, eds., *Clerical Exile in Late Antiquity* (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2016).

Sardinia after running afoul of the Vandal king Thrasamund. Dionysius had come to Rome from Scythia and would never return to his place of birth. His letter to Eugippius hints at the 'inconveniences of living as a stranger' (*peregrinationis incommoda*), while asserting at the same time that 'as long as one always pursues the [heavenly] fatherland with desire, one cannot be deemed an exile far from home'.[42] This is a familiar type of civic language that Eugippius' came to harness to great effect in his *Commemoratorium*.

Eugippius, then, was part of a network of prominent literati who made it their business to read each other's works and who would have appreciated the values and themes expounded in the *Commemoratorium*. Significantly, this network is an important point of refence also for those who discern a political agenda behind the text.[43] Eugippius' North-African correspondents Fulgentius and Ferrandus were active defenders of Nicaean orthodoxy against the Arian Vandal regime.[44] One of Ferrandus' letters to Eugippius, dated to around 533, consisted of a lengthy rebuttal of Arian theology. It was prompted by a series of questions that a certain 'Arian Gothic count' had recently put to Eugippius and which the latter had passed on to Ferrandus.[45] The phrasing does not in itself imply hostility, but begs the question all the same: if Eugippius was debating Arians in 530s, may he not also have interspersed his earlier hagiographical work with anti-Arian sentiments, possibly even veiled criticism of Arianism's Gothic royal adherents?

There was at least one contemporary who interpreted the work in such terms: Paschasius, the Roman deacon to whom Eugippius had sent off the *Commemoratorium*. A staunch supporter of pope Laurentius, Paschasius was not at all fond of King Theoderic, who was not just a heretic in his

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[42] Dionysius, *Epistula ad Eugipium presbyterum*, col. 346B. *a patria non procul exsulare creditur, si semper patriam desiderio consequatur.*

[43] Winckler, '"Wie aus dem Hause der Ägyptischen Knechtschaft"', 33–36; Carl Hammer, 'The Examples of the Saints. Reading Eugippius' account of Saint Severin', *Classica et Mediaevalia* 59 (2008): 155–186; Walter Goffart, 'Does the Vita S. Severini Have an Underside?', in *Eugippius und Severin*, ed. Pohl and Diesenberger, 33–39; though see Gometz, 'Eugippius', 217–244, who notes rightly that not all people in Eugippius' network were on the same page politically.

[44] Daniel Bachelet, 'Fulgence et l'arianisme vandale', in *Lingua et ingenium: studi su Fulgenzio di Ruspe e il suo contesto*, ed. Antonio Piras (Cagliari: Sandhi, 2010), 3–16.

[45] Ferrandus, *Epistula dogmatica*, 170. *nunc interim dignare considerare, quales habeat vires ab arriano Gothorum comite nuper proposita quaestio.*

eyes but had made the still more aggravating mistake of coming down in favour of Laurentius' rival Symmachus.[46] The deacon was careful to couch his dislike in scriptural analogy. Praising Eugippius' hagiographical efforts, he compared them to those of the Maccabee Mattathias, who had used 'the examples of the saints' to inspire his sons to keep up the fight against their Seleucid oppressors. Paschasius explained:

> The father's instruction was not lost upon the sons. So profound an impact did the deeds of their elders have upon them, that they frightened armed princes with their candid faith, vanquished heathen army camps, tore down demonic shrines and altars across the land, and, having themselves been decorated with eternal wreaths, obtained a civic crown for their radiant fatherland.[47]

As Istvan Bóna and Karl Hammer have stressed, the analogy between the Seleucids and Theoderic's Gothic regime would have been hard to miss for Eugippius and his biblically-minded contemporaries.[48] Paschasius saw the *Commemoratorium* as a work that could inspire the Catholic inhabitants of Italy to rise up against their heretical overlords, and he called upon Eugippius to join in this cause. In doing so, Paschasius incidentally showed himself to be yet another member of Eugippius' network well-versed in the idiom of citizenship. Besides invoking the image of a shared *patria*, he referred to the Roman military distinction of the 'civic crown' (*civicam coronam*), a wreath of oak leaves traditionally bestowed upon a soldier who saved the life of a Roman citizen.[49]

Paschasius' interpretation is suggestive, but cannot be taken as a direct gateway into Eugippius' own intentions. In the next section, therefore, we will explore how Eugippius himself came to harness the language of citizenship in his *Commemoratorium* and what lessons he sought to impart with it.

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[46] On Paschasius: John Moorhead, 'The Laurentian Schism: East and West in the Roman Church', *Church History* 47 (1978): 125–136, here 132, n. 25.

[47] Paschasii epistola ad Eugippium, ed. Noll, *Das Leben*, 46. *Nec paterna liberos fefellit instructio; tantum enim profuerunt memoratis facta maiorum, ut apertissima fide armatos principes deterrerent, castra sacrilega superarent, cultus arasque daemonicas longe lateque diruerent, ciuicamque coronam sertis decorati perennibus splendenti patriae prouiderent.*

[48] Bóna, 'Sever[in]iana', 285; Hammer, 'The Examples of the Saints', 159–161.

[49] Valerie Maxfield, *The Military Decorations of the Roman Army* (London: Batsford, 1981), 70–74.

4   The *Commemoratorium*: A Tale of Many Cities

The narrative proper of the *Commemoratorium* can be grouped into three sections: Severinus' ministry in Noricum (c. 1–39), his death (c. 40–43), and the translation of his body to Italy (c. 44–46). All three deal with citizenship, though from different perspectives and with different emphases.

The first section starts *in medias res* with the saint's arrival in the city of Asturis and then continues with a series of stand-alone episodes that show Severinus moving from town to town as Noricum gradually comes under barbarian rule. There is no strict chronology. Narrative coherence is achieved through recurrence, as episodes tend to conform to a strict formula. An urban community is facing a crisis of some sort—barbarians at the gate, citizens being captured, floods, famine, heresy—whereupon the saint arrives and offers the citizens advice on how to solve the problem. His tone and bearing on such occasions resemble those of an Old Testament prophet, lamenting his listeners' sinfulness and threatening divine retribution.[50] The episode's resolution depends on the citizens' response: if they heed the saint's advice, they are saved, if they ignore it, they suffer the consequences, which tend to take the form of biblical scenes of urban destruction.

There are several things to note here. First, that despite being set in a distant frontier province of an empire that no longer existed, the urban landscape of the *Commemoratorium* would have been instantly recognisable to its sixth-century readers. They would have identified with Noricum's circumstances: an embattled Roman society gradually yielding to barbarian rule. Moreover, Eugippius used various 'zooming devices' to bring his story closer to the experiences of his contemporaries.[51] In describing Noricum's settlements, he combined place names with general Roman urban terminology, distinguishing as a rule between cities (*civitates*, *oppida*, *municipia*) on the one hand, and forts (*castella*)

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[50] Marc van Uytfanghe, 'La bible dans la "Vie de saint Séverin" d'Eugippius', *Latomus* 33 (1974): 324–352.

[51] On 'zooming devices', see: Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, 'Assumptions and the Creation of Meaning: Reading Sophocles' Antigone', *Journal of Hellenic Studies* 109 (1989): 134–148.

on the other.[52] The inhabitants of such settlements he typically designated collectively, referring to citizens (*cives*), Romans (*Romani*) or town-dwellers (*oppidani*) when speaking of the inhabitants of cities, while using 'inhabitants' (*accolae*) for the residents of forts.[53] The result was a rather a-historical Roman landscape that the citizens of sixth-century Italy and North-Africa could easily map onto their own situation. The biblical typology that Eugippius simultaneously imposed on Noricum's urban landscape would have worked in a similar way, but was targeted mostly at readers proficient in exegesis, such as the monks of Lucullanum.[54] They would have looked at the Romans of Noricum as they had been trained to look at the Ancient Israelites in the Old Testament: a prefiguration of themselves. This raises a second point: the urban vignettes that form the backbone of the *Commemoratorium* were clearly meant to be instructional. They were more than a scenic backdrop to Severinus' saintly achievements. They were to be read as parables of good and bad communal behaviour: short and accessible stories set in a familiar urban landscape that would prompt the sixth-century reader—monastic and secular—to ruminate on what it meant to be a good citizen. The resulting model of citizenship was both Christian and Roman, but it emphasised communal responsibilities above legal rights. Good citizenship in Eugippius' book meant performing a number of duties for the good of the community.

One important duty that Eugippius had his protagonist Severinus instil in the citizens of Noricum was a particular type of Christian piety: public, communal and participatory. The text is riddled with scenes of citizens participating in the liturgy and engaging in communal prayer, fasting and penance. The importance of these practices is underlined right at the start through Severinus' interaction with two cities, Asturis and Comagenis.[55] Both are having trouble with barbarians: Asturis is facing an immanent attack, Comagenis is being bled dry by a barbarian cohort lodged within its walls as part of a treaty. Visiting these cities in turn, Severinus is clear about the remedy: start fasting, start doing penance. The citizens

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[52] *civitas* (9x) and *oppidum* (38x) are his most common terms. Most major settlements are characterised by both terms. See furthermore: Bieler, *The Life*, 19–20, n. 21.

[53] But see Eugippius *Commemoratorium*, c. 11, which refers to one Marcianus, a citizen (*civis*) of the fort (*castellum*) of Cucullis.

[54] Winckler, '"Wie aus dem Hause"'; Wood, 'The Monastic Frontiers'.

[55] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 1–2.

of Asturis ignore the saint, and their city is razed to the ground soon thereafter. The citizens of Comagensis are also doubtful at first, but then an old man appears in their midst, the sole survivor of the carnage at Asturis, who corroborates the saint's predictions. Thereupon, the citizens of Comagensis start observing fasts and making amends for their past mistakes. On the third day, as they are all celebrating Mass together, the town is shaken by an earthquake, driving off the barbarians and saving the city.

Beyond such acts of Christian participation, the *Commemoratorium* put a special emphasis on charity or *caritas*. We have seen already that this was an important value for Eugippius. He had chosen *caritas* as a central organising principle for his collections of excerpts from Augustine in the 490s, and he continued to return to it in his correspondence thereafter.[56] In the *Commemoratorium*, he presented *caritas* as a practical and distinctly communal virtue: paying tithes, looking after the poor by sending food or clothes and paying ransom for fellow citizens captured by barbarians.[57] While *caritas* should thus be aimed at the wellbeing of the community as a whole, the text does on occasion zoom in on individual responsibilities. Early on in the narrative, we are told the story of the widow Procula, a citizen of Favianis, who is secretly hoarding grain in a time of famine.[58] She is found out by the saint, who publicly berates her: as 'a woman of noble birth' (*nobilissimis orta natalibus*) she has a special duty towards the poor, but her actions render her a slave of greed (*cupiditatis ancilla*, *avaritiae mancipium*). Castigated, she repents and starts to dole out freely to those of lesser means and status (*pauperibus*), and soon thereafter, a merchant fleet arrives, lifting the famine. There was more to this story than a general celebration of Christian charity. It was a carefully crafted reminder that with elevated social status came enhanced responsibilities. The doling out of grain had long been associated with elite and imperial munificence in Rome and was continued under the Ostrogothic rulers.[59] The blatant social reversal implied in the

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[56] Gometz, 'Eugippius', 86–99.

[57] See, e.g.: Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 3, 12, 17–18.

[58] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 3.

[59] Michele Salzman, 'From a Classical to a Christian City: Civic Euergetism and Charity in Late Antique Rome', *Studies in Late Antiquity* 1 (2017): 65–85.

saint's exhortation—a woman of noble birth acting like a slave of greed—would have further driven home the point: the widow of Favianis had failed not just as a Christian but also as a member of the urban elite. Surely, Eugippius' aristocratic contemporaries in Naples and Rome could do better.

Evidently, Eugippius was not afraid to instil in his readers a sense of social control, even a feeling of being watched. This was the case above all with behaviour that defied public scrutiny, such as correct belief and worship.[60] The message is driven home in a story situated in Cucullis, a fort in the West of Noricum.[61] Severinus is called in by the inhabitants because they are afraid that some in their midst are still engaging in pagan practices. The saint orders all the families to come together for Mass and to each bring an unlit candle, which they have to affix to one of the church walls. Over prayer, the faithful in the congregation see their candles miraculously lit, while those who had engaged in sacrilegious practices are exposed by their unlit candles. With the 'secrets of their heart' laid bare for all to see, they confess and repent and are re-accepted in the community. Clearly, correct belief was another part of good citizenship for Eugippius. But the tale also reiterated the message he had already conveyed through the story of the widow Procula: citizenship is acted out in private as well as in public. Your fellow citizens may only see what you do out in the open, but God and the saints see all.[62]

Significantly, good citizenship extended beyond strictly Christian practices. Twice, the saint is shown to convince a city to take to the field against a barbarian threat, fortified by their faith and his intercessory prayers. In both cases, they are victorious, defeating an enemy that boasts superior numbers.[63] For Eugippius, then, the collective responsibility of citizens for their community's wellbeing could extend into the martial realm. But he took care to underline, all the same, that the greatest protection against external threats was provided by spiritual arms—communal faith and prayers—and that the sweetest victory was a

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[60] On earlier Christian strategies to police communal belief and practice, see: Harry Maier, '"Manichee!": Leo the Great and the Orthodox Panopticon', *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 4 (1996): 441–460; Flierman and Rose, 'Banished from the Company of the Good', 15–21.

[61] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 11.

[62] A sentiment already expressed in the Scriptures, see: e.g. Psalm 138; John 21:37.

[63] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 4, 27.

bloodless one.[64] This latter point was driven home in a lengthy episode situated in the city of Lauriacum, where the saint convinces the citizens to post watches on the city walls at night to guard against an immanent barbarian attack.[65] Unconvinced of the threat, the citizens agree only reluctantly. Yet on the fourth night, one of the watches accidently sets fire to a haystack with his torch. The city suffers no damage, miraculously, but the ensuing blaze does scare off a barbarian force lying in wait in the surrounding woods. When the citizens walk out of the gate the next morning, they encounter the abandoned ladders that the barbarians had brought 'for the destruction of the city' (*ad urbis excidium*).

It is fair to ask at this point how exactly the barbarians fitted into Eugippius' civic model. The examples shown so far placed the barbarians firmly in opposition to Noricum's citizens: they are a danger to the city, whether they threaten it from outside or are lodged treacherously within. This suggestion is strengthened by Eugippius' language, which combined specific ethnonyms with more general Roman terminology used for outside peoples. He identified *Rugi*, *Heruli*, *Alemanni*, *Thoringi* and *Gothi*—names that would still have rung familiar in the sixth century—but he also spoke frequently of barbarians (*barbari*), typically with pejorative connotations. In situations of conflict, he openly characterised them as enemies (*hostes, inimici*) or robbers (*praedones, latrunculi*).[66] References to barbarian Arianism are rare and implicit, but are not absent. Early on, Severinus is introduced as someone who commanded respect even among the 'heretical enemies of the Church', by which the reader was meant to understand the Rugi. Later in the text, the Rugian queen Giso comes in for special censure due to her plans to re-baptise Catholics, presumably into the Arian faith.[67]

Other segments of the text offer a more complex reading. The saint himself is shown to have been on friendly terms with barbarian kings

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[64] A point that recurs in many early hagiographical works, e.g. Sulpicius Severus, *Vita Martini*, c. 4.

[65] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 30.

[66] Fritz Lošek, 'Freunde, Feinde, Fremde—Terminologie und Typologie in der Vita Severini', in *Sprache und Identität im frühen Mittelalter*, ed. Walter Pohl and Bernhard Zeller (Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2012), 205–210; Matthias Skeb, 'Mit Fremden leben. Gottesbild und Umgang mit Fremden in der "Vita Severini" des Eugippius', *Studia monastica* 51 (2009): 33–48, here 35–36.

[67] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 4, 8; Winckler, '"Wie aus dem Hause"', 33.

and queens: he was welcome at their courts, where he offered advice and interceded on behalf of Noricum's citizens. The barbarian king Odoacer, in particular, is styled in positive terms, despite his Arian credentials. As a young man he sought out the saint for spiritual guidance and a blessing; later on, as king of Italy, he helped the Romans evacuate Noricum and find a new home across the Alps.[68] Eugippius' favourable account of Odoacer takes on a more poignant character by the subsequent lack of praise for his successor in Italy: Theoderic. The Ostrogothic king appears only once in the text, directly after the section on Odoacer. Eugippius refers to him as a barbarian king, but does not mention his rule over Italy, nor the fact that he would assassinate Odoacer to establish this rule. While lacking open hostility, the comparison between the two kings was hardly flattering for Italy's present ruler.[69]

All things considered, we can appreciate how someone like Paschasius would have read the *Commentatorium* as a call to arms against the Ostrogothic regime. There is anti-barbarian rhetoric in Eugippius' text. The citizens of Noricum had been the Romans: the concepts of citizen (*civis*) and Roman (*Romanus*) were for him nearly interchangeable. He had not included Noricum's barbarians in this model of citizenship, beyond their role as robbers and enemies that is. For a city like Naples, where Romans and Goths lived in close proximity, such imagery amounted to a plea for segregation rather than integration. That said, Eugippius did not of itself renounce barbarian rule: it was possible to be a good citizen in a barbarian kingdom, as long as the civic community would remain of sound spiritual conviction and keep to correct Christian practice. His views on the Ostrogothic regime were even more opaque. He refrained from openly criticising Theoderic.[70] Nor did he mention Arianism by name.[71] In this respect, his call to arms was more of a whisper.

Eugippius turned Severinus' ministry among the cities of Noricum into a powerful model of civic behaviour. Yet his story was not yet finished. The saint had eventually passed from the world. Shortly thereafter, Noricum had been given up as a Roman province and most of its

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[68] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 7, 32, 44.

[69] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 44.

[70] Winckler, '"Wie aus dem Hause"', 33–34.

[71] Philippe Régerat, 'Der Arianismus in der Vita Severini', *Wiener Studien* 111 (1998): 243–251.

Roman inhabitants had abandoned their cities and sought refuge in Italy. This posed a serious challenge to Eugippius' narrative and its underlying message. For if the cities of Noricum had been doomed in the end, what had been the point of making them behave as proper civic communities? Eugippius used the final chapters of the *Commemoratorium* to lay out a response. Inevitably perhaps it saw him return to the civic values he had used to introduce his protagonist in the prologue: the Christian as an exile on earth whose real *patria* is in heaven. Yet crucially, he managed to effect this return without invalidating the model of civic participation he had so carefully laid out in the meantime.

Severinus' prophetic qualities proved a great boon in bringing about this resolution. Eugippius left no doubt that the saint had been aware of Noricum's imminent evacuation all along. Indeed, part of his ministry had been to prepare Noricum's citizens for this faithful day. When Severinus had aided the Romans of Batavis against an Alemannian force, he had tempered their jubilations by pointing them towards the future: their city, and many others, would soon have to be abandoned.[72] This did not necessarily mean leaving Noricum altogether. For the citizens of Lauriacum, for example, the saint brokered a deal with the Rugian king Fela, allowing them to resettle in nearby towns under a peaceful treaty.[73] For other Romans, Severinus predicted a longer, though ultimately no less beneficial, migration: they would move to 'a province of Roman land' and would suffer 'no loss of liberty'.[74]

With his death at hand, Severinus retreated to his monastery at Favianis. He informed his brethren about the impending evacuation using a biblical example that had reconciled many Christians to the sufferings of exile by reframing it as a return home. Just as the sons of Israel had departed Egypt for the Promised Land, so the peoples of Noricum would escape barbarian oppression and set out towards a Roman province. The monks too should join this Exodus, taking his bones with them.[75] On his deathbed, Severinus offered his followers a last piece of advice, invoking

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[72] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 27.

[73] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 31.

[74] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 31. *asserens universos in Romani soli provinciam absque ullo libertatis migraturos incommodo.*

[75] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 40.

an earlier yet equally iconic Old Testament episode about displacement and homecoming:

> Abraham obeyed faithfully when the Lord called upon him to set out for the place that he was to accept in his possession. He went, knowing not where he would end up. Imitate the faith of this holy patriarch, imitate his sanctity, despise all worldly things, and always seek the home that is in heaven.[76]

It is doubtful whether Eugippius had himself been present during the saint's final hours. Few among the monks of Lucullanum in the 510s would have been. But even crafted after the fact it was a powerful memory. Their spiritual leader had foreseen their journey to Italy. Their 'state of wandering' (*peregrinatio*), as Eugippius came to style it, had followed in the footsteps of Abraham and the Israelites and had been sanctioned by their saint.[77]

The final chapters of the *Commemoratorium* described, in broad strokes, Noricum's evacuation and the translation of the saint's body to Italy. The past was now rapidly catching up with the present. The one remaining task for Eugippius was to show how his community had found a new temporary *patria* in Naples, and to underline how much the city and its surroundings had benefitted, and would continue to benefit, from the new saint in their midst. He fulfilled this task with relish, describing how the Neapolitan noblewoman Barbaria had inundated the wandering monks with letters asking them to settle at her estates in Lucullanum. Papal approval for the translation had been obtained swiftly, and the local bishop had with his own hands carried Severinus' remains to their new resting place.[78] All formalities had been observed, and more. As the people of Naples had rushed out to witness the scene and pay tribute to their new saintly protector, several citizens had been cured of long-standing ailments. Miracles had continued ever after. Even after his death,

[76] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 43. *Abraham namque uocatus a domino fide oboedivit, ut exiret in locum, quem accepturus erat in possessionem, et exiit nesciens, quo uenturus esset. Huius igitur beati patriarchae imitamini fidem, imitamini sanctitatem, terrena despicite, patriam caelestem semper inquirite.*

[77] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 44.

[78] Eugippius, *Commemoratorium*, c. 44.

Severinus continued to instil communal behaviour, and citizens continued to benefit from his presence and example.

5   Conclusion

Christianity played a crucial role in ensuring that the citizen remained a familiar concept in the Early Medieval West. One of the aims of this volume, and this contribution in particular, has been to get a better understanding of what this process looked like on the ground. To this end, this contribution zoomed in on the Bay of Naples around 510 CE, where the displaced monk Eugippius used the genre of hagiography to put forward a spectacular vision of Christian civic community. His *Commemoratorium Vitae Sancti Severini* confronted its readers with familiar but ostensibly contradictory ideas about citizenship. The two letters that came to serve as its prologue and postscript are a case in point. The former characterised Severinus as a stranger who denounced earthly ties to become a citizen of the heavenly fatherland, the latter celebrated the example of the Maccabees, who won civic honours by liberating their earthly *patria* from sacrilege and tyranny. In between, Eugippius told the story of a wandering holy man who taught the cities of a Late-Roman frontier province how to act as good citizens.

While Eugippius was a monk, his *Commemoratorium* was a work of the world. Written in the still heavily urbanised landscape of early sixth-century Italy, it aimed at a wide readership that included not just the community of Lucullanum and the citizens of Naples, but also a network of Italian and North-African clerics and aristocrats. The Roman and Biblical language of citizenship came easy to such readers: it was part of their textual horizon and cultural heritage and resonated with their circumstances. Not every reader would have read the text in the same way or distilled from it the same meaning. For the citizens of Naples and other Italian cities, the stories of Severinus' ministry in Noricum offered a script of civic behaviour. For their communities to thrive under a new post-Roman political constellation, they should act collectively. They should participate in the liturgy and other acts of public piety. They should engage in charity, with a special duty befalling the urban elite. They should be of sound Christian belief and see to it that their neighbours were as well. If necessary, they should take up arms against external enemies, trusting that God would aid the faithful city in its distress. For the embattled clergymen in Eugippius' Mediterranean network the text

could serve as a validation of their struggles under heretical barbarian rule. While never mentioning Arianism by name, the *Commemoratorium* celebrated Catholic orthodoxy and censured barbarian kings who did not respect it. For most part, it placed the barbarians outside its civic model. For the monks of Lucullanum, finally, the text held multiple interpretative layers. They could read the urban stories figuratively, taking from them what applied best to the monastic experience, such as the calls for collective prayer, penance and communal introspection. Yet the text was also meant to reconcile them to their recent migration to Italy, confirming they were on a path laid out by their saintly founder, a path that, if followed persistently, would lead them towards the heavenly *patria*.

The language of citizenship remained widespread in the early Middle Ages because it was flexible and could serve diverse purposes. Christianity played an important role as mediator in this respect, turning the already formidable heritage of Roman citizenship into a still richer compendium of values, terminologies, stories and rhetorical strategies. Still, it is one thing for us to observe this flexibility, it must have been quite another for a medieval author to harness it and direct it towards some cause, or in the case of Eugippius, multiple causes. His *Commemoratorium* was not a self-evident work. Nor was it a literary exercise. It was an act of imagination with practical aims and ambitions: a meticulously crafted story that was meant to change how a new generation of Christian communities acted and participated in the world.

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Pleasing God, Serving the Citizens: Charity and Water Supply in Cairo and Baghdad

Josephine van den Bent and Angela Isoldi

1 Introduction

Early Abbasid Baghdad and Mamluk Cairo were among the most populous cities of the medieval period. One of the biggest challenges in sustaining such cities in the Middle East was water management. A wide variety of societal players were involved in this, from governmental authorities down to individual citizens. Because of the great value the Islamic tradition attributed to water provision as a form of almsgiving, charitable foundations also played a significant role in the water supply of these cities. By investigating the respective situations in early Abbasid Baghdad (second–third century AH/eighth–ninth century CE) and Mamluk Cairo (ninth/fifteenth century), this chapter analyses the way rulers and elites contributed to providing citizens with this most

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essential of facilities, focusing specifically on the role of charity and especially the institution of *waqf*, in dealing with the water needs of the urban population.

2   CHARITY AND WATER

The Islamic tradition knows both obligatory alms, generally called *zakāt*, and voluntary alms, generally called *ṣadaqa*, although in early Islamic sources these are frequently used interchangeably and the distinction between them developed gradually.[1] Almsgiving has an expiatory function, and Yaacov Lev has described how medieval Islamic charity also functioned as a channel for communicating with God (expressing gratitude, imploring for deliverance, etc.).[2] Those who give alms will be duly rewarded, according to the Qur'an, verse 2:261:

> The parable of those who contribute their wealth in the way of God (*fī sabīl Allāh*) is like the parable of a grain of corn that grows seven ears: in each ear (there are) a hundred grains. (So) God doubles for whomever He pleases. God is embracing, knowing.[3]

Water provision has always been considered a worthy cause for almsgiving, perhaps even the best one. In that sense, an often quoted hadith is this one—or variations thereon:

> [It is related] on the authority of Saʿd ibn ʿUbāda that he said: 'Oh Messenger of God, Umm Saʿd [i.e., his mother] has died. Which charity (*ṣadaqa*) is best?' He [the Prophet] said: 'Water.' So he [Saʿd] dug a well and said: 'This is for Umm Saʿd.'[4]

[1] Yaacov Lev, *Charity, Endowments, and Charitable Institutions in Medieval Islam* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005), 4–5; Yaacov Lev, 'The Ethics and Practice of Islamic Medieval Charity', *History Compass* 5, no. 2 (2007): 603–618, here 603, 605.

[2] Lev, *Charity*, 21–28; Lev, 'Ethics and Practice', 606–607.

[3] Qur'an 2:261: A.J. Droge, trans., *The Qur'ān. A New Annotated Translation* (Sheffield: Equinox Publishing Ltd., 2013). See also: Lev, 'Ethics and Practice', 604–606.

[4] Abū Dāwūd Sulaymān ibn al-Ashʿath al-Sijistānī, *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ, Muḥammad Kāmil Qarah Balilī, and Shādī Muḥsin al-Shayyāb, vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2009), 109.

The close relationship between charity and water provision is also visible in the terminology that eventually developed: water fountains providing drinking water to the public came to be known as *sabīl*s. The word *sabīl* literally means 'road' or 'path' and is frequently used in the phrase *fī sabīl Allāh*, meaning 'in God's path'. It indicates work done on His behalf, and the expression is used in various contexts, including that of waging jihad—which is fighting for God—as well as to describe charitable actions. From the latter developed the use of the term *sabīl* for charitable provision of water in general, which could take many forms, but also for a public drinking fountain specifically—the latter we will discuss in more detail below.[5]

Some founders of these water fountains actively referenced the abovementioned and other hadiths in their constructions, underlining the role these institutions played in personal piety. In 755 AH/1354 CE, the Mamluk *amīr* Shaykhū had a *sabīl* built. On it, he had inscribed that the Prophet had said that 'there is a reward in every living thing [lit. "every hot liver"]', which references a tradition that exists in various forms about someone offering water to a thirsty dog.[6] He also mentions the abovementioned hadith, as the inscription continues by stating that the Prophet was asked: 'What works are best?', and that he answered 'providing drinking water'[7] (Fig. 1).

From an early moment in Islamic history onwards, charity and water provision were thus closely connected. Especially the holy cities of Mecca and Medina were popular targets for such charity, of which the water installations on the way to and in Mecca built by Zubayda bint Jaʿfar ibn Abī Jaʿfar al-Manṣūr (d. 216/831)—who was married to caliph Hārūn

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[5] Saleh Lamei Mostafa, 'The Cairene Sabil: Form and Meaning', *Muqarnas* 6 (1989): 33–42, here 34; C.E. Bosworth and Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'Sabīl', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. P. Bearman et al., 2nd ed. (Brill Online, 2012) (henceforth *EI2*), http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_0954.

[6] *Thesaurus d'Epigraphie Islamique* (TEI), fiche n° 1807, consulted on 14 April 2022. http://www.epigraphie-islamique.uliege.be/thesaurus/User/EpigraphyDisplay.aspx?id=1807&pan=3&st=%u0627%u0644%u0645%u0627%u0621&sc=16. For the hadith, see for instance: Abū Muḥammad al-Ḥusayn ibn Masʿūd ibn Muḥammad al-Farrāʾ al-Baghawī, *Sharḥ al-sunna*, ed. Shuʿayb al-Arnāʾūṭ and Zuhayr al-Shāwīsh, vol. 6 (Beirut: al-Maktab al-Islāmī, 1983), no. 1667, 167. See also: Lamei Mostafa, 'The Cairene Sabil', 35.

[7] *TEI*, fiche n° 1807. See also Lamei Mostafa, 'The Cairene Sabil', 35, for this and other pious inscriptions on *sabīl*s.

Fig. 1 Dome of the sabīl built by the Mamluk amīr Shaykhū in 755 AH/1354 CE. The inscription mentioning the *ḥadīth* is in the middle arch (Angela Isoldi)

al-Rashīd (r. 170–193/786–809) and the mother of Muḥammad al-Amīn (r. 193–198/809–813)—are especially famous.[8] *Ṣadaqa* in general, and specifically charitable water provision, could be organised in a variety of ways, but a very popular form through which the charity could even be made permanent (at least in theory) was the institution of *waqf* (pl. *awqāf*): Islamic charitable endowments.

2.1   *The Islamic Waqf: General Characteristics*

Waqf foundations, often connected with water provision, played an essential role in shaping urban spaces and social dynamics in the pre-modern Islamic world. They often financed the creation and maintenance of essential services and infrastructures such as mosques, madrasas, hospitals, roads, commercial structures and water facilities.[9] They also enriched

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[8] On these projects, see for instance: al-Yaʿqūbī, *Mushākalat al-nās li-zamānihim*, ed. William Millward (Beirut: The New Book Publishing House, 1962), 26. See also: Lev, *Charity*, 75–76, and passim.

[9] Recent studies have pointed out the connection between the spread of *waqf* foundations financing public services with the crisis of major tax-collecting institutions in the medieval Islamic world, where *waqf* became an effective way of compensating for the lack

urban networks by promoting employment, social mobility, education, craftsmanship and material transfer and commerce.[10] *Waqf* foundations were established mostly by the military and the civilian 'elites', meaning a heterogeneous and fluid social stratum of (groups of) individuals characterised by political, social and economic power. This stratum did not identify itself as a specific social group, but it clearly had a key role in shaping its socio-political context, which it could influence thanks to its access to a variety of resources. The influential position of the elite was determined by multiple factors, among which ancestry, wealth, military power, strong networks, patronage, education and even outstanding personal qualities. Therefore, members of this socially dominant stratum could come from very different backgrounds and included state officials, military leaders, religious scholars, wealthy merchants and influential women.[11] For these elites, *waqf* represented a way of contributing to the 'common good' of the urban society.[12] The elites' interest in the establishment of *waqf* foundations derived from the fact that this kind of patronage granted public support and social visibility and often entailed also economic and political advantages for the founders themselves.[13]

From a legal perspective, the Islamic *waqf* is a form of *ṣadaqa* and it consists of the perpetual donation of a self-sustaining set of properties, meaning a set of properties that includes revenue-generating assets

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of tax income and enhancing urban development. See: Stefan Heidemann, 'Charity and Piety for the Transformation of the City', in *Charity and Giving in Monotheistic Religions*, ed. Miriam Frenkel and Yaacov Lev (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2009), 153–174.

[10] Randi Deguilhem, 'The Waqf in the City', in *The City in the Islamic World*, ed. Salma K. Jayyusi (Leiden, Brill: 2008), 926–929; Sylvie Denoix, 'A Mamluk Institution for Urbanization: The *Waqf*', in *The Cairo Heritage*, ed. Doris Behrens-Abuseif (New York, AUC Press, 2000), 193–195.

[11] For this, and a much more detailed discussion on the use and meaning of the term 'elite' in the study of early Islamic history, see: Hannah-Lena Hagemann, Katharina Mewes, and Peter Verkinderen, 'Studying Elites in Early Islamic History: Concepts and Terminology', in *Transregional and Regional Elites. Connecting the Early Islamic Empire*, ed. Hannah-Lena Hagemann and Stefan Heidemann (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 17–44.

[12] Deguilhem, 'The Waqf in the City', 929; Heidemann, 'Charity and Piety', 168.

[13] The Islamic *waqf* is the only type of endowment that combines within its religious framework both public and private aims, general and personal purposes. See: Gabriel Baer, 'The Muslim Waqf and Similar Institutions in Other Civilizations', in *Stiftungen in Christentum, Judentum und Islam vor der Moderne*, ed. Michael Borgolte and Tillmann Lohse (Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2009), 272. See also: Lev, *Charity*, passim, for a discussion of many aspects of *waqf*.

to specific charitable or pious purposes. The term '*waqf*' (from Arabic *waqafa*, 'to stop') indicates the alienation of the endowed property from the circulation in the market and from the rules regulating inheritance, gifts and other forms of conveyance (including confiscation). The ownership of the endowed goods is transferred to God, but their profits are used for the benefit of a general group of people such as the needy, or the poor, or for a more specific, 'worthy' target (e.g., the relatives of the founders).[14]

The establishment of a *waqf* depends on a few constitutive elements: a founder, a set of properties to be endowed and a beneficiary. The founder (*wāqif*) must be the uncontested owner of the properties to be endowed (*mawqūf*).[15] Such properties must include a source of income in order to financially sustain the charitable purpose of the foundation. Commercial structures, agricultural land, manufacturing facilities and rental units were among the most commonly endowed revenue-generating assets. Their profits were spent for the charitable scope of the foundation: distributing food and water, building and maintaining essential infrastructure, financing religious institutions, etc.[16] The beneficiaries (*mawqūf ʿalayhi* or *ahl al-waqf*), either 'worthy' individuals or collective groups, could belong to the family of the founder or be a certain social group. Most *waqf* foundations included both, also because family *waqf*s generally indicated the poor and the needy as ultimate beneficiaries after the eventual extinction of the founder's family.[17]

The operating conditions of a *waqf* foundation were stipulated in the *waqf* deed by the endower, and their execution was supervised by an appointed administrator (*nāẓir*).[18] The functioning of *waqf* foundations was also under the jurisdiction of the religious authorities (the *qāḍī*s),

[14] Muhammad Zubair Abbasi, 'The Classical Islamic Law of Waqf: A Concise Introduction', *Arab Law Quarterly* 26 (2012): 126.

[15] R. Peters, 'Waḳf' in *EI2*, http://dx.doi.org.ru.idm.oclc.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1333.

[16] Denoix, 'A Mamluk Institution', 193–195.

[17] Deguilhem, 'The Waqf in the City', 923–924; Peters, 'Waḳf'; Abbasi, 'The Classical Islamic Law of Waqf', 139. A *waqf* for the benefit of the founder's family is called *waqf ahlī*, while it is called *waqf khayrī* if it benefits larger social groups. A *waqf* which benefits both is called *waqf mushtarak*.

[18] *Waqf* deeds usually specify the identity of the first appointed administrator and establish the criteria for choosing his successors.

who had to approve their validity at first. Within this basic legal framework, particular laws regulating the *waqf* could be flexibly adapted to the needs and tendencies of different periods. In fact, this institution became subject to fluctuations determined by different social, cultural and economic factors.[19] As will be shown in this paper, the use of *waqf* varied in time and space in response to different needs and customs of society, as well as the individual familial and socio-economic conditions of the founders, their biases, and concerns.

3   The Role of Charity in Baghdad's Water Provision

The city of Baghdad was founded in 145/762, on the Tigris, at a site that had a few pre-existing settlements and where various canals connected that river to the other major river in the area, the Euphrates. Its location near those canals was a key element in the selection of the site for al-Manṣūr (r. 136–158/754–775), the Abbasid caliph who gave the order for the new city to be built. The Round City of Baghdad was completed in 149/766.[20] Baghdad was not just the Round City, however, but rapidly came to cover large swaths of land outside it as well. On the western side of the Tigris, troops lived in the Ḥarbiyya neighbourhood; labourers populated al-Karkh, to where the markets were also moved in 157/773–774, and where many migrants came to live.[21] The city also started expanding onto the eastern bank of the Tigris, after al-Manṣūr built a camp on that site for his son and heir Muḥammad al-Mahdī when the latter returned from Khurasan in 151/768, which came to be called al-Ruṣāfa, and where extensive urban development followed.[22]

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[19] Deguilhem, 'The Waqf in the City', 930, 937.

[20] Jacob Lassner, *The Topography of Baghdad in the Early Middle Ages: Texts and Studies* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 126–128; A.A. Duri, 'Baghdad', in *Historic Cities of the Islamic World*, ed. C. Edmund Bosworth (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 31–33.

[21] Lassner, *Topography*, 139–140, 147–148; Duri, 'Baghdad', 32; Nassima Neggaz, 'Al-Karkh: The Development of an Imāmī-Shīʿī Stronghold in Early Abbasid and Būyid Baghdad (132-477/750-1055)', *Studia Islamica* 114 (2019): 265–315, here 274.

[22] Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī, *Taʾrīkh al-rusūl wa-l-mulūk*, ed. M.J. de Goeje, vol. 3.1 (Leiden: Brill, 1879), 365; Guy Le Strange, *Baghdad during the Abbasid Caliphate: From Contemporary Arabic and Persian Sources* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1900), 41–42, 187–190.

There is debate on the population numbers of Baghdad at its height of prosperity, with scholarly estimates ranging between a quarter and 1.5 million people, but many scholars today consider the city to have had at least half a million inhabitants in the late eighth and ninth centuries.[23] These people all needed access to water; for consumption, of course, but also for a wide variety of other purposes, ranging from ablution facilities in or around mosques and bathhouses to artisanal processes and irrigation. Water supply to the Round City and the caliphal palace via various conduits was organised at an early stage at the orders of al-Manṣūr.[24] Water was also distributed by watercarriers (*saqqāʾūn*).[25] For those outside the Round City, the canal system that cut through the city on both banks was a key source of water, as the third/ninth-century geographer and historian al-Yaʿqūbī describes:

> For the people of al-Karkh and its surroundings, [water is drawn from] a canal called the Nahr al-Dajāj (…) and from a canal called Nahr Ṭābiq ibn al-Ṣamīḥ, and they have the great Nahr ʿĪsā which takes water from the main part of the Euphrates (…). They also have cisterns (*ābār*) into which water from these canals enters, and this is sweet water. All the people drink from them and these canals were needed because of the large size and extent of the town.[26]

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[23] E.g.: Lassner, *Topography*, 158–160 (ca 280,000, perhaps even twice that); Duri, 'Baghdad', 35–36 (1.5 million); Hugh Kennedy, 'The Feeding of the Five Hundred Thousand: Cities and Agriculture in Early Islamic Mesopotamia', *Iraq* 73 (2011): 177–199, here 177 (ca 500,000).

[24] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1892), 238; Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. Yusūf al-Hādī (Beirut: ʿĀlam al-Kutub, 1996), 289; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, ed. Bashshār ʿAwwād Maʿrūf, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār al-Gharb al-Islāmī, 2001), 388–389. For a more elaborate discussion of these structures and their construction, see Josephine van den Bent and Peter Brown, 'Constructing Hydraulic Infrastructure in the Abbasid and Tulunid Capitals: Water Conduits in Baghdad, Samarra, and Cairo between the 8th and 9th centuries', *Al-Masāq* (forthcoming).

[25] See for instance: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:388. There was also a 'Watercarriers Street' (*sikkat al-saqqāʾīn*) in the Round City (al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 240).

[26] al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 250–251. For the importance of these canals for the provision of drinking water to the city, see also for instance: Miskawayh, *Kitāb Tajārib al-umam*, ed. H.F. Amedroz, vol. 2 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1921), 406.

The pre-existing Sassanian canals, such as the Nahr Dujayl to the north of the Round City and the Nahr ʿĪsā (known earlier as the Nahr Rufayl)[27] to the south, which transported Euphrates water to the Tigris played an important role here—they were part of the reason why the location had been so attractive in the first place.[28] But after the foundation of Baghdad, various canals were dug that provided water for the inhabitants, such as the Nahr al-Dajāj and the Nahr al-Qallāʾīn in al-Karkh and the Nahr al-Mahdī on the east bank. Unfortunately it is not always entirely clear when and at whose orders these canals were dug.[29]

Yet, as discussed above, from an early time in Islamic history, the provision of water was also an important way of giving charity, and consequently this phenomenon also appears in the early decades of the city Baghdad. For Baghdad in the early Abbasid period we have found two examples of water provision through charitable constructions. The oldest source that makes mention of these two examples is Ibn al-Faqīh's (d. 290 AH/903 CE) *Kitāb al-Buldān* (The book of countries), which was written around 290 AH/903 CE.[30] This work contains an elaborate description of Baghdad that mentions the so-called Birkat Zalzal and Ḥawḍ Haylāna, both of which appear to have been charitable initiatives aimed at providing water for the general populace.[31] These initiatives were named after the people who provided them, Zalzal and Haylāna, and both can be considered members of the elite. The resources on which their membership thereof was based, however, were strongly reliant

[27] Peter Verkinderen, *Waterways of Iraq and Iran in the Early Islamic Period. Changing Rivers and Landscapes of the Mesopotamian Plain* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2015), 30.

[28] Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 48–49.

[29] A good example of the complications here is the case of the Nahr Ṭābiq, as discussed in Judith Ahola and Letizia Osti, 'Baghdad at the Time of Al-Muqtadir', in *Crisis and Continuity at the Abbasid Court*, ed. Maaike van Berkel et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 221–241, here 224–225. For a discussion of the caliph's involvement in the development of waterworks for the benefit of the populace, see van den Bent and Brown, 'Constructing Hydraulic Infrastructure' (forthcoming).

[30] Ibn al-Faqīh, *Mukhtaṣar Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. M.J. de Goeje (Leiden: Brill, 1885), x; Adam Silverstein, 'Ibn Al-Faqīh', in *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, ed. Kate Fleet et al., 3rd ed. (Brill Online, 2019), http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_ei3_COM_30769.

[31] The section on Baghdad only survives in the manuscript at the Astān-i Quds-i Raḍawī Library in Mashhad, not in the abridgement by Abū al-Ḥasan ʿAlī ibn Jaʿfar al-Shazarī edited by De Goeje. The edited text of the Mashhad manuscript is available in Yusūf al-Hādī's edition. For an overview of the relationship between these two abridgements, see Al-Hādī's introduction (Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 6–9).

on the patronage of others, and both of them can be considered social climbers—an element that may have affected their wish to engage in water-related charity, thereby cementing their social position as members of the elite.

3.1   The Birkat Zalzal

The Birkat Zalzal, or 'Pond of Zalzal', was located in the neighbourhood of al-Karkh on the west side of Baghdad, and it was fed by the Nahr Razīn, one of the canals coming from the Karkhāyā Canal.[32] Ibn al-Faqīh writes:

> To the left of the Suwayqa Abī al-Ward is the pond named after Zalzal the lute-player. He belonged to the generous people (*kirām al-nās*) in the days of al-Mahdī and al-Hādī and al-Rashīd. In the place of the ponds was a village called Shāl Qafyā(?) to Qaṣr al-Waḍḍāḥ. Zalzal was a servant (*ghulām*) of ʿĪsā ibn Jaʿfar ibn al-Manṣūr, and he dug this pond and made it into a *waqf* for the Muslims (*jaʿalahā waqf-an ʿalā al-muslimīn*).[33]

Various sources make mention of this pond and of Zalzal, the man who had it dug. There is no doubt in the sources that this pond was dug on the orders of Zalzal with the express purpose of providing water as a charity, which is clear from the terminology they use. Following Ibn al-Faqīh, Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī (d. 626/1229) states that Zalzal 'was of the generous people' (*min al-ajwād*) and that he 'made it into a *waqf* for the Muslims' (*wa-waqqafahā ʿalā al-muslimīn*).[34] Other authors use the term *sabīl* to reflect the charitable aspect: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdadi (d. 463/

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[32] Suhrāb, *Kitāb ʿAjāʾib al-aqālīm al-sabʿa ilā nihāyat al-ʿimāra*, ed. Hans von Mžik (Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1929), 132. See also: Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 52, 61–62, and, on the neighbourhood of al-Karkh: Neggaz, 'Al-Karkh'.

[33] Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 296. The edited text reads *shāl q-nyā*, but the manuscript appears to read *shāl q-fyā* (for a facsimile, see Otʿar Cʿkʿitišvili, *K Istorii Goroda Bagdad; Materialy k Istorii Vozniknoveniia i Razvitiia Feodalʿnogo Goroda Na Blizhnem Vostoke* (Tbilisi: Izd-vo Met͡s niereba, 1968). Yāqūt, in his *Muʿjam al-buldān*, is clearly reliant on Ibn al-Faqīh for some of his information. He renders it as 'Sāl', rather than 'Shāl', and writes *bi-qibāʾ* ('at a distance') instead of *q-nyā/q-fyā*. Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, vol. 1 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), 402. For the pre-Islamic settlements at the site of Baghdad, including Sāl, see for instance: Duri, 'Baghdad', 31.

[34] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1977, 1:402.

1072) writes that 'he dug this pond for *sabīl*';[35] similarly Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī (d. 654/1256) states that he 'made a pond for *sabīl* in Baghdad'.[36] The pond was apparently big enough, or otherwise prominent, that the entire neighbourhood came to be called after it—a neighbourhood that was apparently quite lovely, if the poetry quoted by these authors is to be believed.[37]

As Ibn al-Faqīh mentions, Zalzal (a nickname, his given name was Manṣūr), a lute-player, was the endower of this pond. He was not just any lute-player: his playing was so good that it became proverbial.[38] He and the flautist Barṣawmā were reportedly members of the lower social classes of Kufa, and they were brought to Baghdad by the famous musician Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī (125–188/743–804), who taught both of them Arabic music.[39] Zalzal played at the court of Hārūn al-Rashīd, under whom he reached the highest courtly rank of musicians, although he was apparently already active in al-Mahdī's time (r. 158–169/775–785).[40] However, at some point he invoked the caliph's anger and was imprisoned, for some ten years according to al-Iṣfahānī, after which he was

[35] al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:401.

[36] Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān fī tawārīkh al-aʿyān*, ed. Muḥammad Barakāt, Kāmil al-Kharrāṭ, and ʿAmmār Rīḥāwī, vol. 12 (Damascus: Dār al-Risāla al-ʿĀlamiyya, 2013), 447.

[37] al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:401–402; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1977, 1:402; Sibṭ ibn al-Jawzī, *Mirʾāt al-zamān*, 12:447.

[38] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1977, 1:402. See also: Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 61. On Zalzal's biography, see for instance: Henry George Farmer, *A History of Arabian Music to the XIIth Century* (London: Luzac & Company, Ltd, 1973), 118–119; H.G. Farmer and E. Neubauer, 'Zalzal', in *EI2* http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_SIM_8105.

[39] Abū al-Faraj al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, vol. 5 (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub, 1932), 227; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1977, 1:402. See also: Farmer and Neubauer, 'Zalzal'. On Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, see for instance: Farmer, *A History*, 116–117; Hilary Kilpatrick, 'Ibrahim al-Mawsili', in *Dictionary of Literary Biography. Vol. 311, Arabic Literary Culture, 500–925*, ed. Michael Cooperson and Shawkat M. Toorawa (Farmington Hills, MI: Thomson Gale, 2005); Dwight F. Reynolds, *Medieval Arab Music and Musicians. Three Translated Texts* (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 5–7, 11–12, and the translation on pp. 13–106.

[40] Farmer and Neubauer, 'Zalzal'.

released, and both he and al-Mawṣilī were richly rewarded on the occasion.[41] Zalzal's social position was clearly based on personal talent, but also strongly reliant on personal relations. He was also clearly a social climber: he had come from a low social class, and professional musicians did not enjoy a great reputation in Abbasid Baghdad.[42]

Although there are various stories about Zalzal's musical activities at court, there is no report on the construction of his charitable initiative. The date of his death, and thereby the *terminus ad quem* for the pond, is also unclear.[43] However, he was clearly active in the last quarter of the second/eighth century, possibly into the early years of the ninth, and it was likely at the height of his career during the reign of al-Rashīd, with corresponding financial means, that he had the pond dug—either before his imprisonment, or after his release, perhaps using some of the reward he received on that occasion—so sometime between 170/786 and *c.* 188/803.

3.2   The Ḥawḍ Haylāna

A second body of water that the sources describe as a charitable initiative in the provision of water in early Abbasid Baghdad is the 'Ḥawḍ Haylāna', or 'Haylāna's Tank' on the east bank of the Tigris. One of three offshoots of the Nahr Mūsā, splitting off at the Al-Anṣār Bridge, ended in this tank, the other two emptying in the Ḥawḍ al-Anṣār and the Ḥawḍ Dāwud

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[41] al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 5:201–202; Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, 1977, 1:402; Farmer and Neubauer, 'Zalzal'. See: Reynolds, *Medieval Arab Music*, 58.

[42] George Dimitri Sawa, 'The Status and Roles of the Secular Musicians in the Kitāb Al-Aghānī (Book of Songs) of Abu al-Faraj al-Iṣbahānī (D. 356 A. H./967 A. D.)', *Asian Music* 17, no. 1 (1985): 69–82, here 70–75.

[43] Hārūn al-Rashīd took the throne in 786, but the much later author Ibn Taghrī Birdī (d. 815/1412) includes Zalzal among the deceased of 174/790–791 (Ibn Taghrībirdī, *al-Nujūm al-zāhira fī mulūk Miṣr wa-l-Qāhira*, ed. Muḥammad Ḥusayn Shams al-Dīn, vol. 2 [Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1992], 100), which is incompatible with the ten-year prison sentence. Farmer and Neubauer point to this problem and consequently suggest a date between *ca.* 185/801 and 193/809 (Farmer and Neubauer, 'Zalzal'); however, Ibrāhīm al-Mawṣilī, who relates a story about events after Zalzal's death, died in 188/803–804 (al-Iṣfahānī, *Kitāb al-Aghānī*, 5:254). See Reynolds, *Medieval Arab Music*, 102.

respectively.[44] Unlike in the case of Zalzal, the exact identification of this Haylāna is uncertain, as Ibn al-Faqīh indicates:

> Haylāna's Tank: people claim that Haylāna was a stewardess (*qayyima*) of al-Manṣūr. She dug this pool and made it for water provision (*wa-jaʿalathu li-l-sabīl*) and it was named after her. And Bāb al-Muḥawwal on the West side is an estate (*iqṭāʿ*) of Haylāna which was given to her by al-Manṣūr. It is [also] said that Haylāna was a slave (*jāriya*) of al-Rashīd and that the tank is named after her.[45]

The latter option is followed by some lines of poetry that al-Rashīd reportedly recited after she died. This confusion is not clarified by the later authors, who build on the same tradition: Yāqūt, for instance, shares the same structure, also opening with the description of a Haylāna who was a *qahramāna* (stewardess) of al-Manṣūr and who 'dug this tank on the east side and dedicated it to charitable purposes (*sabbalathu*)' followed by a narration on Hārūn al-Rashīd's grief. He also relates that by his time, writing in the 620s AH/1220s CE, the Ḥawḍ Dāwud had been destroyed,[46] but does not report anything similar for the Tank of Haylāna, which may suggest that it was still in use in the early seventh/thirteenth century. Although the authors are clearly not entirely sure about the historical circumstances of the tank, the confusion appears to revolve more around the exact identification of the Haylāna who founded this tank for water provision rather than there being any doubt that the tank was dug 'for sabīl'. So it appears that a water installation, the terminology of '*sabīl*'/'*sabbalathu*' suggesting this too was a *waqf*, was dug at the orders of a Haylāna who was active at court at some point between

[44] Suhrāb, *Kitāb ʿAjāʾib*, 130; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:435. The sources do not give much information on circumstances of the construction of the other two tanks. Very little mention is made of the Ḥawḍ al-Anṣār overall; the identification of the Dāwud in question is also unclear and authors give different options (Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 309; al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:414; See also: Le Strange, *Baghdad*, 223; Lassner, *Topography*, 264–265 n. 33).

[45] Ibn al-Faqīh, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, 308.

[46] Yāqūt al-Ḥamawī, *Muʿjam al-buldān*, vol. 2 (Beirut: Dār Ṣādir, 1977), 320. See also: al-Khaṭīb al-Baghdādī, *Taʾrīkh Madīnat al-Salām*, 1:414–415. On the position of *qahramāna*, albeit in a slightly later time period, see: Nadia Maria El-Cheikh, 'The Qahramâna in the Abbasid Court: Position and Functions', *Studia Islamica*, no. 97 (2003): 41–55.

the foundation of al-Ruṣāfa in 151/768 and 173/789–790, the year in which the second Haylāna died.[47]

Much like Zalzal, both Haylānas were members of the elite, in the sense that they could influence their social and economic, and perhaps even political, contexts, and here used their wealth to provide water to the community. But, also like Zalzal, their respective positions were reliant on others: al-Rashīd's Haylāna was enslaved, and the same may have applied to al-Manṣūr's stewardess. It is clear that at least some richer members of early Abbasid society wished to express their piety and generosity through the provision of water. While this expression of piety was likely the primary driver behind the foundation of these charitable enterprises, they could also have political and societal consequences and benefactors took these interlinked factors into consideration.[48] Both Zalzal and the Haylānas belonged to what Lev has described as 'the ruling circles': while they did not personally wield political authority, they did belong to the court.[49] As charitable deeds were highly valued by medieval Islamic society, they served to enhance a benefactor's position. Lev argues that charity could therefore be a powerful tool to integrate marginalised groups into society. Besides recent converts to Islam, he points specifically to eunuchs and enslaved women at court: through the social effects of charity, the community became aware of, and came to respect, them.[50] Given Zalzal and Haylāna's positions as social climbers, who were members of the elite but relied on others' patronage in order to do so, their water-providing *waqf*s appear to be an expression of piety as much as a way of cementing their respective social positions.

It is thus evident that charitable water provision, including via the institution of *waqf*, played a role in the water infrastructure of early Abbasid Baghdad, side by side with canals and installations constructed by the authorities and other private actors. Moreover, the Birkat Zalzal (last third of the second/late eighth-early ninth century) and the Ḥawḍ Haylāna (second half of the second/eighth century) are among the oldest

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[47] Ibn al-Sāʿī, *Nisāʾ al-khulafāʾ*, ed. Shawkat Toorawa (New York: New York University Press, 2015), 19.

[48] Lev, *Charity*, 28; Lev, 'Ethics and Practice', 607–608.

[49] Lev, *Charity*, 29, 35. Lev differentiates this from 'people of civilian society' involved in charity, such as merchants, administrators, teachers, and religious scholars.

[50] Lev, *Charity*, 39; Lev, 'Ethics and Practice', 615.

endowed waterworks that we know of.[51] Of course, of the water used for the approximately half a million people in Baghdad, only a small percentage came from Zalzal's and Haylāna's respective charitable initiatives. As described above, most inhabitants of the city would have relied on the canals, cisterns, and other elements within the city's network of water provision. Yet, their constructions were clearly and literally integrated into the wider water network: the pond and the tank that they had built, respectively, were fed directly by canals running through the city. Through their pious involvement in this 'best form of charity', these founders not only pleased God but also served citizens' needs and enhanced their own status in Baghdadi society, their endowments recalled by historians for centuries—even if they were not quite sure which Haylāna they ought to thank for the tank. The relative importance of such instances of charitable water provision to Baghdad remains unclear, unfortunately. The instances of charitable water provision discussed here all come from geographical descriptions of the city, which means that they discuss physical structures rather than processes in most cases, and especially lower key initiatives—such as water provision at mosques—are much harder to trace. Similarly, we lack *waqf* documents or other information in the sources about how exactly the foundations by Zalzal and Haylāna were managed or about how their waters were (envisioned to be) used. The source material for Mamluk Cairo, however, is much richer in this regard, and it is to there that we now turn.

4   Charity, Good Governance and the Provision of Water in Mamluk Cairo

4.1   *Diffusion of Waqf Foundations in Mamluk Cairo*

Like in Abbasid Baghdad, water structures supported by charitable foundations and embedded in the urban water system existed in Mamluk-era Cairo as well. The great abundance of chronicles and documentary sources from the Mamluk period (i.e. from the middle of the seventh/ thirteenth to the beginning of the tenth/sixteenth century) show us the

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[51] See Lev, *Charity*, 30–31, 75; Lev, 'Ethics and Practice', 612, discussing Abū Bakr al-Madharāʾī's drinking installation at Ramla in the early fourth/tenth century and Jaʿfar ibn Faḍl's mid-fourth/mid-tenth century well and seven cisterns in Fusṭāṭ. Other early examples include the endowments by Zubayda (al-Yaʿqūbī, *Mushākalat*, 26).

importance of water distribution as a form of piety and its pervasiveness in the charitable deeds of the elites. Both for this abundance of extant source material and for the different socio-political context, Mamluk Cairo represents an interesting term of comparison with Abbasid Baghdad as it allows us to see how the phenomenon of charitable water distribution developed in two different phases of Islamic history.

It must be said that, in Egypt, the institution of *waqf* was not used exclusively during the Mamluk period but made its first appearance soon after the Islamic conquest. Moreover, some of its earliest applications already involved the supply of water to the city—during the Abbasid period, for example, the financial official al-Mādharāʾī alienated the pond of al-Ḥabash and a hydraulic system connected to it.[52] Similarly, in the mid-fourth/mid-tenth century the vizier Jaʿfar ibn Faḍl endowed a water well and a system of seven cisterns in Fusṭāṭ.[53]

It was not until the Mamluk period, however (648–923/1250–1517) that the *waqf* reached an unprecedented peak in terms of legal development, variety of applications, and quantity of foundations. Some reforms implemented already under the sultanate of al-Ẓāhir Baybars al-Bunduqdārī (r. 658–676/1260–1277) had important consequences for the administration of charitable endowments, and they were likely among the factors that boosted the spreading of *waqf* foundations.[54]

During the Mamluk period, the military and civilian elite of Cairo endowed a great variety of properties (agricultural lands, residential buildings, baths, commercial and industrial structures). The revenues from these endowments benefited their households as well as the local community and allowed for the creation and development of religious institutions

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[52] Doris Behrens-Abouseif, 'Waḳf' in *EI2*, http://dx.doi.org.ru.idm.oclc.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1333.

[53] Lev, *Charity*, 75.

[54] One of such reforms involved the creation of a distinct office for the management of greater sultanic charitable foundations, and their separation from smaller familial (or semi-familial) foundations, managed autonomously by their own supervisors. See: Aḥmad ibn ʿAlī al-Qalqashandī, *Ṣubḥ al-aʿshā fī ṣināʿat al-inshāʾ*, ed. Muhammad Hussein Shams al-Din et al. (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2012), 4:39; Muhammad Amin, *al-Awqāf wa-l-ḥayyā al-ijtimāʿiyya fī Miṣr* (Cairo: Dār al-Nahḍa al-ʿArabiyya, 1980), 108. Another reform, namely the appointment of a chief *qāḍī* for each of the four religious schools (*madhhabs*), deeply influenced the life of *waqf* foundations as it allowed a bigger flexibility in the rules regulating the endowments. See: Yossef Rapoport, 'Royal Justice and Religious Law: Siyasah and Shariʿah under the Mamluks', *Mamlūk Studies Review* 16 (2012): 76.

(mosques, madrasas, and Qur'anic schools for orphans) and urban facilities. Especially from the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century, the alienation of assets through family *waqf*s also became a common way of securing an income for the families of the elite, as it protected their properties from over-taxation and confiscation, in a period when factional struggles within the ruling class exacerbated such practices.[55] Moreover, since the military was paid with the usufruct of state land allotments which returned to the Treasury (*bayt al-māl*) after the cessation of the tenant's service (due to his death or disgrace), more *amīr*s started buying their assigned plots and endowing them to their families—in this way, they prevented the state from taking back their allotments and protected their descendants from destitution.[56]

With the spread of charitable foundations nurtured by the elite, the institution of *waqf* became an essential part of Cairo life and penetrated deeply into society. Mamluk-era historiographers seem to express mixed opinions regarding the mushrooming of *waqf* foundations in the capital. While they condemned the abuses perpetrated by the authorities in the management of large religious foundations, they positively valued the effort shown by the members of the elite in the establishment of foundations and criticised individuals that did not manifest such concerns.[57] The historian Ibn Taghrī Birdī (814–874/1410–1470), for example, concludes his obituary of the influential amīr and *atābak* (commander) Yashbak al-Sūdunī (d. 849/1445) saying that 'despite his great power (*wa-maʿa hādha al-tamakkun al-ʿaẓīm*) he never did any of the advised good deeds in his life (*lam yafʿal fī ḥayātihi min al-maʿrūf mā yudhakkaru bihi*), such as [founding] *sabīl*s and mosques, as is customary for the great rulers (*ʿalā ʿādat ʿuẓamāʾ al-mulūk*)'.[58]

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[55] The recent historiographical debate about the phenomenon of *waqf* 'booming' in the Mamlūk sultanate considers religious zeal, the rulers' need for legitimation and popular support, and the urge to find a financial shield against political upheavals as the most important elements motivating the ruling elite and the wealthy citizens to establish *waqf* foundations. See: Muhammad Amin, *Izdihār al-awqāf fī ʿaṣr salāṭīn al-Mamālīk: dirāsa tārīkhiyya wathāʾiqiyya* (Riyadh: Wizārat al-Awqāf, 2001), 243–246; Daisuke Igarashi, *Land Tenure and Mamluk Waqf* (Berlin: EB-Verlag, 2014), 18.

[56] Igarashi, *Land Tenure*, 5–7, 21.

[57] Amin, *Izdihār*, 254.

[58] Ibn Taghrī Birdī, *Ḥawādith al-duhūr* (ʿĀlim al-Kutub, 1990), 131. Interestingly, in commenting Yashbak's lack of charitable endeavours, Ibn Taghrī Birdī uses a specific group, the *ʿuẓamāʾ al-mulūk* (i.e. the highest members of the ruling class), as a term

Such criticism for Yashbak's lack of charitable initiative shows that the author considered the creation of endowments a customary practice, at least among the most influential members of the ruling elite. It also indicates that charitable deeds were somehow expected from people having the same power and affluence (*tamakkun*) as Yashbak. The use of the term *maʿrūf* (good) echoes the Qurʾanic phrasing for the collective moral imperative of the Muslim community: 'commanding right and forbidding wrong' (*al-amr bi-l-maʿrūf wa-l-nahī ʿan-al-munkar*).[59] The description of such good deeds as 'recommended' (*mā yudhakkaru bihi*) seems to endorse this reading.

Ibn Taghrī Birdī's statement also suggests that creating water-supply facilities (particularly the *sabīl*, or fountain), together with building mosques, was among the most recommendable and widespread types of charitable deeds. By the time the historian wrote these words, the *sabīl* had in fact become one of the most popular types of *waqf*-financed water installation in Cairo. This was due to the water scarcity in the area, the great demand for installations storing and distributing water and the high value Islamic tradition attributed to offering water as a form of charity. In the following section, we shall explore in more detail the function of the *sabīl* and the significance it acquired in ninth/fifteenth century Cairo.

4.2   Landmarks of Charity: Function and Significance of the Cairene Sabīls

Especially from the ninth/fifteenth century onward, fresh water supply became a primary object of charity in Cairo. *Waqf*s often allotted funds for the periodical distribution of potable water, or for the building and upkeep of a special type of water fountain, the *sabīl*. The urge to provide such services was partially dictated by the difficulties of the city's water situation. The enormous medieval metropolis relied on Nile water

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of comparison. As discussed above, the term 'elite(s)' encompasses various social groups that medieval Islamic sources indicated more specifically (*amirs, ʿulamāʾ*, merchants and influential women, members of the official administration, etc.). It is also relevant to point out that the primary sources for the medieval Islamic World generally focus on the agency of the individuals, and rarely use more general terms indicating the social stratum we indicate here as 'elite'. See: Hagemann, Mewes, and Verkinderen, 'Studying Elites', 19–24.

[59] Michael Cook, 'al-Nahy ʿan al-Munkar', in *EI2*, http://dx.doi.org.ru.idm.oclc.org/10.1163/1573-3912_islam_COM_1437.

for drinking purposes, as the wells provided unpalatable brackish water, unsuitable for human consumption.[60] Water, therefore, had to be transported from the river, a tiresome job done mostly by watercarriers who sold water in the streets or delivered it to private residences.[61] However, by the beginning of the ninth/fifteenth century, successive environmental calamities and the westward recession of the river flow had made the service of watercarriers unaffordable for a large part of the population.[62] The unstable government could not cope with the situation and, if anything, made it worse.[63] In this scenario, it seems plausible that the elite charitable initiatives might have at least partially mitigated the problem of water provision. The *sabīl*, which gradually became a widespread structure, represented one of the ways to intervene in the water provision of the city.

Built on a large underground cistern (*ṣahrīj*), the Cairene *sabīl* was a water distribution chamber usually located at the corner of larger religious buildings.[64] It faced the street on one or more sides; big iron windows separated it from the thoroughfare but allowed direct communication between the passers-by and the inside of the room. Above the *sabīl*, a second floor often served as a Qur'anic school for orphans (*maktab*, or *kuttāb*). The cistern was normally filled through small openings placed at street level, in which water carriers periodically deposited fresh water collected during the annual plenitude of the Nile. From there, water was manually transferred into the *sabīl*, poured over a *shādhirwān* (a slanted marble carved surface which functioned as both a filter and a

[60] Paulina Lewicka, *Food and Foodways of Medieval Cairenes: Aspects of Life in an Islamic Metropolis of the Eastern Mediterranean* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 457.

[61] For the services offered by the water carriers, see for example: Ibn al-Ukhuwwa, *Maʿālim al-qurba fī aḥkām al-ḥisba* (Cairo: General Egyptian Book Organization, 1976), 348–350; Ibn Bassām, *Nihāyat al-rutba fī ṭalab al-ḥisba* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 2003), 300–301; Ibn al-Ḥājj, *al-Madkhal*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Maktabat Dār al-Turāth), 176–181.

[62] Al-Maqrīzī, *Kitāb al-Sulūk li-maʿrifat duwal al-mulūk*, vol. 6 (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-ʿIlmiyya, 1997), 29; Ibn Ḥajar, *Inbāʾ al-ghumr*, vol. 2 (Cairo: Wizārat al-Awqāf, 1998), 105.

[63] Amalia Levanoni, 'Urban Water Management in the Medieval Middle East: The Case of Mamluk Cairo', in *Egypt and Syria under Mamluk Rule*, ed. Amalia Levanoni (Leiden: Brill, 2021), 260.

[64] There are also some self-standing *sabīl*s (although not very common). A fine example is the *sabīl* of Sultan Qāytbāy in Shāriʿ Ṣalība.

cooler) and finally it flowed into smaller basins from which cups were filled and offered to passers-by through the iron windows. A special employee, the *muzammalātī*, had the responsibility of fetching and distributing the water from the cistern and cleaning the structure and its accessories[65] (Figs. 2 and 3).

The *modus operandi* of the *sabīl*s and the remuneration of its employees were established by the individual founders. So, for example, the physician and bureaucrat Fatḥ Allāh ibn Muʿtaṣim ibn Nafīs al-Ṭabrīzī (759–816/1357–1413) stipulates in his *waqf* deed the working conditions of the two *sabīl*s he endowed in 810/1408:

> And from this [revenue] pay the janitor (*bawwāb*) appointed by the *nāẓir* (…) as doorkeeper and *muzammalātī* for taking care of locking and opening the gate of the shrine, transferring the water from the big cistern of the Sufi lodge (*khānqāh*) and the new cistern (…) to the *sabīl* of the new shrine, and for serving it all to people from late morning (*ḍuḥā*) till early afternoon (*ʿaṣr*) every day of the week, and the opposite in the holy month of Ramadan, from sunset to the time people finish the *tarāwīḥ*.[66] (…) The total amount [to be paid] each year is a thousand five hundred and sixty dirhams, of which seven hundred and twenty are for the janitor-ship, and eight hundred and forty are for transferring of the water from the cisterns to the *sabīl* and serving it as described above (…)
>
> A yearly amount of three hundred dirhams shall be paid for the mugs and clay vessels, the sponges and brooms, and the tools to draw water and for the price of the oil for the lightening during Ramadan and of what is needed for transporting and serving the water.
>
> A righteous man shall be paid six hundred dirham per year to work as *muzammalātī* and take care of transporting water from the cistern that is in Cairo in the Suwayqat al-Masʿūdī to the nearby *sabīl*, and distributing it from midday (*ẓuhr*) to early afternoon (*ʿaṣr*) every day of the week, and in the month of Ramadan from sunset until the time people finish the *tarāwīḥ* prayer every night of the week.
>
> A yearly amount of two hundred and fifty dirham must be paid for the tools for drawing water and for the cups and the pottery vessels, the sponges and brooms, and for the oil vases for the illumination during the

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[65] Dina Bakhoum, 'The Waqf System: Maintenance, Repair and Upkeep', in *Held in Trust. Waqf in the Islamic World*, ed. Pascale Ghazaleh (Cairo: AUC Press, 2011), 186.

[66] The *tarāwīḥ* is prayer performed during the nights of Ramadan. Its recitation ends shortly before dawn.

Fig. 2 *Sabīl* of Sultan Qāytbāy (r. 872–901 AH/1468–1496 CE). Built in 884 AH/1479 CE, it is one of the finest extant Mamluk-era *sabīls* and it is characterised by the peculiarity of being a self-standing *sabīl*, while other structures of this type are generally embedded in bigger religious buildings (Angela Isoldi)

Fig. 3 *Sabīl* of Sultan Qāytbāy (interior). The finely carved marble slab (Ar: *salsabīl* or *shādhirwān*) where water was poured to be cleansed and cooled down before being offered to passers-by (Angela Isoldi)

month of Ramadan, and for any other tools needed for distributing water from the *sabīl* that is in Cairo (…).[67]

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[67] DW 20/355. For a partial edition of this document see Doris Behrens Abouseif, *Fatḥ Allāh and Abū Zakariyya: Physicians under the Mamluks* (Cairo: IFAO, 1987), 39–44.

The conditions described in Fatḥ Allāh's deed are very similar to those stipulated for other *sabīl*s in several ninth/fifteenth-century Egyptian *waqf* documents. The excerpt reported above also shows to what extent the functioning of a *sabīl* was regulated by the founders, and how its structure conditioned people's access to fresh water. With its precise schedule, the iron windows protecting its inner space, and the presence of a 'righteous' *muzammalātī* distributing water, the *sabīl* was not just a public fountain, but a more complex structure with a deeper intrinsic meaning.

As argued by Saleh Lamei Mostafa, some architectural elements of the *sabīl* can be interpreted as symbolic references to Qur'anic passages on water and water giving. For instance, the *shādhirwān* on which water is poured echoes the Qur'anic description of drinking water as 'visible running water'.[68] Similarly, the fact that *sabīl*s were often attached to larger religious buildings, or associated with Qur'anic schools for orphans, suggests that they were not seen as ordinary facilities, but as a profoundly sacred form of charity.[69] All this is obviously linked with the high value Islam attributes to water provision as a form of charity.

Other than a distinct religious meaning, the *sabīl* carried a socio-political significance too. Visible from multiple sides, placed often at the corners of monumental façades or in similarly noticeable locations, and sometimes decorated with exquisite designs and inscriptions, *sabīl*s intended to be noticeable landmarks. At the same time, the iron windows, the fixed operating timespan and the necessary presence of an attendant limited and policed the access to the object of charity itself—fresh water. Considered from this perspective, *sabīl*s can be interpreted as a combined representation of the elites' piety, munificence, and power. Thus, the importance attributed during the Mamluk period to the *sabīl* might have been related not only to its charitable function, but also to its relevance in the political discourse of the urban elites.

4.3   Charity Makes the Difference

Ibn Taghrī Birdī's remark on Yashbak al-Sūdūnī's lack of concern for charitable deeds triggers some questions regarding the endowing practices of

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[68] Lamei Mostafa, 'The Cairene Sabil', 33–42.

[69] Lamei Mostafa, 'The Cairene Sabil', 38.

the Mamluk ruling class, especially because this historian is not the only author commenting on the philanthropic endeavours of the elites. Does such interest by Mamluk-era authors reflect a specific mindset regarding the responsibilities of the ruling class? Were charitable deeds considered as a sort of duty of the wealthy and powerful?

The number of *waqf*s established during the ninth/fifteenth century indicates that founding endowments had become a customary practice for the urban elites. However, the nature and functions of the individual foundations varied greatly, and so did the social position of the founders themselves. In the diversified context of these endowments, interesting patterns of correspondence between the endowers' social status and the nature of their *waqf*s can be discerned.

Interesting observations, in this sense, have been done by Daisuke Igarashi in his case study on the endowment strategy of Qijmās al-Isḥāqī (d. 892/1487). This *amīr* rose to a prominent political position in the Mamluk Sultanate, eventually becoming governor of Damascus in 885/1480. The biographies and obituaries of Qijmās written by his contemporaries praise his brave and humble personality, as well as his piety and his many charitable deeds. Not all of his foundations, however, were meant for the benefit of the citizens. In fact, Igarashi's study shows that the purpose of Qijmās' endowments changed together with his social status. At the earliest stages of his career, Qijmās established a familial *waqf* to secure assets for himself and his household, while the *waqf*s he founded when he rose to more prestigious positions showed a gradual tendency towards promoting public interests.[70] For example, the *waqf* for his tomb, which he established in 872/1467 after his promotion to a higher military rank, included a water-cistern (*ṣahrīj*) for public use and a *muzammalātī* for the distribution of water at his shrine. Only 10 per cent of the revenues of this *waqf* were actually spent for charitable purposes, but it is still relevant that Qijmās included water distribution as soon as he achieved a more prestigious position. Subsequently, when he became viceroy of Alexandria, he equipped the city with a number of *sabīl*s and finally in 884/1479, after being promoted to *amīr akhūr kabīr* (great supervisor of the royal stables), he endowed the famous religious complex in al-Darb al-Aḥmar (in Cairo), which included a mosque-madrasa and a

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[70] Daisuke Igarashi, 'The Waqf-Endowment Strategy of a Mamluk Military Man: the Contexts, Motives, and Purposes of the Endowments of Qijmās Al-Isḥāqī (d. 1487)', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 82, no. 1 (2019): 39–44.

sabīl-maktab.[71] The *sabīl* thus appeared in Qijmās' endowments as his prestige increased.

There are other instances in which public figures added a *sabīl* to their endowments following a political advancement. The sultan al-Ashraf Ināl (r. 857–865/1453–1461), for example, added a Sufi lodge, a mosque-madrasa and a *sabīl* to his funerary complex in Cairo when he became the ruler.[72] The abovementioned Fatḥ Allāh endowed his *sabīl*s in Cairo after he achieved the powerful position of *kātib al-sirr* (Chief Secretary).[73] Overall, the great majority of the extant *sabīl*s of Cairo built throughout the ninth/fifteenth century were part of endowments established by the urban dignitaries.[74] This not only shows the extent of the city's elites involvement with charitable water distribution, but also reveals a pattern of association between great wealth and power and the construction of *sabīl*s. Ibn Taghrī Birdī's indignation at Yashbak stems from the fact that, by his time, it was a consolidated custom of the ruling elite to devote at least part of their wealth to a charitable scope, and particularly to the construction of *sabīl*s.

We could argue, therefore, that *sabīl*s were a way to physically represent shared ideals of good governance. Major political treatises written during the Mamluk period, such as *al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya* (Treatise on the government of the religious law) by the religious scholar Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728/1328), and the *Kitāb Muʿīd al-niʿam wa-mubīd al-niqām* (The restorer of favours and the restrainer of chastisements) by Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī (d. 771/1370), formulated the theoretical frameworks of equity and justice for the Muslim community. Ibn Taymiyya equates justice to a lawful balance of rights and claims, in which everybody gives and asks according to his social position.[75] He also attributes the value of religious duties to the principle of good governance.[76] On the other hand, al-Subkī states that the authorities should keep the common good as a

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[71] Igarashi, 'The Waqf-Endowment Strategy', 44–46.

[72] Caroline Williams, *Islamic Monuments in Cairo: The Practical Guide* (Cairo: AUC Press, 2002), 209.

[73] Abouseif, *Fatḥ Allāh*, 20.

[74] This partial survey is based on Williams, *Islamic Monuments in Cairo.*

[75] Caterina Bori, *One or Two Versions of al-Siyāsa al-sharʿiyya of Ibn Taymiyya? And What Do They Tell Us?* (Bonn: ASK Working Paper, 2016), 11.

[76] Rapoport, 'Royal Justice and Religious Law', 93.

priority and use their means for fulfilling the needs of the community.[77] On the basis of the necessary correspondence of *niʿma* (divine grace) and *shukr* (the individual's gratitude to the divine), which is the fundament of his work, al-Subkī treats good governance as the authorities' duty towards God. Charitable foundations, and particularly those devoted to religious institutions and water supply, nicely fit into this political philosophy due to their pious character and social significance.

5   Conclusions

In this chapter, we have looked at two different types of charitable water provision: the tank and pond endowed in early Abbasid Baghdad by Haylāna and Zalzal respectively—bodies of water embedded in the urban water network—and the highly organised *sabīl*s of Mamluk Cairo, where passers-by were offered cups of fresh water. Due to the highly sacred value of water provision as a form of charity, and to the environmental challenges of water management in medieval Cairo, the many charitable endowments of the city (the number of which increased throughout the ninth/fifteenth century) often included water distribution and water facilities. In particular, *sabīl*s gained a special significance. Together with mosques, they became the structure most commonly financed by the *waqf*'s of high-ranking political figures. Their location, structure and embellishment show that *sabīl*s should not be considered as simple water facilities, but as symbolic elements of the elites' political discourse, physically representing ideals of piety, power, munificence, and good governance in the urban space.

On the one hand, the many narrative and documentary sources we possess from Mamluk Cairo indicate that charitable water distribution became so pervasive in the endowments of the elite that it became somehow expected from the most prominent figures of the ruling class to devote part of their means to the construction and maintenance of *sabīl*s. As for Abbasid Baghdad, on the other hand, fewer examples of charitable water provision are attested, although this is at least in part due to a comparative lack of primary source material. But from the cases discussed above, it seems to be the case that early Abbasid endowers of water facilities were not so much part of the ruling elite, like their Mamluk

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[77] Tāj al-Dīn al-Subkī, *Kitāb Muʾīd al-niʿam wa-mubīd al-niqām*, ed. David W. Myhrman (London: Luzac, 1908), 49.

counterparts, but rather social climbers from the circle around them. Close to the rulers, but not themselves in an official position of power, their generosity demonstrated their piety, but may also have served to enhance their status in society—something especially attractive for those who were members of marginalised groups, such as enslaved people. In both cases, the cities' inhabitants benefited, and so did the reputation of the donors.

Throughout the centuries, we thus see different elite groups active in the provision of water through charity, which formed a meaningful part of the water supply in Baghdad and Cairo. In Baghdad, the Pond of Zalzal and the Haylāna's Tank may have been used by individual citizens or watercarriers to fill up waterskins to be used for consumption or other purposes, even if it reflected only a small percentage of the city's use. Cairenes were offered a drink of fresh water when passing by a *sabīl*. Ultimately, the symbolic value might have been higher than the practical, but given the natural difficulties of water supply in these two cities, these endowments constituted a welcome contribution to these cities' systems of water provision.

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Thinking about Urbanity, Urban Settlements, Literacy, and Exclusion: The Case of Medieval Scandinavia

Marco Mostert

1   Introduction

The positive notions an urban society entertains of the 'citizenship' shared by its members is often twinned with negative notions concerning those who do not belong to that urban society. More often than not, those who are excluded from 'citizenship' and the concomitant ideals of civilisation (which in Europe from classical Antiquity onwards derive from forms of what was called *urbanitas*) are the inhabitants of the countryside. They could be defined by *rusticitas*, a generic term used for the (usually negative) qualities associated with peasants. *Urbanitas* was associated with uses of language, which could include the uses of language in its written form. This led to the association of peasants with illiteracy—a notion that is

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still prevalent among many students of the Middle Ages.[1] However, the ability to use the written word actively was not restricted to urban centres, even if in cities and towns one was more likely to meet people who were capable of using the written word than in the countryside.

These observations give rise to several questions. Did the perceived absence of *urbanitas* in the countryside lead to forms of exclusion of those accused of *rusticitas* by urbanites? And, if so, did the alleged absence of literacy in the countryside exacerbate the disdain for peasants? Answers to these questions will be sought through a consideration of urban literacy in medieval Scandinavia.[2] This may lead to a re-evaluation of the associated notions of *urbanitas*, *rusticitas*, and literacy. But first we need to consider the question of what a medieval 'town' or 'city' could be, as not all towns—or even cities—could boast an 'urban' culture which might lead to the harbouring of negative notions about the inhabitants of the countryside.

2   What Makes a Medieval Settlement a Town or City?

If one thinks of a medieval city, one most likely conjures up city walls and a city charter in which the city's lord gives privileges to the community of burghers. However, medieval cities show a large variety according to their main functions (episcopal cities, residences, harbour cities, trade cities), their lords (royal cities, episcopal cities, and 'free cities'), their numbers of inhabitants, etc. Geographers have developed a 'central place theory', which aims to distinguish the various forms of human settlement according to their numbers of inhabitants and the functions they

[1] See: *Oral and Written Communication in the Medieval Countryside: Peasants, Clergy, and Noblemen*, ed. Anna Adamska and Marco Mostert, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 45 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2023).

[2] *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, ed. Kasper H. Andersen and Jeppe Büchert Netterstrøm, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 53 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), is the only volume dealing with the topic of medieval urban literacy in the Nordic world. In the literature about urban history, however, one can also find useful information. See: Hans Krongaard Kristensen and Bjørn Poulsen, *Danmarks byer i middelalderen* (Aarhus: Universitetsforlag, 2016), which deals with urban development generally, and gives excellent photographs of selected documents (notably at 111, 147, 149–151, 154, and 252).

fulfil in their region.[3] In this way they can distinguish hamlets, villages, towns, cities, and metropolises. The more functions a settlement fulfils within its region or supra-regionally, the more 'urban' it is. Some medieval archaeologists have embraced central place theory as well. In 1976 Martin Biddle, for instance, proposed twelve criteria for studying post-Roman towns: defences; a planned street-system; one or more markets; a mint; legal autonomy; a role as a 'central place', a relatively large and dense population; a diversified economic base; plots and houses of 'urban' type; social differentiation; a complex religious organisation; and a juridical centre.[4] This list of features was based on the perception of continuity between Roman and post-Roman towns. Other archaeologists hold with different models, which also allow for the growth of towns and cities where no continuity between Roman and post-Roman settlements can be observed.[5]

One can observe a caesura in the history of medieval towns around 1150: after that date, cities were founded because the older cities had proved themselves to be beneficial to their lords. This led to the founding of cities (or at least of settlements which obtained city charters from the

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[3] This theory was first developed by Walter Christaller, *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1933). It was originally thought of as a contribution to economic geography; its influence in geography generally cannot be overestimated. For a survey of its use in archaeology, see: Athanasios K. Vionis and Giorgos Papantoniou, 'Central Place Theory Reloaded and Revised: Political Economy and Landscape Dynamics in the *Longue Durée*', *Land* 8, no. 2 (2019), retrieved via https://www.mdpi.com/2073-445X/8/2/36. For a general introduction to the theory, see: Leslie J. King, *Central Place Theory, Scientific Geography Series* 1 (Beverly Hills: SAGE Publications, 1984).

[4] Martin Biddle, 'Towns', in *The Archaeology of Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D.M. Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 99–150, here 100. See also: John Schofield and Heiko Steuer, 'Urban Settlement', in *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe*, 1, *Eighth to Twelfth Century AD*, ed. James Graham-Campbell and Magdalena Valor, *Acta Jutlandica* LXXXIII:1, *Humanities Series* 79 (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2007), 111–153, at 111. See also: Hans Andersson, Barbara Scholkmann et al., 'Towns', in *The Archaeology of Medieval Europe*, 2, *Twelfth to Sixteenth Centuries*, ed. Martin Carver and Jan Klápště, *Acta Jutlandica, Humanities Series* 2011/2009 (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2011), 370–407.

[5] See on this matter: e.g. Cristina La Rocca, 'La trasformazione del territorio in Occidente', in *Morfologie sociali e culturale in Europa fra Tarda Antiquità e Alto Medioevo*, *Settimane di studi del Centro italiano di studi sull'alto medioevo* 45, 2 vols. (Spoleto: Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1998), vol. 1: 257–291.

start, in the hope that they might develop into veritable cities) in areas of Europe where previously urban life had been exiguous at best.[6]

In the Middle Ages, starting from post-Roman times and continuing well into early modern times, the settlements known as towns or cities could be asked to fulfil a selection of the following functions, either locally, regionally, or supra-regionally: the exercise of power; jurisdiction; defence; organisation of religious life; central roles in the economy; cultural and educational roles; roles in sociability. Not all towns or cities did fulfil all of these roles at all times, or at the same level. Considering their educational roles, they might have been restricted to parish schools, but might have extended to universities or the university-like *studia* of the mendicant orders as well. It is interesting to observe that many of these functions, even when they might be exercised without recourse to writing, could be helped by use of the written word.

3   URBANITAS

Already at the time of Plautus (c. 250–184 BCE) Roman city dwellers were expected to show good manners at all times. This means that there were already standards of *urbanitas* ('urbanity') in place, which could be contrasted with the rudeness, roughness, and boorishness of people in the countryside. By the time of Cicero (106–143 BCE) two kinds of existence, a city life and a country life, had crystallised.[7] By the eighth century CE, the Latin language could use the words *urbanitas* and *rusticitas* to signify a double norm in the use of that language itself.[8]

In the early Middle Ages, the term *rusticus* was used to denote peasants. It had acquired the pejorative connotation of stupidity and

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[6] Heinz Stoob, 'Stadtformen und städtisches Leben im späten Mittelalter', in *Die Stadt. Gestalt und Wandel bis zum industriellen Zeitalter*, ed. Heinz Stoob (Cologne and Vienna: Böhlau, 1979), 156–193.

[7] Edwin S. Ramage, *Urbanitas. Ancient Sophistication and Refinement* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973), 29–30, 67–68.

[8] Gustav Inichen, 'Zwischen Latein und frühem Romanisch (Die Schwelle um 800 n. Chr.)', in *Text-Etymologie. Untersuchungen zu Textkörper und Textinhalt. Festschrift für Heinrich Lausberg zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. Arnold Arens (Stuttgart: F. Steiner, 1987), 14–18, here 15. See also: Mary Alberi, 'The Patristic and Anglo-Latin Origins of Alcuin's Concept of Urbanity', *Journal of Medieval Latin* 3 (1993), 95–112, on the development of the Christian concept of *urbanitas*, in which the linguistic and moral superiority of *urbanitas* is coming to the fore.

barbarism. Medieval peasants could be characterised as insufficiently Christian, as practitioners of superstitious rites. Already Augustine (354–430) had used *rusticus* with the meaning of 'ignorant' in contradistinction to *urbanus*, 'civilised'. This led to peasants being thought of as ignorant, materialistic, and negligent in religion.[9] Not only town dwellers might harbour such feelings. Other social groups could share in these sentiments, such as chivalrous knights, whose *curialitas* took over much of the depreciation that had already found a place in *urbanitas*. By the twelfth century *urbanus* had become a synonym for *eruditus* ('learned'), which presupposed that someone who was *urbanus* was also literate.[10]

Do we encounter the use of *urbanus* or *rusticus* with these meanings or connotations also with Scandinavian or Nordic town dwellers? The dictionary of Swedish Medieval Latin mentions only the meaning of 'farmer' for *rusticus*, and the pejorative connotations that we have encountered from Antiquity onwards are wholly absent.[11] There are two good reasons for this absence.

[9] The references to the sources using this terminology can be found, with translations, in: Paul Freedman, *Images of the Medieval Peasant. Figurae: Reading Medieval Culture* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), 10, 137–138, referring to Gerhard Köbler, '"Bauer" (*agricola*, *colonus*, *rusticus*) im Frühmittelalter', in *Wort und Begriff 'Bauer'. Zusammenfassender Bericht über das Kolloquium der Kommission für die Altertumskunde Mittel- und Nordeuropas*, ed. Reinhard Wenskus et al., *Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, series 3, Abhandlungen* 89 (Göttingen: Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen, 1975), 230–245. See also Rudi Künzel, *The Plow, the Pen and the Sword. Images and Self-Images of Medieval People in the Low Countries, Routledge Research in Medieval Studies* 12 (London/New York: Routledge, 2018), 60–61.

[10] See for references to the sources: Thomas Zotz, '*Urbanitas*. Zur Bedeutung und Funktion einer antiken Wertvorstellung innerhalb der höfischen Kultur des hohen Mittelalters', in *Curialitas. Studien zu Grundfragen der höfisch-ritterlichen Kultur*, ed. Josef Fleckenstein, *Veröffentlichungen des Max-Planck-Instituts für Geschichte* 100 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1990), 392–451.

[11] U. Westerbergh, *Glossarium Mediae Latinitatis Sueciae* (Stockholm, 1968–), II.5, s.v. The dictionary has not yet reached *urbanus*. B. Friis Johansen et al., *Lexicon Mediae Latinitatis Danicae. Ordbog over dansk middelalderlatin*, 1.1- (Aarhus, 1988–), has not reached *rusticus* yet.

4   Towns in the Nordic World

The forms of 'urban' literacy did not play a role in any 'urbanity' that might have been used to exclude certain groups of town dwellers. Mainland Scandinavia consists for the present purposes of present-day Denmark (including the historic duchy of Schleswig), Norway, Sweden, and Finland. Iceland is of no interest, as there were no towns there in the Middle Ages. When we look at the map of towns in the Nordic kingdoms (Fig. 1), we see that most of them were rather small. Bergen, the largest town in Norway, in the Middle Ages never exceeded 10,000 inhabitants. In the late fifteenth century, Stockholm had about 7,000 inhabitants, and Copenhagen probably even fewer. The towns generally had functions in the exercise of power, for the most part royal power, as secure trading conditions at specified sites were guaranteed by the representatives of the king. There were Christians in some of the early towns, and churches were built during the ninth century in Hedeby, Ribe, and Birka. Around 855 a plot of land was granted by a Danish king at Ribe for the building of a cathedral. A major wave of town foundations took place in the period 950–1250, at the same time as the general European urban boom. This is also the first clear marker of the Scandinavian realms being more deeply integrated into wide-ranging networks of trade and communication.[12]

However, urban populations were anything but numerically dominant in comparison with rural populations, nor indeed did they obtain absolute economic dominance in society. By the fifteenth century, the countryside and the peasantry were integrated into the system of urban literacy. Peasants possessed documents and could have their own seals. No sharp contrast between town and countryside should therefore be assumed in the matter of literacy skills.[13] Here, as can be observed elsewhere in medieval Europe as well, there is no clear distinction between 'urban literacy' and 'countryside literacy'; and forms and uses of writing that were to be found in the towns and the few cities could on occasion also be found in villages and hamlets.

[12] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, ed. Kasper H. Andersen, Jeppe Büchert Netterstrøm, Lisbeth Imer, Bjørn Paulsen, and Rikke Steenholt Olesen, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 53 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 12–15.

[13] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 14.
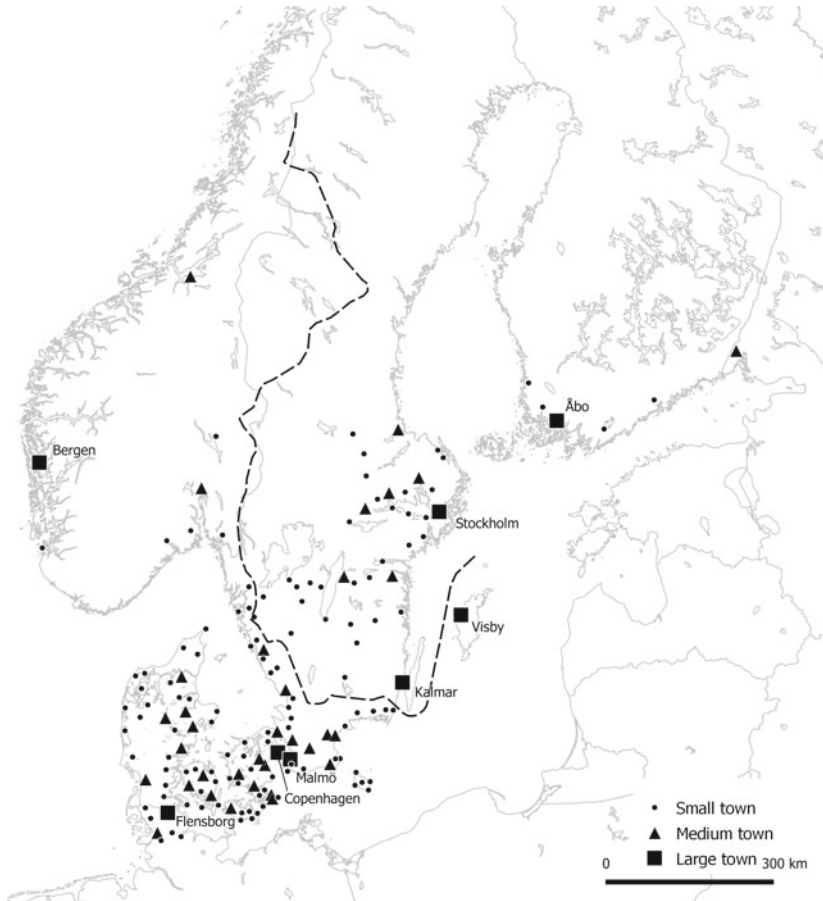
Fig. 1 Map of the towns in the Nordic kingdoms. Casper Andersen, Archaeological IT, Aarhus University and Moesgaard Museum (Source Anders Andrén, *Den urbana scenen. Städer och samhälle i det medeltida Danmark, Acta archaeologica Lundensia. Series in octavo* 13 [Bonn: Rudolf Habelt Verlag, and Malmö: CWK Gleerup, 1985], appendix)

In Scandinavia as elsewhere, a clear distinction existed between those who did not belong to the elites of those whose name was mentioned in the town register, the burgesses, and the rest, including those in the margins of urban society.[14] And even if 'urban' literate behaviour and its products may not have contributed to looking down upon less literate townspeople, general forms of literate behaviour that were not specific to towns may have done so nevertheless. We will come back to this later. First, we need to touch upon a particularity of the Nordic World: the existence of a vernacular literacy using runes.

5   Vernacular Languages in the Nordic World

A perceived lack of literate accomplishments in the vernacular may have been a second reason for the different 'urbanity' of the elites of Scandinavian towns. Six vernaculars were spoken in the Nordic World in the Middle Ages: Danish, Swedish, Old Norse, Low German, Finnish and Sami. With the exception of the last two, Finnish and Sami, they were also written. To these six vernaculars, Latin was added as well.[15] Manuscripts in Latin dominate the texts that have come down to us from the earlier medieval period (c. 1050–1200), especially in Denmark, even if the vernacular does also appear early on in the mainly Latin manuscripts. As a literate religion, Christianity stood in a position of decisive contrast to the pre-Christian forms of religion which it replaced in Scandinavia. As a result, the introduction of Medieval Latin written culture was integral to the process of conversion that had begun in the ninth century. Christianity

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[14] On the margins of society, including urban society, see: Marco Mostert, 'Studying Communication in the Margins of Medieval Society', in *Strangers at the Gate! Multidisciplinary Explorations of Communities, Borders, and Othering in Medieval Western Europe*, ed. S.C. Thomson, *Explorations in Medieval Culture* 21 (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2022), 23–40.

[15] Marco Mostert, 'Linguistics of Contact in the Northern Seas', in *Empires of the Sea. Maritime Power Networks in World History*, *Cultural Interactions in the Mediterranean* 4, ed. Rolf Strootman, Floris van den Eijnde, and Roy van Wijk (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020), 179–193, put the six vernaculars in a wider linguistic context. For Latin, see: Paul Lehmann, 'Skandinaviens Anteil an der lateinischen Literatur und Wissenschaft des Mittelalters', in Id., *Erforschung des Mittelalters. Ausgewählte Abhandlungen und Aufsätze*, 5 vols. (Stuttgart: Hiersemann, 1941–1962), vol. 5, 275–429; Alf Önnerfors, 'Geistige Ausbildung und lateinische Ausdrucksfähigkeit der skandinavischen Gelehrten im Mittelalter', in Id., *Mediaevalia. Abhandlungen und Aufsätze, Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters* 6 (Frankfurt am Main/Berne/Las Vegas: Lang, 1977), 202–220.

and the Church were closely linked to urbanism from the outset. Towns became the centres of the Scandinavian episcopal sees. All Scandinavian sees (with the exception of Børglum in Denmark) were either integrated in pre-existant urban communities or virtually constituted them. From the thirteenth century onwards, the mendicant orders joined the secular clergy in the episcopal towns. The metropolitan sees knew practically the same level of scholarship as comparable diocesan centres elsewhere in Europe. Schooling was often an urban phenomenon. Citizens increasingly sent their children to the ecclesiastical schools to get an education.[16]

Maybe this development in Latin-script literacy led to the demise of runic script in Scandinavia? But runic writing did survive the advent of Christianity, royal administration, and the introduction of Latin literacy, simply because the introduction of Latin and Latin script did not compete with the kind of writing that runes were used for.[17] Runes were mainly used for texts in the vernacular but could also be used for Latin texts. In the towns, many people used them for short messages. This urban use has been shown to be more prevalent than had been thought before the development of urban archaeology. Runes have developed to write on hard surfaces; the contents of runic messages were not necessarily different from those written in other available scripts, and neither was the choice of their language. They were easily learned, it seems, by 'trying your knife'. No formal schooling was needed for carving runes in wood, just some experience. Once you had learned runes, you could, if you had learned also to write on parchment, use them for writing the vernacular in manuscripts as well.[18] There are religious texts in the vernacular carved in runes, but also in Latin (the *Ave Maria* was an important

[16] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 15, 25, 26.

[17] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 29.

[18] Kristel Zilmer, '"*Fann ek bein* ..."—"I Found a Bone". Runic Artefacts as Material Evidence of Writing in medieval Norwegian Towns', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 135–171, here 135.

text, apparently).[19] And there were also epigraphic texts carved in Latin script.[20]

Because no schooling was needed for it, runic literacy in the vernacular might be attained also by writers and readers who would not have been able to become literate in Latin, as learning the meaning of words written in Latin did require schooling. This may have influenced, as suggested above, the urban elites' views on vernacular literacy.

6   NORDIC URBAN (ADMINISTRATIVE) LITERACY

The term 'urban literacy' quite often is meant to refer to all uses of script that take place in towns.[21] This includes all forms of written culture that could be found within the bounds of the towns and excludes all forms that took place outside the towns.[22] This would mean that the study of urban literacy would needs include the study of alphabets and languages whenever towns can be shown to be multi-ethnic or multilingual; book production and urban historiography; instances of individuals resorting to writing (in memorial practices and business matters); and the place of writing in the system of urban communication as a whole. And it

[19] Cf. Zilmer, '"*Fann ek bein …*"', 136, 147, 166; Rikke Steenholt Olesen, 'Medieval Runic Latin in an Urban Perspective', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages,* 69–103, here 74, 79–80, 88–89; Elise Kleivane, 'Roman-Script Epigraphy in Norwegian Towns', ibid., 105–134, here 120, 122, 126–127; Janne Harjula, Visa Immonen, and Kirsi Salonen, 'Medieval Literacy in Turku: Material and Linguistic Remains', ibid., 197–227, here 213, 215–216, 221, 223, 226.

[20] Steenholt Olesen, 'Medieval Runic Latin', 80.

[21] On the notion of 'urban literacy', see: Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, 'Introduction', in *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy I*, ed. Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 27 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 1–10; Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, 'Introduction', in *Uses of the Written Word in Medieval Towns. Medieval Urban Literacy II*, ed. Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 28 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 1–16; and Marco Mostert and Anna Adamska, 'Whither the Study of Medieval Urban Literacy?' in *Uses of the Written Word in Medieval Towns*, 427–431. Looking beyond the confines of those areas of Europe that had become part of *Latinitas* by the eleventh century proves useful. See, apart from *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*: Agnieszka Bartoszewicz, *Urban Literacy in Late Medieval Poland*, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 39 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017); Katalin Szende, *Trust, Authority, and the Written Word in the Royal Towns of Medieval Hungary*, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 41 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018).

[22] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 8.

would also have to include the kinds of writing associated with urban parish priests and, in episcopal cities, the bishops and their clergy. Such a broad understanding of urban literacy has indeed produced valuable research that has led to important new insights.[23] This use of the term 'urban literacy', however, is problematic in the Scandinavian context, and not only there. As we have already remarked, there are hardly any forms of writing which took place in towns that did not have their pendant in literate behaviour in the countryside.[24] It makes sense, therefore, to distinguish the study of the various uses of writing in towns (for which German has the term *Schriftwesen*) from urban literacy (*Schriftlichkeit*). I would define 'literacy' as: the abilities of a person or group to use the various skills that have to do with reading and writing, either actively or passively. Many studies concentrate on what is called 'pragmatic literacy', which may be defined as 'all forms of literacy which either directly serve functional actions or which were meant to teach human action and behaviour by making available knowledge'.[25] These studies privilege the study of the uses of writing in urban administrations, dealing with the documents that were produced, the people who produced, kept, and used

[23] In Norway, for instance, a beginning has been made with the study of preserved dedicatory inscriptions. These inscriptions document the consecration of a church or an altar, and this ritual was meant to be performed by a bishop (Elise Kleivane, 'Roman-Script Epigraphy', 134). Of course, having a stone monument made in your honour and for the benefit of your soul was not for everyone, and all of these people probably did belong to some level of elite in their respective communities (ibid., 119). Inscriptions on portable objects, however, were made for protection, and had a durable and continuous function, using revered names and religious phrases; they were not meant for communication with human beings (ibid., 123). To mention only one more example: archaeological research has been able to use finds of wax writing tablets, styli, parchment prickers, book mounts, seal matrices and more, allowing a re-evaluation of literate behaviour in the town of Ribe (Morten Søvsø, 'Searching for Urban Literacy in the Archaeological Record', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 229–252, here 246, 249).

[24] As the Münster medieval historian Peter Johanek once quipped during a session of the Leeds International Medieval Congress in 2007, the only forms of writing that were restricted to medieval towns were those that could be found exclusively in the medieval universities, as universities could only be found in medieval towns.

[25] Hagen Keller, 'Pragmatische Schriftlichkeit im Mittelalter. Erscheinungsformen und Entwicklungsstufen. Einführung zum Kolloquium in Münster, 17.-19. Mai 1989', in *Pragmatische Schriftlichkeit im Mittelalter. Erscheinungsformen und Entwicklungsstufen (Akten des Internationalen Kolloquiums 17.-19. Mai 1989)*, ed. Hagen Keller, Klaus Grubmüller, and Nikolaus Staubach, *Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften* 65 (Munich: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1992), 1–7, here 1.

these documents, and the ways town dwellers may have had access to them. This was and remains a sensible restriction, as the study of the documents of urban administrations is not only a prerequisite for any understanding of urban literacy, but also for evaluating the roles played by groups of town dwellers in the organisation of their communities. Those groups that were represented in the towns' institutions would have been more likely to be able, on the basis of their power and influence, to exclude members of other urban groups. If they did in fact do so on occasion, it may be asked if forms of (urban) literacy played a role in this.

Let us see whether a short survey of what is known about Scandinavian urban literacy may help us to answer this question.[26] It may be helpful to summarise this knowledge in the form of a flowchart (Fig. 2), which indicates both the players involved in the organisation of medieval Scandinavian towns and the main documents that informed their organisation.

In many cases the town's lord, usually the king, took the initiative of issuing a town law, but in other cases the initiative came from the population of a settlement that wished to be granted a written law and so to become legally recognised as a town.[27] A community that wished to become a town had to gain this status from its lord in the form of a town charter. From the eleventh century onwards, kings issued such royal privileges. The oldest extant one dates from 1085; it was given by Saint Knud of Denmark to the cathedral at Lund. Written privileges were in all probability the result of negotiations between the king and the would-be town in question. Communities wishing to receive a royal privilege understood the role of charters very well. These written texts testify to the fact that Scandinavian urban communities were in fact becoming literate communities. Special legal regulations were necessary for every town from the very beginning. The oldest of these was the Birka Law, an adaptation of the Norwegian provincial laws to circumstances pertaining in Nidaros, the oldest layer of which predates 1160. In 1522, Christian II of Denmark

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[26] The size of this article precludes going into any detail. I have taken care to give full references to the articles in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, the main source for my knowledge on this area. Readers may want to consult the full indices in that collection at 441–462.

[27] Kasper H. Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 289–317, here 298.
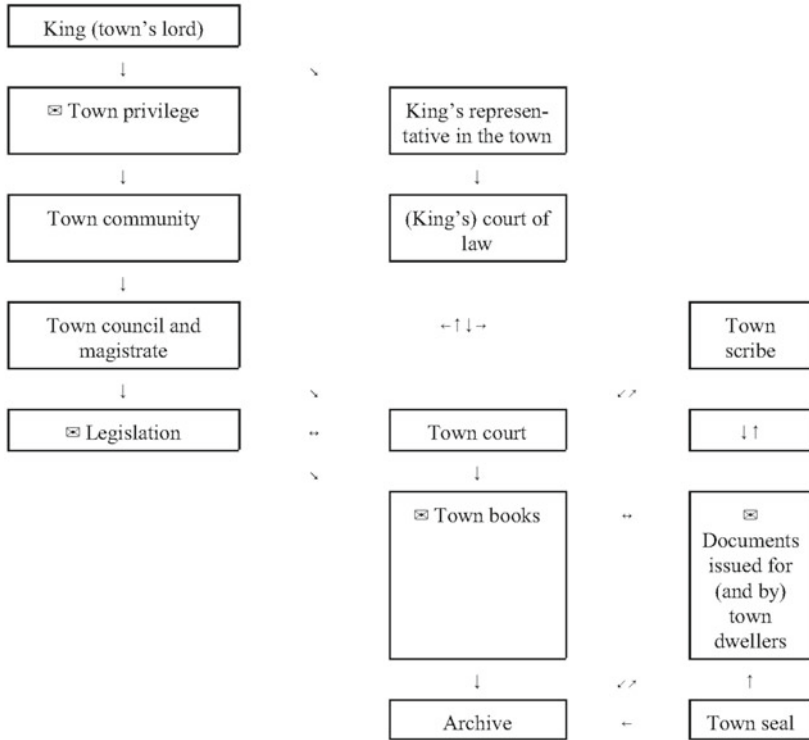
Fig. 2 Flowchart of medieval urban administrative literacy in the Nordic kingdoms

tried to impose a common town law on Denmark. Norway had already done this in the 1270s and Sweden around 1350.[28]

Town seals were among the most potent visual symbols of urban communities. They became common in Scandinavia around the middle of the thirteenth century. They were followed by individual burgesses' seals, which appear from the last quarter of the thirteenth century, and were subsequently diffused gradually throughout much of the urban population. But there were some who continued to be without seals. Mayors

[28] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 17–18.

had to seal for those who did not have seals of their own.[29] Both in word and image, the town seals of medieval Denmark, like those of towns in other parts of Europe, represented a town as a collective whole rather than as an amalgamation of individuals or specific social groups within a town. The town seal was an essential symbol of the town as a legal agent and contributed to the town's independent status and to the sense of a common identity among the town dwellers.[30] Illegitimate use of the town seal was more than just a crime. In 1379, in Ribe, the following statement was made by the town's councillor:

> Jakob Jensen, previously our co-councillor, has broken into our seal compartment, or the place where we hide our town's seal, and taken the seal out, with which he has issued his own open letters against our will and to the detriment of all the citizens of our town.[31]

The 'citizen's tower' in Ribe's cathedral held the town archives: this conflict over the use of the town seal was in fact a battle over the control of the town's archives,[32] and thereby over the rights that derived from the archival documents. Let us consider just one example of Ribe's documents: the town charter of Ribe that had been issued between 1202 and 1214. In it, the community received exemption from all royal customs and fees in the king's realms.

At about the same time in the early thirteenth century, the burgher collective of Ribe started to issue letters in its own name. And they proved able to ascertain the authenticity of diplomas and reveal forgeries.[33] Royal privileges and town laws have been preserved because they continued to be valid for centuries after the time at which they were composed.[34]

After having received its town charter, the town community had the privilege of organising itself by a town council and a magistrate. The town council is mentioned from the middle of the thirteenth century

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[29] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 23.

[30] Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', 306.

[31] Jeppe Büchert Netterstrøm, 'Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Ribe', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 253–287, here 268.

[32] Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', 306.

[33] Netterstrøm, 'Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Ribe', 266.

[34] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 24.

onwards.[35] These representatives of the community henceforth legislated on matters that concerned town life, insofar as their legislation did not obstruct the king's superior powers as lord of the town. The king maintained a representative in the town, his bailiff (*fogeden*), as well as a court of law that operated next to the town's own court; the latter was meant to deal with conflicts arising from the matters for which the town council had become competent on the basis of the town charter. The urban elites which populated the town councils were strengthened by their control of the administration through the use of the written word. They could also be helped by legally trained ecclesiastics. The town council's power was a clear manifestation of civic literacy. The intention clearly was to strengthen the hold over the local population. Over the fourteenth century, the town council's power was growing to the detriment of that of the royal representative over the fourteenth century.

The town court was led by the town's lord's representative, the bailiff (*fogeden*), but also included members of the town council and other representatives of the citizenry.[36] From 1252, the Ribe council could legislate locally, and, together with the royal steward, the councillors wrote the town law of 1269.[37]

As soon as there are sources on social standing, it is clear that the members of the town council came from the (merchant) elite.[38] Their writing down of town laws was part of a gradual but significant development from orality to literacy. Decrees and privileges issued by the town council, letters of conveyance, contracts, wills, documentation from criminal court cases, etc., were kept because they could be used in inheritance cases and disputes long after they had been issued. This type of source tells us most about members of social or administrative elites; archaeological finds often provide better evidence for daily life among the mass of the population.[39] But it would be wrong to see the town court only

[35] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 30.

[36] Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', 302.

[37] Netterstrøm, 'Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Ribe', 258.

[38] Netterstrøm, 'Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Ribe', 256.

[39] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 18, 24, 31.

as a legal institution. The court was also a forum for public announcements and a generator for various urban identities, and it must therefore be considered a key institution in urban communities.[40]

On occasion larger proportions of the population of the town took part in assemblies, which were intended to reach agreements about new general regulations which were set down in writing. In this way, a broader circle of the citizenry was incorporated into a 'textual community' that otherwise was associated with the members of the council.[41]

Both the town council and the town court depended on the services of the town scribe. In a cultural sense, town scribes were keepers of memory, and it may be argued that they had a role in the identity formation of the inhabitants of their towns. The town scribe Aage Jensen Degn started the first town book in Malmö in 1420. He and his successors showed a clear historical interest with their records of Malmö's traditions and events. In several ways, Aage and the late medieval Danish town scribes were the creators of new forms of urban literacy.[42] However, the town books they kept did not only contain historiographical matter: far from it.

They were records on parchment, and later predominantly on paper, and formed a heterogeneous category of documents. In the late Middle Ages, town books became commonly used for the registration of decisions; they were also used to inscribe new citizens (burgesses).[43] Books of citizens were a pan-European phenomenon. Urban administrations registered who had been given citizenship as part of a formalised process by which the person obtaining citizenship had to take a citizen's oath before representatives of the town, and the town scribe then registered the tax the new citizens had to pay to become a citizen. This basic information was often supplemented with personal information about the new citizen, for instance his place of birth.[44] In Stockholm, in the 1350s, the town law required that property transactions as well as the acquisition of citizenship be written down in Swedish in the town book by the town scribe, who

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[40] Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', 302.

[41] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 32.

[42] Bjørn Poulsen, 'Putting Town Life in Writing: Medieval Danish Town Scribes', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 319–342, here 342.

[43] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 18.

[44] Andersen, 'Markers of Civic Literacy in Medieval Danish Towns', 309.

must also be Swedish, never foreign.[45] In 1629, the Stockholm council was to go even further in stipulating:

> ... [It] was therefore unanimously decided by the Council that even if one does not want to prohibit foreign persons from putting their cases or acting in their mother tongue, nevertheless, such person should never be allowed to be represented by a procurator who is unable to present or act in the case in our Swedish tongue, as it has been in the old custom, that all cases must only be presented to the court written in our Swedish mother tongue and not in any other language.[46]

With this early modern example of language politics, we have come to the end of our short survey of urban literate behaviour in Scandinavia. It is interesting to note that most of the forms urban literacy seem to have taken are not all that different from what can be observed elsewhere in Europe. Granted, sometimes Scandinavia seems to be lagging somewhat behind, and sometimes decisions were taken that were slightly different from those arrived at elsewhere in Europe, but no outsider from towns elsewhere in Europe would have been baffled by the ways writing was put to use in Scandinavian urban communities. Whether urban literacy was also used in 'othering' certain groups, remains to be seen.

7   Exclusion by Urban Literacy?

Letters on parchment or paper relating to urban life survive in many different forms from the medieval Scandinavian towns. The Nordic urban societies produce the same kind of documents as other, more urbanised parts of Europe, such as England or the Low Countries.

In the later Middle Ages, it was necessary for practically everybody, and not only for the members of the councils, to be able to make use of and to defend oneself by means of written evidence. At the same time, as we have mentioned before, literacy became widespread among ordinary folk in the countryside in the late Middle Ages. But common townspeople could not, by using script, participate in the urban administration and control

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45 Theresia Petterson, 'Variance and Change in Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Stockholm: The *Liber Memorialis*', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 343–374, here 351.

46 Petterson, 'Variance and Change in Civic Literacy in Late Medieval Stockholm', 354.

the council. There were elements of secrecy to counter, and the records had to be scrutinised by committees. Administrative uses of writing, and gradually the town archives as well, became means of exercising control by the town's government over their own urban community.[47]

We have seen something of the interaction between the main players in towns: the king, the king's representative, the urban community, the town council and the magistrate, and the town scribe. We have noted that written texts, the town charters with their seals, the town laws, and the town books, played a considerable role in developing the towns as textual communities, and even more so as communities that increasingly relied on writing for their organisation and, obviously, their administration. We have also seen, finally, how access to the main documents may have led to forms of exclusion. And how linguistic restrictions may have been even more conducive towards 'othering' in Sweden, even if this was to the detriment of some of the vernaculars that had been accepted as equals until the 1350s in their written form, and until 1629 in their oral forms as well. We have not found evidence of a depreciating attitude towards inhabitants of the countryside based on 'urban' literacy, most probably due to the fact that 'countryside' literacy used the same forms of pragmatic literacy.

8   Literate Mentalities

We might finish here. So far, however, we have mainly considered what was urban about urban literacy. We have as yet not paid any attention to the ways in which the development of literacy as such might have led to differences in mentality. We have to consider this in the remainder of this short survey.[48]

In all periods of the history of our civilisation since the invention of alphabetic writing, the use of the written word was known, and the

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[47] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 16, 19, 31, 32, 36.

[48] This section is based on Marco Mostert, 'Forgery and Trust', in *Strategies of Writing. Studies on Text and Trust in the Middle Ages*, ed. Pettra Schulte, Marco Mostert, and Irene van Renswoude, *Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy* 13 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008), 37–59; Marco Mostert, 'Schrift als Ausdruck von Mentalität und die Gründe ihres Wandels', in *Wandlungsprozesse der Mentalitätsgeschichte*, ed. Peter Dinzelbacher and Friedrich Harrer (Baden-Baden: Deutsche Wissenschafts-Verlag, 2015), 93–120.

written word was known by all to some extent. This holds true for Scandinavia as well. In all periods we encounter men and women whom we are inclined nowadays to qualify either as 'literate' or as 'illiterate'. But this distinction is imprecise. It would be better to distinguish between illiterate, semi-illiterate, semi-literate and literate people.[49] Illiterates have no idea what writing is. They don't know, for example, that writing represents speech in visual form. They do not understand that the content of a written text is transmitted by the eyes and not by the ears. With the term 'semi-illiterate' are meant those who, although they themselves cannot read and write (and who for this reason are functionally illiterate) nevertheless know what writing is and how it differs from speech. The semi-literate are those who, although they can read and write, are not (or not yet) aware of all the intricacies of the written language. Their mentality resembles in some respects that of the semi-illiterate. Those who are fully literate are able to manipulate the culture of writing. Since they have thoroughly mastered the techniques of writing, they are able to decide for themselves which possibilities of the culture of writing they will use. These distinctions are not absolute. It is possible to be fully literate in some areas of written culture and only semi-literate in others. The four levels of literacy should be considered as 'registers of the culture of writing'. A change of register can explain apparent inconsistencies between different cases of the use of writing by the same person.

As could happen in Scandinavia just as easily as it could happen elsewhere in medieval Europe, whenever a literate register clashes with the writing culture of the semi-literate, the mentalities of writing can have a strong impact on mentalities in general. However, such mental changes are no irreversible processes. At other times, semi-literate registers may attract large circles of illiterates to the detriment of literate registers. We often see similarities in concepts such as 'word', 'writing', 'law', 'fraud', or 'falsification' as used by ancient jurists and philosophers—who first defined these concepts—their medieval successors (for as far as the writings of their older colleagues have survived) and modern jurists.

If we subscribe to the idea that the intensive use of the written word can lead to changes in the very concept of 'writing' among the literate—and as I have shown elsewhere, the content of concepts such as confidence

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[49] There are other classifications that distinguish between different skill levels, e.g., Franz H. Bäuml, 'Varieties and Consequences of Medieval Literacy and Illiteracy', *Speculum* 55 (1980): 237–265, here 246–247 (on 'quasi-literates').

in 'writing', 'word', 'text', and 'truth' is subordinate to the written word—we come to the conclusion that fully literates, whether they lived in Antiquity, the Middle Ages or the early modern period, shared certain aspects of these concepts.[50] In order for medieval and modern scholars to be able to take up classical concepts, these concepts had to overlap somewhat, so that mutual understanding was possible. At the same time, the literates had to share at least some mental dispositions and some ideas with their less literate contemporaries. As soon as concepts concerning the written word were set aside, the mentalities of the literate and the illiterate could intersect in order to make communication possible. These shared mentalities of the past have often become foreign to us. In terms of reading comprehension, and therefore of literate mentalities, we probably have more in common with the literate people of the past than with our own illiterate, semi-literate or semi-literate contemporaries.

In the 1960s, research on the culture of writing benefited significantly from developments in the media. The publication in 1963 of the essay 'The consequences of literacy' by anthropologist Jack Goody and literary historian Ian Watt proved to be a turning point.[51] Goody and Watt argued that the alphabet made Greek democracy possible, and that 'rationality' is impossible without (alphabetic) writing. Since then, these claims have been endlessly discussed in the humanities. Today, the idea of a causal link between writing and democracy no longer finds support, given that between the two World Wars Germany and Russia, which could hardly be considered as model democracies, were among the most literate societies. The idea of a link between the written word and rationality (in the sense of logic and dialectics elaborated in ancient Greece) cannot be maintained either. In some societies several writing systems coexist, but only students educated in schools that follow the model of the modern western school system possess this type of rationality.[52] Goody and Watt's technological point of view was influenced by enlightened ideas dating from the eighteenth century. Their technologism has since been nuanced. We have ended up with the idea that the development of the culture of

[50] Mostert, 'Forgery and Trust', 44–49.

[51] Jack Goody and Ian Watt, 'The Consequences of Literacy', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5 (1963): 302–325, reprinted in *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, ed. Jack Goody (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 27–68.

[52] Sylvia Scribner and Michael Cole, *The Psychology of Literacy* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1981).

writing was an important factor in the history of civilisation, but only one factor among many others. A preliminary synthesis of the results of this stream of research was published in 1982 by Walter J. Ong in his *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word*.[53] Ong first deals with societies in which the oral ('orality') is dominant, then with the restructuring of consciousness through the use of writing, printing, space and 'closure' (with some considerations on the consequences of electronic communication), and controversial theoretical issues (for instance the meaning of reading and writing for human beings). Anthropologists expressed reservations about certain ideas of the technological current. Ruth Finnegan, for example, titled her book on the theme *Literacy and Orality. Studies in the Technology of Communication*, a title which rejected Ong's thesis that the presence or absence of the written word is fundamental and decisive in and by itself.[54] The idea of a clear opposition between the culture of the written word and orality always finds echoes, even if we are today more aware of its inscription in the history of the European West and in one of these great stories that only date back to the eighteenth century.

Despite these discussions, one of the key effects of the history of writing lies in the changes wrought in the mentality of those who learn to read and write. In his chapter on 'The psychodynamics of orality', Walter Ong summarises the essential traits of orality under nine headings.[55] People never exposed to education according to the western model, with its asking of the questions of logic, will remain in an oral frame of mind for as long as they live.[56] If, however, they come into contact with western-style education, even if it is only for a few years, they will start to become literates.

Things really begin to change whenever someone learns to read and write in a school environment. A few examples will make this clear. For us, fully educated scholars, the term 'word' is a concept of grammar, which was developed in late Antiquity. The development of grammar

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[53] Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London and New York: Methuen, 1982).

[54] Ruth Finnegan, *Literacy and Orality. Studies in the Technology of Communication* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1988).

[55] Ong, *Orality and Literacy*, 31–77.

[56] See: A.R. Luria, *Cognitive Development. Its Cultural and Social Foundations*, trans. Martin Lopez-Morillas and Lynn Solotaroff, ed. Michael Cole (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1976).

(whose name derives not without reason from the Greek word for 'letter') has to do with developments in the design of writing such as the separation of words, which made it possible to identify groups of letters with meaningful sounds. For us, the words of speech largely agree with those of writing. For the semi-literate, the term 'word' means 'everything that can be said'. This goes for English *word*, Dutch *woord*, and German *Wort*. But it also applies to the Berbers of North Africa, who named this concept *anwar*.[57] And everything one says must be 'true' in the sense that one should trust what has been said. 'A man a man, a word a word'. This expression does not only apply to promises or other performative remarks, but also to the mediation of information, to oral texts recognised as fictions, and even to poems. In the Middle Ages the 'word'—as far as we can deduce this from texts written by scholars with their different mentality of writing—had a similar meaning for the illiterate, the semi-illiterate, and the semi-literate.

And what does 'written' mean? As educated scholars we have learned that writing does not fix the contents of communicative acts forever. Even if writing is capable of fixing meanings for more or less long periods, the evolution of language takes us away from the intentions of their authors. Written texts need explanation, exegesis. Errors need correction, and scholars know that a written text is interpreted differently over time—and that it must be commented on, for otherwise it loses its meaning.[58] On the other hand, for semi-literates, the oral must be identical to the written, and for them the topos of the lability of memory expresses an important truth. Writing should have an eternal value.[59]

Semi-literates, just as fully literates, could read a written text—provided they knew enough of the language in which it was written. Semi-illiterates could only read written texts, their aesthetics and decoration

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[57] Jeanne Kurvers, *Met ongeletterde ogen. Kennis van taal en schrift van analfabeten* (Amsterdam: Aksant, 2002), 82, 189–191.

[58] Marco Mostert, 'Reflections on Canonization and Authority of the Word in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. By Way of Comment', in *Medieval Transformations. Texts, Power and Gifts in Context*, ed. Esther Cohen and Mayke B. de Jong (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 13–24; J.F.A. Sawyer, *Sacred Languages and Sacred Texts* (London/New York: Routledge, 1999).

[59] Heinrich Fichtenau, *Arenga. Spätantike und Mittelalter im Spiegel von Urkundenformeln*, *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung. Ergänzungsband* 8 (Graz and Cologne: Böhlau, 1957), 131 ff., on the *arenga* of the *memoria-oblivio* type.

as a picture.[60] They were sensitive to the splendour of liturgical books, to the richness that the possession of such a book meant, and they could take pleasure in the images and the letters, even if they were not sure of their meaning. And the same goes for charters, which could also be understood as images due to their visual rhetoric, as representatives of the power of those who were responsible for their production. Charters were powerful symbols of authority, power, and validity irrespective of whether you could read them.[61]

9   Urban Schools and Exclusion

Let us end with a hypothesis for further research, both on medieval literacy generally and on its manifestations in the Nordic world. In the light of what can be said on literate mentalities, we should not look for literacy as such, but rather look at the literacy acquired through attending schools, in our case medieval urban schools, if we want to find out what the links between literacy and exclusion may have been. It may have been in the classrooms that pupils and students acquired the self-assurance that led them to think themselves better than their educationally less fortunate contemporaries. This group included those that had mastered runic literacy, as we have seen that that did not require formal schooling. In medieval Scandinavia, schools appeared in many towns. To attend university, one went to Paris, and later also to Prague, until the foundation of the universities of Rostock (1419) and Greifswald (1436), and of the Scandinavian universities of Uppsala (1477), and Copenhagen (1479). The Dominican *studia* also provided a curriculum which catered for schoolboys from town as well as for students of Theology.[62] The reasons why obtaining an education that went beyond the basics of reading and writing was attractive must have been the same as elsewhere in medieval Europe: to gain access to the literacy-driven careers that developed from

[60] Laura Kendrick, *Animating the Letter. The Figurative Embodiment of Writing from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance* (Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 1999).

[61] Peter Rück, 'Beiträge zur diplomatischen Semiotik', in *Graphische Symbole in mittelalterlichen Urkunden: Beiträge zur diplomatischen Semiotik,* ed. Peter Rück, *Historische Hilfswissenschaften* 3 (Sigmaringen: Thorbecke Verlag), 13–47, here 13.

[62] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 28–29; Johnny Grandjean Gøgsig Jakobsen, 'The Dominican Order and Urban Literacy in Medieval Scandinavia', in *Urban Literacy in the Nordic Middle Ages*, 375–410, here 309–402.

the thirteenth century onwards in towns and at the courts of the mighty, to make a living out of the knowledge one had acquired.[63] To attend a renowned town school or university required money. Money that was available among the families making up the town's elites. Members of the urban elites, who may have looked down upon town dwellers who did not have their power and influence anyway, may have acquired through their attending institutions of higher education the levels of literacy that gave them literate mentalities, and additional reasons for looking down upon other inhabitants of the towns, of Scandinavia as elsewhere. This can be seen in the ordinances of the town councils. In Schleswig, in 1336, the council intended to 'do away with worthless practices' and to restrict festivities associated with marriage and childbirth.[64] That suggests the town's elite to have had another mentality than the rest of the inhabitants. A difference in mentality that may well have been influenced also by the different kinds of literacy with which town dwellers came into contact.

10   What Happened through Literacy in Medieval Scandinavia?

We can draw some tentative conclusions from what has been dealt with above. We have seen what makes a settlement into a town. At the same time, we have seen that in Scandinavia there were only small differences between town and countryside. We have seen that this very probably had influence on the way town dwellers did not have the same disdain for country dwellers that was visible in other European regions, as expressed by the use there of a perceived opposition between *urbanitas* and *rusticitas*. We have also seen that the possession of literate skills was different in Scandinavia, in that runes formed a writing system that was primarily associated with the indigenous vernaculars, and that could be learned without having to attend formal school education. This was different from the Latin-based literacy in continental Europe and on the British isles and

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[63] Marco Mostert, 'Some Thoughts on Urban Schools, Urban Literacy, and the Development of Western Civilisation', in *Writing and the Administration of Medieval Towns*, 337–348; Marco Mostert, 'Reading, Writing and Literacy. Communication and the History of Medieval Societies', in *Literacy in Medieval and Early Modern Scandinavian Culture*, ed. Pernille Hermann, *The Viking Collection. Studies in Northern Civilization* 16, ed. Pernille Hermann (University Press of Southern Denmark, 2005), 261–285.

[64] Andersen et al., 'Introduction', 32.

in Ireland. There, Latin was required if one wanted to participate to the full in literate forms of communication, and acquiring these skills was usually done in schools that went beyond the teaching of reading, writing, and reckoning. As a consequence, we may assume that, with the exception of Scandinavia, elsewhere differences may have come to be perceived between the ways those who had been through advanced Latin education and those that had not benefited from such an education. The literacy of vernacular education which could be acquired at home did not encompass knowledge of logic that was part of the literacy available in Latin schools. The literate mentalities that went with these two types of literacy, that could be acquired in different educational environments, might have repercussions in the ways that those who had benefited from a school education saw themselves as somehow different from the 'others' among whom they lived. Irrespective of whether those 'others' were literate in that they might be able to use the (mainly vernacular) runes or were in fact illiterate. Exclusionary tendencies might therefore come about based on literate behaviour and thought after all. Even if these tendencies may not have had much to do with just any form of literacy as such, including the kinds of literate behaviour that went with the running of urban communities, but with the kind of literacy that was acquired in the Latin schools of Europe.

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Doing the Dirty Work: Ribalds, Armies and Public Health in the Southern Low Countries, 1100–1500

Claire Weeda

1 Introduction

Civic-military financial accounts across northern France, the Low Countries and Italy mention so-called ribalds in their expenses between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. The name ribald was generally a pejorative term used for the social group of able-bodied paupers, often migrants without legal citizen status, who moved in and out of the city in search of temporary work in sanitation, public works and the military.[1] Towns appointed funds for ribalds to sweep market squares, clean fountains and remove dead animals from canals, for instance in Ghent.[2] These multitasking ribalds, often from rural backgrounds, also scrabbled as

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[1] For migrants and citizenship status, see: Miri Rubin, *Cities of Strangers: Making Lives in Medieval Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020).

[2] Janna Coomans, 'The King of Dirt: Public Health and Sanitation in Late Medieval Ghent', *Urban History* 46 (2019): 82–105.

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servants and low-status recruits in the seigneurial armies and urban militias campaigning outside the city, at a time when urban communities held significant military responsibilities. Ribalds transported military materials in the wagon train, maintained roads and bridges and worked the siege engines, as Franck Viltart has shown. Ribalds, thus, did the dirty work to preserve the city's sanitation, infrastructure and security.

Ribalds' status, however, was fragile. The citizens' attitude towards these workers was double-edged. They considered ribalds, in legal, social and moral terms, to be non-citizens, who nonetheless were indispensable to the city's health and security by doing the dirty, shameful work in the cities' public spaces and militias.[3] In moral terms, the literate clergy depicted ribalds as an uprooted mob of ragamuffins, the riffraff associating with sex workers, gamblers and drinkers at court and in the city. Complaints rang that these ne'er-do-wells were deceitful wasters, who loitered around taverns and would rather feign sickness than work.[4] On the other hand, clerics and administrators, men of the pen, acknowledged the sheer necessity of the hard manual labour these ribalds performed. Indeed, without these workers there to remove corrupt matter and dirt, cities assuredly failed to meet the standards of hygiene or to adequately manage the infrastructures supporting their economic and military needs. Thus, the moralist Peter the Chanter (d. 1197), who was affiliated with the church of Notre-Dame in Paris, commented that 'vagabonds or ribalds are haulers and sanitation workers in the city, just as new sex workers are seemingly necessary to avoid far more shameful lust'.[5]

How the ribalds and the city negotiated the civic-military and social boundaries that typically marked urban communities in this region, is the

[3] Bronislaw Geremek, *The Margins of Society in Late Medieval Paris* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); Bronislaw Geremek, *Les fils de Caïn: L'image des pauvres et des vagabonds dans la littérature européenne du XVe au XVIIe siècle* (Paris: Flammarion, 1991).

[4] Sharon Farmer, 'The Beggar's Body: Intersections of Gender and Social Status in High Medieval Paris', in *Monks and Nuns, Saints and Outcasts: Religion in Medieval Society: Essays in Honor of Lester K. Little*, ed. Sharon Farmer and Barbara Rosenwein (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 153–171.

[5] Petrus Cantor, *Summa quae dicitur Verbum adbreuiatum*, I 47, ed. Monique Boutry, CCCM 196 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004). *Item, trutanni uel ribaldi sunt portitores honerum, mundatores sordium ciuitatum, et huiusmodi, nouarie etiam meretricule necessarie esse uidentur propter turpiorem libidinem uitandam.*

question addressed in this contribution.[6] As this chapter argues, several interacting issues were at play in the give and take over the social status of ribalds between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries. As Christ's poor, ribalds laboured by the sweat of their brow in this world, awaiting their rewards in the next.[7] Doing the dirty work in the city and on the battlefield also meant these ribalds, often young men and women, played a key role in upholding the military-civic identity of communities, as Richard Trexler commented in his work on Tuscan cities.[8] Ribalds performed the shameful tasks associated with it: collecting spoils, removing dead bodies, mucking out stables, insulting enemies, that good citizens preferred to avoid. Thus, as mostly non-citizens in legal terms, ribalds made a crucial contribution to the urban community, yet their presence and behaviour was spurned and satirised to distinguish it from good citizenship. The city's attitude thereby hardened in the course of the fourteenth century, especially when the labour pool shrunk after the first major outbreak of the Second Plague Pandemic in 1347–1353, known as the Black Death. Afterwards, ribalds more often were actively shunned or even criminalised.[9] In the same period, military and sanitary tasks increasingly were institutionalised in towns and cities, while religious confraternities took upon themselves the so-called good works looking after the poor and sick. Thus, in the second half of the fifteenth century, cities more frequently

[6] Franck Viltart, 'Le roi des ribauds à la fin du Moyen Âge. Une royauté infâme?', in *Les 'autres' rois: Études sur la royauté comme notion hiérarchique dans la société au bas Moyen Âge et au début de l'époque moderne*, ed. Torsten Hiltmann (Munich: De Gruyter, 2010), 80–94.

[7] Catharina Lis and Hugo Soly, *Worthy Efforts: Attitudes to Work and Workers in Pre-Industrial Europe* (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 99–155, 426–547; Anita Boele, *Leden van een lichaam: Denkbeelden over armen, armenzorg en liefdadigheid in de Noordelijke Nederlanden 1300–1650* (Groningen: Verloren, 2013), 225–253.

[8] Richard C. Trexler, 'Correre la Terra: Collective Insults in the Late Middle Ages', in *Dependence in Context in Renaissance Florence*, ed. Richard C. Trexler (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1994), 113–170.

[9] Rozanne Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux en France et dans les anciens Pays-Bas (XIe-XVIIe siècles)' (PhD diss., Utrecht University, 2022); Samuel K. Cohn, 'After the Black Death: Labour Legislation and Attitudes Towards Labour in Late-Medieval Western Europe', *The Economic History Review* 60, no. 3 (2007): 457–485; Brian Tierney, *Medieval Poor Law: A Sketch of Canonical Theory and Its Application in England* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1959).

issued bylaws expelling the ribalds, if they did not conform to the social and economic order.[10]

Before exploring this fluctuating status of the ribalds in more detail, we can note how their position was subject to a form of vital politics. This is a term used to understand how governments manage the 'quality' of citizens, factoring in presuppositions about a person's physiology and competencies.[11] Closely related to vital politics is the concept of biopolitics, entailing the negotiation of power at the level of life: *life* as a political-economic object, necessary to create manpower, to sustain armies or economic viability, upheld through regulations. From a biopolitical perspective, maintaining health thus has less to do with the pursuit of health of populations to its own end, although populations certainly might reap the benefits of biopolitical interventions.[12] As this chapter suggests, vital politics marked the ribalds' status on various levels: they made a vital contribution to population health by sanitising public spaces and maintaining military and economic infrastructures such as roads and canals, yet were considered dirty, unhealthy workers, corrupting the material and the spiritual environment. The ribalds' position as able-bodied labourers, accordingly, rested upon their indispensable efforts, spending their muscle strength, for the security and economy of a rapidly expanding

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[10] For the differentiation of labour after the Black Death, see: Lis and Soly, *Worthy Efforts*, 99–155; Janna Coomans, 'Forced Motions: Poor Migrants and Changing Perceptions of Public Health in Northwestern Europe, 1450–1600', in *Dynamic Balances: Public Health in the Premodern World*, ed. Guy Geltner and Janna Coomans, forthcoming. Lis and Soly contest Jacques le Goff, 'Travail, techniques et artisans dans les systèmes de valeur du haut Moyen Âge (Ve -Xe siècle)', in *Pour un autre Moyen Âge: Temps, travail et culture en Occident: 18 essais*, ed. Jacques le Goff (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), 108–130. See also: Josef Ehmer, 'Attitudes to Work, Class Structures, and Social Change: A Review of Recent Historical Studies', *Internationaal Instituut voor Sociale Geschiedenis* 59 (2014): 99–117; Nicolas Perreaux, 'Œuvrer, servir, souffrir: Réflexions sur la sémantique des activités médiévales', in *Labeur et production au sein des monastères de l'Occident médiévale*, ed. M. Lauwers, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 31–79.

[11] Nikolas Rose, *The Politics of Life Itself: Biomedicine, Power, and Subjectivity in the Twenty-First Century* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[12] Michel Foucault, 'The Birth of Biopolitics', in *The Essential Foucault. The Essential Works of Michel Foucault, 1954–1984*, ed. Paul Rabinow, trans. R. Hurley e.a., 3 vols (New York, 1997), I, 73; Maurizio Meloni, 'The Politics of Environments Before the Environment: Biopolitics in the Longue Durée', *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* 88 (2021): 334–344; Paul Rabinow and Nikolas Rose, 'Thoughts on the Concept of Biopower Today', retrieved via http://www.lse.ac.uk/sociology/pdf/RabinowandRose-BiopowerToday03.pdf.

urban landscape. Nonetheless, urban and Church authorities commented negatively about the spiritual-physical qualities of these manual labourers. They lacked discipline, easily succumbed to strong sexual appetites, were lazy and deceitful.[13] What is more, their handling of corrupt matter—dirt—was viewed in medical-theoretical terms to present a direct health hazard.[14] Thus, men of the pen depreciated ribalds' vital, hazardous efforts for the community as the lowest form of labour, reaffirming society's complex hierarchy of spiritual and physical work.

From the perspective of vital politics, how did city authorities secure the efforts of the ribalds within a civic-military infrastructure and how were their toils represented? As this chapter shows, between the twelfth and fifteenth centuries, seigneurial and urban militias appointed ribalds as temporary workers in their armies to execute infrastructural labour. Outside of the military expeditions, ribalds held sanitary and maintenance tasks in the city. Their toils, in- and outside the city, thereby formed a significant element of civic identity. Ribalds' vital effort, doing the dirty work for communities, was acted out during civic festivals, mirroring the 'good virtues' of the higher echelons of urban society. As such, it can be argued that dirt dwells at the core of urban citizenship, whose act of removing it as matter out of place served as a *vital performance of civic identity*.[15] However, as this chapter argues, in the course of the fifteenth century, sanitation and security tasks increasingly were institutionalised, pushing the temporary migrant workers called ribalds out of the social order and into the sphere of criminalisation.

2 Ribalds in the Military-Civic Arena

Before turning to the ribalds' contribution to civic-military infrastructural and sanitation requirements, it is necessary to address briefly how sanitation mattered in this period. The cities that mushroomed in Europe from the twelfth century took sanitation seriously as a public health policy—as they did in the Mediterranean region and Middle East. In recent years, historians have argued extensively that municipalities organised and in

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[13] Farmer, 'The Beggar's Body', 157–158.

[14] Carole Rawcliffe, *Urban Bodies: Communal Health in Late Medieval English Towns and Cities* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2013), 113–114.

[15] Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (New York: Praeger, 1966).

part financially supported various types of sanitation work out of concerns over the health of populations.[16] Although its organisation was decentralised, towns and cities actively endeavoured to promote public hygiene for the sake of disease prevention. This had to do with the medical premise that corrupt, decaying matter, from which poisonous particles known as miasma arose, was considered the root cause of disease.[17] Cities accordingly strove to remove foul matter, recognised by its stench, from the streets, pools, ditches and waste heaps where- and whenever possible.[18] In many cities, for instance in Brielle, Haarlem and Gouda in the Low Countries, magistrates ordained that households and shop owners clean the streets in front of their houses or outsource the cleaning at their own expense.[19] They also appointed multitasking cleaners to remove dirt and waste at specific sites of significance to the city, such as market squares, the town hall and important waterways, by the same stroke facilitating the flow of traffic of people and goods. To this end, many cities in northern France and the southern Low Countries, as elsewhere, established sanitary policing outfits. Corruption, and its policing, also extended to the moral sphere, dirt representing material pollution emerging after the original sin and expulsion of mankind from the spiritually and physically pure locus of Eden.[20]

Now from circa 1250, we come across a so-called king or count of the ribalds supervising sanitation workers in various cities, including in Bruges and Ghent.[21] The regional presence of this king or lord of the ribalds, and his package of tasks, suggests that his early origins lie in

[16] For northern Italy, see: G. Geltner, *Roads to Health: Infrastructure and Urban Wellbeing in Later Medieval Italy* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2019).

[17] Vivian Nutton, 'The Seeds of Disease: An Explanation of Contagion and Infection from the Greeks to the Renaissance', *Medical History* 27 (1983): 1–34; Carlos Miguel Ferreira and Sandro Serpa, 'Contagions: Domains, Challenges and Health Devices', *Academic Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies* 9, no. 4 (2020): 1–14.

[18] See above note 13 and older studies such as: E.L. Sabine, 'City Cleaning in Mediaeval London', *Speculum* 12 (1937): 19–43; Lynn Thorndike, 'Sanitation, Baths and Street Cleaning in the Middle Ages and Renaissance', *Speculum* 3 (1928): 192–203.

[19] Janna Coomans, *Community, Urban Health and Environment in the Late Medieval Low Countries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 83–95.

[20] For sanitary policing in Italy, the Low Countries, Germany, England and France, see: Carole Rawcliffe and Claire Weeda, *Policing the Urban Environment in Premodern Europe* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019).

[21] For Ghent, see: Coomans, 'King of Dirt'.

the military sphere of the French principalities. Indeed, early accounts mentioning ribalds recall the world of the *routiers*, mercenary bands from the northern French area. The earliest surviving reference to a *rex ribaldorum* concerns a military commander in a list of armed men taken hostage after the Battle of Bouvines in 1214.[22] The king of the ribalds afterwards surfaces in an ordinance concerning the *hôtel* of French King Philip V dating to 1316. In this capacity, the *roi* of the ribalds was tasked with policing the extensive royal household, the king's soldiers on military campaigns, and controlling who entered court and the presence of sex workers and gamblers.[23] The position was duplicated by the dukes of Normandy, Orléans, Berry and Burgundy. Subsequently, the office gained foot in cities, in particular in the southern Low Countries and northern France, including Bruges, Ghent, Mechelen, Ieper and Rijsel (Lille).[24] In all likelihood, some of the ribalds policed by this so-called king, consequently found employment as sanitation workers in his outfit. According to Richard Trexler, in Italian cities, these ribalds usually were poor non-citizens from rural backgrounds, young men and women, boys and girls.[25] There is little reason to think that this was different in northern France or the Low Countries, although it is possible that the term 'child' (*kinderen*) was also used for adults lacking citizenship rights, whose status therefore resembled that of children.[26]

A supervisor of poor recruits, the king of the ribalds himself belonged to the upper station. The Occitan troubadour William of Tudela (*fl.* 1199–1214), in *Chanson de la Croisade Albigeoise*, comments that the ribalds, camp followers, fell under an aristocratic military 'king'. According to the Italian Franciscan friar Salimbene de Adam (1221–1290), the ribalds elected the king themselves.[27] In urban militias in

[22] *De pugna Bovinensi: Catalogus captivorum*, ed. G. Waitz, MGH SS 26 (Hannover: Hahn, 1882), 393.

[23] Viltart, 'Le roi des ribauds', 86–92.

[24] Viltart, 'Le roi des ribauds', 85–86. Other cities mentioned by Viltart include Valenciennes, Douai, Tournai, Amiens, Laon, Cambrai, Arras, Guise, Noyon, Metz, Mâcon, Lyon, Bordeaux, and Toulouse. There is a clear concentration in northern France.

[25] Trexler, 'Collective Insults in the Late Middle Ages'.

[26] See the discussion around the participants of the Children's Crusade, in Peter Raedts, 'The Children's Crusade of 1212', *Journal of Medieval History* 3, no. 4 (1979): 279–323.

[27] Salimbene, *Chronica*, ed. Ferdinando Bernini, 2 vols (Bari: Gius. Laterza & Figli, 1942), II 928.

the Low Countries, ribalds usually fell under a *conincstavele*, a constable elected by the city magistracy and the general council, often in consultation with the regional principality. The title *conincstavele* is a derivation of the Latin *comes stabuli*, the head of the stables holding a military position similar to the French *maréchal*. This helps explain why the supervisor of ribalds was called a king (*rex*, in Middle Dutch *coninc*) or a count (*comes*, in Middle Dutch *graaf*). As we shall see, the practice of nominating a king as a supervisor was carried through into fifteenth-century urban festival culture, where such appointments were re-enacted in satirical plays performed by the ribalds themselves. Crossbow and longbow guilds, for instance, held king-making competitions, appointing a king for one year.[28]

In chronicles from the twelfth century, ribalds also feature as low-status foot soldiers used to scale walls in siege warfare. The role of these common soldiers, engineers and siege crews, as Randall Rogers argued, was critical to urban warfare at this time.[29] Thus, in 1189, the chronicler Rigord, who was affiliated with the French king, states that ribalds 'were accustomed to make the first attacks in storming the fortifications'.[30] Several accounts narrate the attack by ribalds, also called *arlotz*, *vulgi* and *gartz* camping close to the bridge and walls, on the city of Béziers in the Albigensian Crusade in 1209.[31] The papal legate and Cistercian abbot of Cîteaux, Arnaud Almaric (d. 1225), who led the crusade, calls them 'servants and other persons of low rank and unarmed'.[32] The Cistercian

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[28] Anne-Laure Van Bruaene, 'Princes, Emperors, Kings and Investiture in the Festive Culture of Flanders (Fifteenth-Sixteenth-Century)', in *Les 'autres' rois: Études sur la royauté comme notion hiérarchique dans la société au bas Moyen Âge et au début de l'époque moderne*, ed. Torsten Hiltmann (Munich: De Gruyter, 2010), 131–144, here 135.

[29] Laurence Marvin, '"…Men Famous in Combat and Battle…": Common Soldiers and the Siege of Bruges, 1127', *Journal of Medieval History* 24 (1998): 243–258; Randall Rogers, *Latin Siege Warfare in the Twelfth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997).

[30] Rigord, *Hist. Militiae Francicae* VII, a. 1189, in *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton*, ed. H.-F. Delaborde, 2 vols. (Paris, 1882–1885), I 95. *[R]ibaldi ipsius, qui primos impetus in expugnandis munitionibus facere consueverant.*

[31] Laurence W. Marvin, 'The Massacre at Béziers July 22, 1209: A Revisionist Look', in *Heresy and the Persecuting Society in the Middle Ages: Essays on the Work of R.I. Moore*, ed. Michael Frassetto (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 195–225, here 207.

[32] Innocent III, *Regestorum sive epistolarum* (1198–1216), ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 216 (Lille, 1855), col. 139C. *ribaldi et alii viles et inermes personae.*

monk Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay (d. 1218) describes them as 'servants of the army'.[33] These foot soldiers suffered high casualties in the forefront of attacking armies.

Already in the early accounts, the ribalds also were tasked with doing the dirty work, on both a physical and moral level. They not only cared for the wagon train, but also pillaged the towns after they fell, an act considered too shameful for mounted knights. The chronicler William the Breton (c. 1165–c. 1225), who likewise worked at the French royal court, in his *Philippide* defines ribalds as a contingent of unarmed troops, who collect the spoils of war.[34]

From the late thirteenth century, we come across ribalds in the financial rolls of civic communities, straddling the civic-military boundaries. The biography of Jan Stevens, count of the ribalds in Bruges, is a case in point. Jan Stevens' career is highly reminiscent of that of the king of ribalds in Ghent studied by Janna Coomans.[35] In Bruges, Jan Stevens first appears around 1300 in the financial accounts as the *conicstavele* heading one of the six military contingents drawn from the city's districts, presiding over a hundred militia men. Acting as count of the ribalds, he is also responsible for public health policies, however, for instance handing out of gloves to lepers in Bruges to limit the spread of the disease.[36] In 1316, as count of the ribalds, he twice oversees the fire workers, supervising thirty-five men and women carrying water during the fire at the Poterie, and 455 persons at the lock at Swaenekine. In 1318, we come across Jan Stevens removing dirt from around the fountain of the Beurze.[37]

But this was not all. As a mounted military leader belonging to the aristocracy, Jan also acts as *conincstavele* of the crossbowmen in Bruges. In this capacity, he accompanies the city on various military expeditions. In 1301, he marches with the burgomaster Martin van der Vooght to Gravelines along with two hundred shooters. In 1304, we see him heading,

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[33] Peter of Les Vaux-de-Cernay, *Historia Albigensium,* ed. J.-P Migne, PL 213 (Lille, 1855), col. 0566D.

[34] William the Breton, *Philippide* iii 458 and 616, in *Oeuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume le Breton,* ed. H.-F. Delaborde, 2 vols. (Paris, 1882–1885), ii 82, 88.

[35] Coomans, 'King of Dirt'.

[36] *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges publié sous les auspices de l'administration communale: Section premier Inventaire des chartes, Première série: treizième au seizième siècle,* ed. Louis Gilliodts-Van Severen 9 vols (Bruges: Gailliard, 1871–1885), v 104–105.

[37] *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, v 104–105, 108.

as *hoofdman*, twenty shooters and being remunerated 25 pounds for the cost of the bows. He also leads the haulers on the expeditions and takes care of the tents and pavilions. For these tasks he is honoured by the city council: in 1305, the city of Bruges commissioned the minting of a silver badge costing 3 pounds for Jan Stevens to wear.[38]

Conincstaveles like Jan Stevens were accompanied by ribalds both inside the city and outside on military expeditions, alongside the shooters, sergeants and *busmeestres*, carpenters, cooks and washerwomen. Ribalds transported the partially horse-driven wagons. Their haulers' role concentrated on the transport of materials such as tents and supplies for the militias. They were tasked with setting up camp and clearing sites in preparation for battle, digging ditches and constructing temporary wooden bridges. Ribalds worked at infrastructural maintenance and repair of roads. According to the Parisian bishop William of Auvergne (1180/ 1190–1249), at tournaments, ribalds went about collecting fragments of broken lances, to sell them on afterwards.[39] They also took care of logistics and sanitation during jousts.[40] On the battlefield the wagons, marked with a banner, served as a rallying point for the contingents. In Florentine armies, the ribalds carried a white flag, depicting their activities as looters and gamblers.[41]

Ribalds, known for their technical knowledge of mining walls, took on more specialised tasks in the *geniecorps*, labouring alongside the pioneers working the siege engines. Their military exploits are reflected in name of the so-called *ribaudekins*, a piece of machinery used to fire canons, to destroy walls or bridges.[42] These *ribaudekins* were transported on wagons—probably by ribalds. The wagons used in conflicts were supplied by the regional monasteries and hospitals as part of the services owed to

[38] *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, v 106–108.

[39] William of Auvergne, *Sermones de tempore* 30A, ed. Franco Morenzoni, CCCM 230 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), 123.

[40] Coomans, 'King of Dirt', 95.

[41] Trexler, 'Collective Insults', 851; William Caferro, 'The Florentine Army in the Age of the Companies of Adventure', *Millars: Espai i historia* 43 (2017): 129–150 for the rise in wages of workers after the Black Death, see: William Caferro, 'Petrarch's War: Florentine Wages and the Black Death', *Speculum* 88 (2013): 144–165.

[42] Sergio Boffa, *Warfare in Medieval Brabant* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2004), 165. See also Nicolas Prouteau, '"Beneath the Battle": Engineers and Miners as "Mercenaries" in the Holy Land (xii-xiii siècles)', in *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages*, ed. John France (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 105–118.

the principalities in this region. In Bruges, the financial accounts show that servants from the hospital of St. John's transported the *ribaudekins* into battle.[43] The carts of the ribalds also served to carry off the injured and dead. In the fourteenth century, the chronicler Jean Froissart (c. 1337–c. 1405) recalls how during the uprising in Ghent in 1379–1385, 'poor, dreary servants amidst large mounds of the dead threw bodies on the piles here and there'.[44] This was dangerous work, for corpses in particular were considered sources of miasma.[45]

It is possible that ribalds cooperated with the surgeons appointed at the city hospitals. On military expeditions, surgeons on the city's payroll, who cared for the wounded and sick, accompanied the army recruits. In 1324, on Ghent's campaign to guard the gate of Aardenburg, the surgeon Gillis Van Hoye and 45 *selschutters* marched alongside the military contingents. Two years later, in 1326, a campaign from Ghent advanced to Oudenaarde, including five hundred men headed by the constables, preceded by a hundred *schutters*, two surgeons and a chaplain and followed by dozens of carts transported by ribalds. At the siege of Damme, the shooters and ribalds worked under the supervision of Cornelisse van Aeltre, while master Hannekine the surgeon cared for the wounded with ointments, bandages and other materials.[46] The city of Bruges carefully documented the costs of the military campaigns surrounding the urban revolt of 1302 and the surgeons' expenses, even specifying the names of the wounded receiving treatment. The accounts of the military campaigns of Bruges call the military surgeons *asatres* rather than *chirurgijns* or

[43] *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, II 402; Algemeen Rijksarchief Brussel, Rekenkamer, inv. nr. 25209; Pieter Gorissen, 'De Karweien der Brabantsche Kloosterhoeven in de XIVe eeuw', *Bulletin de la Commission royale d'histoire* 110 (1945): 1–50.

[44] Jean Froissart, *Chronyke van Vlaenderen. Deel 1*, trans. Geryt Potter van der Loo, ed. Napoléon de Pauw (Gent: A. Siffer, 1898), 334. *Dair liepen doe alle die arme, dorre gesellen bij groten hopen onder ghene doden ende worpen den enen hier, den anderen dair.*

[45] Ieva Reklaityte, '"The Smell of Rotting Corpses Infected the Air": Notes on Sanitation, Pollution and Urban Ecology in al-Andalus', in *Medieval Urban Identity: Health, Economy and Regulation*, ed. Flocel Sabaté (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2015), 13–23.

[46] Napoleon de Pauw, 'Conspiration d'Audenarde sous Jacques van Artevelde (1342). Critique historique, avec les pieces inedites du proces', *Annales de la Société d'Emulation de Bruges* 25 (1873): xxxiii; *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, iii 45.

medici.[47] Thus, in 1302, Bruges rewarded Lippine den Arsatre and his companions the significant sum of 7 pounds for serving on its military campaign. Lippine's wife, as well as the spouses of Philip and Godevaerd, accompanied the men on the battlefield, preparing unguents and instruments. In 1305, Lippine the Asatre, Janne the Arsatre and Jan Raepsade each received financial compensation for the costs of medical equipment.[48] On average, on these campaigns, four to five surgeons were active.

On military campaigns, dealing with the wounded and the dead, ribalds would have picked up knowledge of public health through osmosis. That armies developed knowledge about group health in this period has been argued by Guy Geltner.[49] From Antiquity, health experts produced military regimens advising commanders on pressing issues including the provision of food, drink and shelter, upkeep of infrastructure and sanitation. Regimens written by Persian, Greek, Roman, Arab and French strategists advised on using natural resources and handling environmental hazards, avoiding miasma and stench arising from marshes or stagnant waters. Indeed it was crucial, as Sander Govaerts showed, that armies could sustain themselves in their natural environments, protected from disease such as dysentery and plague.[50] Ribalds, working in the military infrastructure, dealing with the dirt, mud and water considered to play a large part in disease transmission, must have been familiar with the basic ideas about health hazards, sanitation and environment in the context of military campaigns, and by extension, in civic public spaces.

The activities of the ribalds highlight the military responsibilities cities held at this time and how they might inform civic practices. Cities in the Low Countries were expected to structurally contribute to the military campaigns of principalities. From the thirteenth century, cities recruited military companies at the level of either neighbourhood wards and

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[47] The term is connected to the French *archiatre*, used to designate surgeons at the French court, and derives from the ancient *archiatier*, the chief physician of a ruler.

[48] *De rekeningen van de stad Brugge (1280–1319). Tweede deel (1302–1319). Eerste stuk (1302–1306)*, ed. C Wyffels, with A. Vandewalle (Brussels: Paleis der Academiën, 1995), 94, 171, 181, 186, 213–215, 218, 223, 277–279.

[49] G. Geltner, 'In the Camp and on the March: Military Manuals as Sources for Studying Premodern Public Health', *Medical History* 63, no. 1 (2019): 44–60.

[50] Sander Govaerts, *Armies and Ecosystems in Premodern Europe: The Meuse Region, 1250–1850* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2021).

districts, or guilds. Hence, military campaigns often worked with both professional soldiers and part-time recruits, citizens and non-citizens. In the Duchy of Brabant, for instance, citizens were expected to annually render military service for forty days, either to protect the city or to contribute to its military duties upon the summons of the principality.[51] In Ghent, the city called all *weerbare men* between twenty and sixty years old to arms.[52] According to Peter Stabel, Bruges, around 1340, could drum up about 8.300 militia men based on a population of 42.000, divided into 10.500 households.[53] Most able-bodied male citizens were active in the militias in some form or manner. The militias, whose civic members bonded through oaths, were donned with various uniforms and equipped with different types of arms. The officials of the principality—the *bailli*, *prévôt*, *châtelain*—were actively involved, alongside the constables, in the recruitment of townspeople for these militias.

That military recruits were drawn from the city meant that military service left its imprint on the infrastructural make-up of it. Indeed, the organisation of the city's defence informed the drawing of the maps of its districts and parishes, variably called constabularies, wards, thirds or quarters. The focal point of the districts was generally the city gate, which was guarded by the night watch and often used as an arsenal. The quarters served as the basic unit for municipal elections and the collection of taxes. Georges Espinas, in his study of the finances of Douai, observed that extending their status as military units, the districts or wards in that city also functioned as the basis unit for the organisation of sanitation, fire protection and the maintenance of public order. The cleaning of the ditches in Douai, for instance, was organised according to the same principles as military tasks. The city sounded the *banklok* to summon, in this case, the citizens and villeins to clean out the ditches, maintain the roads and strengthen the parapets, just as they would call men to arms. The

[51] Maarten Prak, 'Citizens, Soldiers and Civic Militias in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe', *Past & Present* 228 (2015): 93–123; Jan-Frans Verbruggen, 'De militaire dienst in het graafschap Vlaanderen', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 26 (1958): 437–465.

[52] Jelle Haemers, 'Het Gentse gemeenteleger in het laatste kwart van de vijftiende eeuw. Een politieke, financiële en militaire analyse van stadsmilities', *Handelingen der Maatschappij voor Geschiedenis en Oudheidkunde te Gent* 62, no. 1 (2008): 291–325.

[53] Peter Stabel, 'Militaire organisatie, bewapening en wapenbezit in het laatmiddeleeuwse Brugge', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 89 (2011): 1049–1073.

constables gathered their men, providing them with 'shovels, pick and long axes' under their district's banner. In the cases of Douai, Lille, Frankfurt, Hildesheim and Cologne, the financial accounts recording the costs of the cleaning of ditches, fire prevention and the purchase of materials in preparation for warfare were drawn up separately from the central urban city accounts. Often these accounts have not survived, unfortunately.[54]

3 Ribalds' Labours after the Black Death

If until the fourteenth century, ribalds negotiated the military-civic boundaries by meeting demands for sanitary and infrastructural work, after the first major outbreak of plague in the mid-fourteenth century their status shifts. In the poor laws issued at this time, increasing attention was paid to the work conditions of able-bodied men and women. At this time, state and commercial enterprises attempted to subject the working poor—able-bodied workers based on criteria of health and age—to stringent labour regulations.[55] Principalities proclaimed poor laws in an attempt to put a cap on rising labour costs as a result of the disastrous mortality rates. In the ensuing period, public offices increasingly became institutionalised and differentiated. In the Low Countries, thus, it were no longer the generic ribalds, but increasingly the *moosmeisers*, *slijkburgers*, *cellebroeders*, *reeuwers* and *schrobbers* who were involved in sanitation and public health related to communicable diseases, such as the plague. At the same time, the ribalds, male and female, were criminalised, as vagrants, driven from the cities and satirised in texts.

The policing of labourers after the Black Death not only was geared at restricting rising labour wages. Authorities also wielded the stick by limiting the number of people eligible for charity. This was not an entirely new development. Scholars have recorded more negative attitudes towards the poor from 1200. Sharon Farmer refers to a mid-thirteenth-century injunction in the regulations of Touraine-Anjou encouraging the judiciary to ban masterless, poor men who hung around in taverns and led a supposedly wayward life.[56] Yet in particular after the first major outbreak

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[54] George Espinas, *Les finances de la commune de Douai des origines au 15e siècle* (Paris: Picard, 1902), 377–389.

[55] Cohn, 'After the Black Death', 457–485.

[56] Farmer, 'The Beggar's Body', 159. *Les établissements de Saint Louis* I 38, ed. P. Viollet, 4 vols (Paris, 1881), II 54.

of plague, laws proliferate banishing 'idle workers'; in the Low Countries, similar regulations emerge in the course of the fifteenth century. For instance, in 1456, the city of Louvain decrees that only children under the age of twelve and workers above sixty, the disabled, sick and parents with the care for young children, are allowed to collect alms or beg for bread.[57] To police the access to charity, the city authorities introduce a visual system, using lead tokens hung around the necks of those eligible for support. Hospitals, taverns and innkeepers were held responsible for ensuring that nobody other than the bearers of such tokens be admitted to their properties, under the threat of closure.

Besides limiting access to charity, urban authorities took to penalising the presence of migrant, working poor as beggars, ribalds unable to support themselves. In many cities, regulations determined that beggars should leave the city within a few days. On 9 October 1424, the city of Sint-Truiden in present-day Belgian Limburg, for instance, stipulated that *ribauden* and female *ribaudinnen* only stay in the city and the *vrijheid* for the duration of one night, under the threat that their mandibles or jaws be marked with a hot iron.[58] Louvain, in 1456, ordered that pilgrims and poor vagrants rest in the villages for a day and a night, and in the towns for two nights and a day. Exceeding these terms automatically led to punishment, unless one could argue convincingly that one was unaware of these regulations. In Louvain, the authorities sentenced begging women to three days imprisonment at St Michiel's Gate, on a diet of bread and water. Men were shamed to spending three hours on the pillory.[59] In this same period, royal houses were organising armies of professional soldiers, to which cities contributed by paying a fee rather than manpower. In Italy, professional *condottieri* rented out their services as so-called mercenaries. It is conceivable that the reduction of temporary work in the armies also reduced the ribalds' perceived or accepted usefulness to the community. Bad experiences with roaming, masterless army recruits in the Hundred Years War undoubtedly also harmed their reputation.[60]

[57] Stadsarchief Louvain, inv. nr. 1528, fols. 112r–113v.

[58] Stadsarchief Sint-Truiden, Nachtegael, fol. 21v.

[59] Stadsarchief Louvain, inv. nr. 1528, fols. 112r–113v.

[60] John France (ed.), *Mercenaries and Paid Men: The Mercenary Identity in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2008).

As ribalds increasingly were shunned, in the course of the fifteenth century, they began to slip from the civic fabric as sanitary police. Sanitation work was, more and more, institutionalised. So-called *meurderaars* in Bruges were, for instance, tasked with removing dead cats, dogs and pigs from the city's canals and sanitising the city in preparation of festivities.[61] Cities assigned religious confraternities, such as the *cellebroeders*, *-zusters* and *grauwzusters*, with the care for and burial of plague victims, as they did *reeuers* and later *schrobbers* and *schrobberessen* with cleaning the houses of the sick.[62] Thus, the temporary and itinerant nature of dirt work transformed into institutionalised forms of work.

Under these conditions, some non-citizen ribald workers managed to improve their lot. They might be authorised to draw income from fines collected while walking their beat. Janna Coomans identified one former servant, Gossine, who was elected king of the ribalds in Ghent in the 1350s—was he already a citizen of Ghent?[63] Poignantly, the city of Utrecht, from the 1390s, offered so-called *slijkburgers* temporary, non-hereditary citizenship in exchange for cleaning specific sites such as the stairwells to canal waterfront—over ninety cases and contracts from Utrecht issued in the fifteenth century have survived.[64]

Nonetheless, we can assume that many ribalds continued to seek work as masterless men without, albeit temporary, citizenship status. They now featured in literary sources, such as those narrating the adventures of the Aernoutsbroeders, vagabonds active particularly around the coal mines in the Liège and Maastricht region. These ribalds are depicted carrying nets, with gauze covering their faces to protect them from hazardous dust (Fig. 1). Paintings show them dancing and singing.[65] They also appear in sixteenth-century depictions of carnival, swirling around the centre piece of the urban well, where food and drink was distributed (Fig. 2). It is to these images, in the context of civic festivities, that the final section of this contribution will now turn. As we shall see, within discourses

[61] *Inventaire des archives de la ville de Bruges*, iv 80, 337, 417–418, 475, 477, 489, 516.

[62] Saskia Leupen, 'De kloosters van de cellebroeders en -zusters in het graafschap Holland en Zeeland tot aan de Reformatie', *Holland* 30 (1998): 63–93.

[63] Coomans, 'King of Dirt', 99.

[64] Carla Kwakman, 'Slijkburgers in Utrecht', *Madoc* 19, no. 3 (2005): 167–174.

[65] D.Th. Enklaar, *Varende luyden: Studien over de middeleeuwse groepen van onmaatschappelijken in de Nederlanden* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1937).

Fig. 1 Detail from Sebastiaan Vrancx, *Allegory of Winter* (1608), of workers with nets covering their faces. *BD/Rubenianum/digital collections (afb.nr. 1,001,204,064)*

of citizenship and wellbeing, ribalds continued to take centre stage as figures mirroring 'good citizens', whereby they formed part of the social hierarchy, yet dwelled on its very edges.

4 Performing Citizenship in Civic-Military Festivals

As non-citizens responsible for the vital dirty work, from the thirteenth century, ribalds played a central role in performing military-civic identity. As outsiders, they were pivotal in drawing the city's inner physical, social and moral boundaries. Thus, ribalds took on the shameful, indispensable tasks that citizens shunned. As a form of socio-economic, physiognomic and gendered othering, their position in the civic fabric was shamed, however, allowing the citizens to disassociate themselves from such low-status toils. This role the ribalds enacted in civic-religious commemorations of military feats.

In Tuscan siege warfare, Richard Trexler showed, ribalds not only were expected to man the machinery, firing projectiles, scaling and mining

Fig. 2 *The Fight between Carnival and Lent*, by Pieter Bruegel the Elder 1559. Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna. In the rear left, lepers march into the city; to the right, beggars and cripples leave the church. In the right, front, a sick woman and child beg. In the centre stands the well and food wares are traded, symbols of civic public health-amenities

walls, but also to hurl insults at the enemy to defame them. Siege warfare included tactics of shaming, as is observed in the early thirteenth century by William of Auvergne in northern France, stating that 'kings customarily exposed cities under siege to ribalds, actors and prostitutes when the great armies failed to fight and capture them'.[66] Youths, on the part of the victor-aggressors, were mobilised to act out the insults hurled at the governors of conquered cities. Afterwards, races on foot and on horses, such as the *Palio* in Siena, celebrated the endeavours of militias who had

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[66] William of Auvergne, *Sermones de communi sanctorum et de occasionibus*, 54, ed. Franco Morenzoni, CCCM 230C (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 194. *[R]eges ciuitates munitas quas obsident exponere solent ribaldis, istrionibus et meretricibus quando ipsi maiores exercitus eas expugnare et capere negligunt.*

staged similar races outside city walls during siege warfare.[67] The dirty work of ribalds in siege warfare was re-enacted in these urban festivities. However, ribalds, as non-citizens, were now insulted in these civic festivals, sometimes at the city gates, in order to restore the honour of the city after the less honourable, dirty work of warfare was spent. Thus, the festivities within the city echoed, through re-enactment, the shameful exploits perpetrated in the heat of warfare, yet offered citizens the opportunity to expose, control and quench any taboos violated in the fray.

In doing so, civic festivities satirising the ribalds' work held up a mirror to the 'good citizens', shaming the onlookers to uphold good civic morals. In this sense, the ribald actors hired on these occasions for the festivities—including sex workers in Italian cities—served as moral policers as well as being morally policed. In 1329, the town of Ivrea for instance organised races to celebrate the city's saint's vital day and its military victories supervised by a *podestas meretricum*. These enactments served in particular to control—through an orchestrated public enactment of taboos—female virtue, productive and reproductive work.[68] In satirical texts, plays and fabliaux, such as the later sixteenth-century *Der fielen, rabauwen, oft der schalcken vocaulaer*, scenes represented women feigning false pregnancies and beggars simulating illness.[69]

In this context, we again come across the king of the ribalds, appointed temporarily to manage large crowds of vagrants visiting the towns during these fairs. Viltart has observed that in Rijsel (present-day Lille) the king of the ribalds was employed for various small jobs during such festivities. Alongside the city herald and his messenger, the king was rewarded with some wine for helping in the great procession of the Fête de l'Épinette, in 1404. In Abbeville, the pastor of the parish of Notre-Dame self-appointed himself king of the ribalds during an annual fair while the church staged performances of minstrels, storytellers and hawkers. In Picardy, Saint-Quentin and Péronne, the king of the ribalds similarly presided over the annual festival.[70] In Ghent, ribalds assisted the night watch procession (*Auweet*) in the middle of Lent.[71] These festivities often attracted hawkers

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[67] Trexler, 'Collective Insults', 857–872.

[68] Trexler, 'Collective Insults', 881–890.

[69] *Der Fielen, Rabauwen, oft der Schalcken Vocabulaer* (Antwerpen: Jan de Laet, 1563).

[70] Viltart, 'Le roi des ribauds', 88–89.

[71] Coomans, 'King of Dirt', 95.

selling theriac and pills, as well as beggars and lepers coming to the city to collect alms.

Ribalds' role in fairs, working alongside actors, jesters and hawkers, placed them in a society of itinerant sellers of medicinal wares and entertainers who negotiated the boundaries of reality and illusion, such as the so-called charlatans at fairs who alongside *histriones*, storytellers, peddled their cures.[72] In the course of the fifteenth century, city magistrates increasingly attempted to exclude these non-professional health workers from cities, restricting medical care to certified barbers and surgeons who were members of guilds. For instance, in Utrecht in 1434, 1459 and 1461, the aldermen issued ordinances against so-called quacks.[73] It is conceivable that some of these so-called quacks belonged to the sphere of the ribalds who had picked up their knowledge in public sanitation and the military. Ordinances forbade ribalds from going to the houses, church, taverns and weddings with *niewelen*, little cakes usually taken with medicines, and spiced wine (*clareyt*).[74] In 1407, the Buurspraakboek of Utrecht records the punishment of a man for peddling medicinal wares, who is penalised by being placed in a barrel.[75]

5   Urban Panegyrics and Citizenship

If the ribalds working in sanitation suffered low status, the urban elite—the clerics and secular administrators who did not perform dirty work—endeavoured to emphasise in panegyrical texts their own cleanliness, dwelling in a perfect environment. Indeed, from the twelfth century, scholars revitalising the classical genre of urban panegyrics sketched theirs a beneficial environment, emphasising how the clean streets, fresh air and clear water where they lived produced virtuous citizens.[76] The ideal space of Eden's pure environment—untainted by corrupt matter—invited the

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[72] David Gentilcore, *Medical Charlatanism in Early Modern Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 31–50.

[73] *De gilden van Utrecht tot 1528*, ed. J.C. Overvoorde and J.G.C. Joosting, 2 vols (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1896), II 22–25.

[74] *De oudste rechten der stad Dordrecht en van het baljuwschap van Zuidholland*, ed. J.A. Fruin, 2 vols (The Hague: M, Nijhoff, 1882), I 68, 201.

[75] Utrecht, Stadsbestuur van Utrecht 1122–1577, inv. nr. 16, 3 April 1407.

[76] Alistair Minnis, *From Eden to Eternity: Creations of Paradise in the Later Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennysylvania Press, 2015), 88–91.

clergy to compare the walled urban community to that paradisical site in whose centre stood the fount of life (satirised in depictions of carnival). Walled cities, like monastic communities, thereby echoed the ideal conditions of a health-giving Eden, where man in its perfect form once spent his days in a vermin-free, gated community.

Several encomia claimed that the decency and urbanity of the civic population evolved directly from a health-giving environment.[77] Integrating Graeco-Arabic medical texts, encomia stressed that the air quality and climate not only benefitted health but also the mental, and by extension moral, capacities of population groups. In addition to extolling the virtues of salubrious air, panegyrics commented on the quality of sanitation in the city. The Parisian scholastic Jean de Jandun (1280–1328), for instance, remarked in his *laudes* of Paris (1323) that the city was clean (*propitius*) and admired by all men of good will.[78] The Italian grammarian Bonvesin de la Riva (1240–c.1313) claimed that, supported by good government, laws and institutions, city dwellers might derive additional benefits from a healthy environment.

Civic panegyrics focused on the dress, behaviour, virtuous character and physical qualities of their burghers, upholding the honour and common good (*bonum commune*) of the entire community. From a biopolitical, racialising perspective, the texts comment on the morality and fecundity of the female population, who protected the survival and 'pure lineage' of the citizens by sustaining population numbers. Virtuous civility was, moreover, entrenched in Christian values. Ribalds, who so often ensured the water streamed freely and the streets remained clean, were usually not considered part of this honourable company.

In order to achieve the status of 'good citizenship', burghers could turn towards specific scripts, laid out in the so-called regimens or books of conduct produced in large numbers from the twelfth century onwards in Europe in Latin and vernacular languages. In the thirteenth century, translations appeared of the poems like the *Facetus* about household manners. Extracts from popular manuals taught about health and hygiene,

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[77] Claire Weeda, 'Cleanliness, Civility, and the City in Medieval Ideals and Scripts', in *Policing the Urban Environment in Premodern Europe*, ed. Carole Rawcliffe and Claire Weeda (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2019), 39–68.

[78] Jean de Jandun, *Tractatus de laudibus Parisius, Deux éloges de la ville de Paris*, ed. Antoine J.V. Le Roux de Lancy and Lazare M. Tisserand, *Paris et ses historiens au* xiv *et* xve *siècles* (Paris: Imprimerie impériale, 1867), 62.

such as the *Regimen sanitatis Salernitanum*, drawing from the mirror of princes the *Secretum secretorum*, a translation of the tenth-century Arabic *Kitāb* (also known as *Sirr al-asrār*). These texts and conduct books, such as the thirteenth-century Middle Dutch *Bouc van Seden*, featured in urban school curricula where young male citizens between about seven and fourteen years old were prepared for public life.[79] These manuals contained advice how to meet the standards of Christian citizenship equipped with status-enhancing manners, in pursuit of an ideological common good, and how to regulate the community, household and one's own body. Many Church chapters owned such regimens in the Low Countries, as is visible from this graph which shows ownership based upon contemporary wills and library catalogues (Fig. 3).
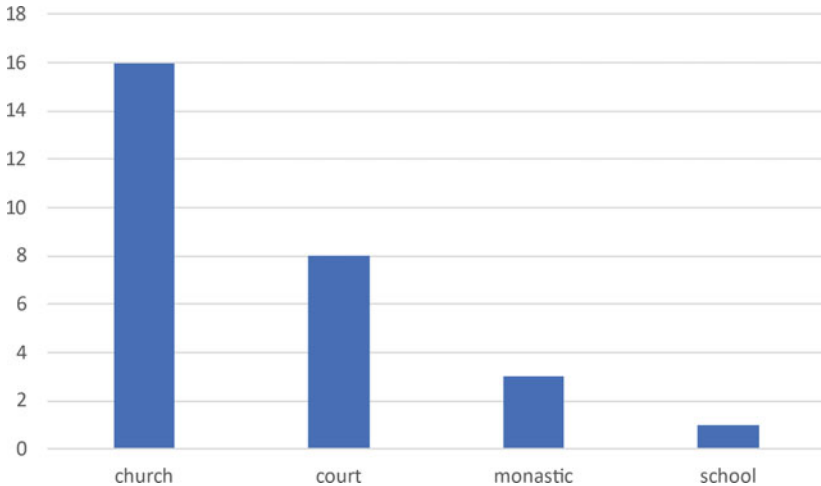
Fig. 3 Graph showing the ownership of conduct books in the southern Low Countries in contemporary wills and library catalogues catalogued in *Corpus catalogorum Belgii: De middeleeuwse bibliotheekscatalogi der Zuidelijke Nederlanden*, ed. Albert Derolez, 7 vols. (Brussels: Koninklijke Vlaamse Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, 1966–2009). 452 manuscripts in total contained medical information

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[79] *Die bouc van seden: Een middelnederlandsch zedekundig leerdicht*, ed. W.H.D. Suringar (Leiden: Gebroeders Van der Hoek, 1891).

Poor migrants would have had little access to such texts at least before the establishment of poor schools in the course of the late fifteenth century.[80]

6 In Conclusion

Studying the fragile position of the ribalds gives insight into how citizenship discourses integrated material and spiritual notions of cleanliness in constructions of identity. The disparaging comments made about the vital, indispensable efforts of ribalds reflected and maintained their marginal social and economic position. With the increasing institutionalisation of low-status work, ribalds' precarious situation sharpened. Those lacking citizenship status, increasingly were shut out from civic society.

In most circumstances, the poor, masterless men remained outside of the civic, idealised arena. The reality was that ribalds led a rough, homeless existence, sleeping outdoors at night 'at the ovens'.[81] At best, ribalds were praised as good, honest workers who took on any dishonourable chores. Thus, the early thirteenth-century *vita* of the Cistercian monk and former constable of the French king, Jean Montismirabilis (1165–1217) from Longpont in northern France, praised ribalds as hard workers. Jean Montismirabilis dedicated his final years to tending to the lepers and poor at his abbey. He commented that ribalds' 'duty it was to clean the stables, to collect waste, to submit humbly to whatever things ought to be discarded, and to earn their bread in the sweat of their brow. Their life, though it may be reckoned vile and despised by men, is nevertheless

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[80] In the late fifteenth century, an exceptional minority are perhaps the poor orphans at the Bogarden school in Bruges, who in some cases were offered access to higher education. Noa Rittersma, 'De bogardenschool van Brugge: Praktijk en ideologie van liefdadigheid, armenzorg en onderwijs (1515–1555)' (MA Thesis, Leiden University, 2022).

[81] *Chronicon abbatiae*, in *Compendiosum abbatiae Longipontis suessionensis chronicon in tres partes distinctum*, ed. Antonio Muldrac (Paris, 1662), 192. *in furno iacere*; William of Auvergne, *Sermones de sanctis* 5, ed. Franco Morenzoni, CCCM 230B (Turnhout: Brepols, 2012), 22. Their lack of clothing was also commented upon. The military surgeon and city doctor Johan Yperman (1260–c. 1332) in his *Cyrurgie* describes how the ribalds, half naked, retained their bodily heat while washing in cold water—the cold water blocking the evaporation of heat. Johan Yperman, *Cyrurgie*, ed. E.C. van Leersum (Leiden: A.W. Sijthoff), 139.

praiseworthy and very precious in the sight of the Lord'.[82] However, Jean Montismirabilis' companion at Longpont, the abbey's prior, was astonished that Jean should express such a benevolent view. In his own opinion, ribalds were a 'race of men despised before God and men', who swore, committed perjury, played dice, connived with women and drank. Surely, this was not good company, the prior responded, thus carefully grooming his own enhanced status within the social hierarchy.[83]

Above all, as this comment suggests, the marginal position of ribalds on the edges of the civic community allowed burghers to, when necessary, make use of their services, while distancing themselves from any dishonourable acts involved. With the growing institutionalisation of public services in the fifteenth century, however, temporary migrant workers more often were pushed entirely out of the city's jurisdiction. Doing the dirty work had now become integral to the city's own institutional infrastructure, running through the very heart of the community.

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[82] *Chronicon abbatiae*, in *Compendiosum abbatiae Longipontis suessionensis chronicon in tres partes distinctum*, ed. Antonio Muldrac (Paris, 1662), 192. *[Q]uasi pro officio stabulam mundare, simum comportare quibuslibet abiectis rebus agendis et tolerandis humiliter subiacere et in sudore vultus sui panem suum manducare, quorum vita licet ab hominibus vilis reputetur et despecta, est tamen laudabilis et in conspectu domini valde pretiosa.*

[83] *Chronicon abbatiae*, 192.

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Civic Cohesion in Turbulent Times: Galbert of Bruges, the Urban Community and the Murder of the Count of Flanders in 1127

Rob Meens

1 INTRODUCTION

After the year 1000 we see that cities started to develop in many areas in Western Europe. One of the regions where this can be seen to make its mark on the existing landscape, power relations and mentalities, is the region of Flanders where towns such as Ypres, Lille, Gent and Bruges became important trading and urban centres.[1] A unique and in many ways revealing source providing insight into such an urban community is the *History of the Murder of the Flemish Count Charles the Good*, composed by Galbert of Bruges. Galbert wrote his work soon after 1127, the year that the Flemish count was brutally attacked and killed while

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[1] Adriaan Verhulst, *The Rise of Cities in North-West Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

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he was praying in the Church of St. Donatian. Galbert's history was not very popular during the Middle Ages, but especially since the work was edited by Henri Pirenne in 1891 it became a classic for medieval historians.[2] This was partly due to Pirenne's conviction that we are dealing with an almost unmediated window into the twelfth century. For Pirenne Galbert's history work was the result of a careful but naïve chronicler of events, as the unique journalistic structure of the work—it is structured by events taking place on particular days, almost like a personal journal— and his own account of his reporting activities suggests. In a remarkable passage, which conveys something of the vividness of this text, Galbert tells us that:

> in the midst of such a great uproar of events and the burning of so many houses – set on fire by burning arrows shot onto the roofs of the town by night from within the castle and by brigands from the outside in the hope of stealing something for themselves – and among so many dangers during the nights and so many conflicts during the days that I, Galbert, since I had no place for writing, noted down on tablets a summary of the events that were going on until at some point, in a longed-for moment of peace during the night or day, I could set in order the present description according to what had happened. And in this way, constrained as I was, I transcribed for the faithful what you see and read.[3]

We now know, however, mainly thanks to Jeff Rider and Alan Murray, that Galbert was no detached observer of his world, but rather an author writing with clear objectives.[4] Moreover, Galbert was an author who was

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[2] Galbert of Bruges, *Histoire du meurtre de Charles le Bon, Comte de Flandre (1127– 28)*, ed. Henri Pirenne, Collection de textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'histoire 10 (Paris: Picard, 1891); see Jeff Rider, 'Galbert of Bruges' 'Journal'. From Medieval Flop to Modern Bestseller', in *Verhalende bronnen. Repertoriëring, editie en commercialisering*, ed. Ludo Milis, Véronique Lambert, and Ann Kelders, Studia Historica Gandensia 283 (Gent: Opleiding Geschiedenis Universiteit Gent, 1996), 67–93.

[3] Galbert of Bruges, *De multro, traditione, et occisione gloriosi Karoli comitis Flandriarum*, c. 35, ed. Jeff Rider, CC Continuatio Mediaevalis 131 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1994), 81; I used the translation Galbert of Bruges, *The Murder, Betrayal, and Slaughter of the Glorious Charles, Count of Flanders*, trans. Jeff Rider (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2013), here 65–66.

[4] Fundamental is Jeff Rider, *God's Scribe. The Historiographical Art of Galbert of Bruges* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2001); Alan Murray, 'Voices of Flanders: Orality and Constructed Orality in the Chronicle of Galbert of Bruges',

able to deploy clever rhetorical devices. As a notary, Galbert was less well trained in writing a sophisticated Latin, but as an author he used direct speech and suggestive details quite effectively to make his point. Moreover, careful reading makes it clear that Galbert did rewrite certain parts of his text and that he did make an effort to turn it into a coherent narrative. Yet his work is not easy to interpret. One of the reasons why it is so hard to grasp is that it is unfinished. We do not know why Galbert did not finish his work, but because it remained unfinished, we do not have a coherent and polished narrative. Instead, loose threads and thoughts remain in the narrative that were not developed to their logical conclusion. This disadvantage is at the same time one of the advantages of Galbert's work, for it shows us an author still in the middle of his work.

Another factor which makes this text so intriguing is that Galbert did not just write his account in order to convince an audience. Certainly, he tried to turn the murdered count into a saint, and he put the blame for this crime at the door of Bertulf, the powerful provost of the chapter of St. Donatian and his relatives. For a long period, he was also convinced that William Clito, son of count Robert of Normandy and favourite of the French king Louis VI, the Fat, had to be the lawful successor of Count Charles. But his journal is not only an occasionally biased and coloured account of these eventful times, it is also a quest for meaning. In this work we observe an author struggling to find a deeper meaning in the events in Flanders of his time. Galbert found it hard to understand and to explain why the good count Charles had to be murdered, why the provost of his chapter, Bertulf, participated in this act and why William Clito was replaced after a serious civil war by Thierry of Alsace as successor of Charles. It is precisely these doubts and this sometimes unresolved quest for meaning that makes Galbert's work so intriguing.

Galbert is writing at a time when the inhabitants of Bruges act as a group. The town community is clearly a political factor, which presupposes political organisation of some sort. As stated in the recent history of Bruges, edited by Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn, it is clear that although we have no official documents that prove the existence of a civic community in Bruges, such a commune must have existed at the time that Galbert wrote his journal. Dumolyn, Declercq and Haemers observe that

'Galbert of Bruges' description of events following the murder of Count Charles the Good in 1127 appears to show Flemish burgers as emancipated and political conscious groups, fully prepared to take up arms to protect their rights'.[5] The early history of Flemish urban communes remains somewhat unclear because of a lack of sources, leaving room for different interpretations particularly concerning the role of oath-taking, violent revolt and the contribution by the counts of Flanders to the process, but the aforesaid authors conclude that between the reigns of Robert the Frisian (r. 1071–1093) and William Clito (r. 1127–1128), 'the Flemish towns became in effect, if not in legal practice, largely autonomous bodies separated from the countryside'.[6] For Bruges no documents survive that were employed to establish this urban community nor do we have documents that were employed in its functioning, prior to Galbert. It is in Galbert's text that we see this early urban community coming to light. Through Galbert we know that there existed some form of urban law, that the citizens of Bruges acted as a collective and that they were treated as a partner by the count, nobles and the French king.[7]

The work of Galbert of Bruges has, of course, been used to reconstruct the early history of Bruges since the nineteenth century, by famous and competent historians such as Henri Pirenne, François-Louis Ganshof, Adriaan Verhulst, Bert Demyttenaere and others.[8] Manfred Groten has provided us with a study of what Galbert teaches us about the political organisation of the town of Bruges, or rather the lack thereof.[9] This paper

[5] Jan Dumolyn, Georges Declercq, and Jelle Haemers, 'Social Groups, Political Power and Institutions I, c.1100–c.1300', in *Medieval Bruges 850–1550*, ed. Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 124–151, here 126.

[6] Dumolyn, Declercq, and Haemers, 'Social Groups, Political Power and Institutions', 129.

[7] Dumolyn, Declercq, and Haemers, 'Social Groups, Political Power and Institutions', 129–130.

[8] François-Louis Ganshof, 'Le droit urbain en Flandre au début de la première phase de son histoire (1127)', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 19 (1951): 387–416; Adriaan Verhulst, 'Les origines et l'histoire ancienne de la ville de Bruges (IXe XIIe siècle)', in *Anfänge des Städtewesens an Schelde, Maas und Rhein bis zum Jahre 1000*, ed. Adriaan Verhulst (Cologne: Böhlau, 1996), 225–240; Albert Demyttenaere, 'Galbert of Bruges on Political Meeting Culture: Palavers and Fights in Flanders During the Years 1127 and 1128', in *Political Assemblies in the Earlier Middle Ages*, ed. Paul Barnwell and Marco Mostert (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 151–192.

[9] Manfred Groten, 'In tanto tumulto rerum. Die Bürger von Brügge in Galberts Bericht über die Ermordung Graf Karls von Flandern 1127', in *Vielfalt der Geschichte.*

will not review or evaluate their work, but will focus on the position of Galbert himself. His text provides us with a unique occasion to see how an inhabitant of Bruges saw himself in relation to the urban community. This may not seem obvious since we do not know much about Galbert as a person. Therefore, we first need to see what we can say about him.

2   Galbert of Bruges

Apparently, Galbert was employed as a scribe in the chancellery of the Flemish counts in Bruges, at the time the administrative centre of the comital domains and of the county of Flanders. The comital chancellery was headed by Bertulf. As such, Galbert was subservient to the very man he and other contemporaries held responsible for the murder of the Flemish count. The comital chancellery and administration were run mainly by the collegiate chapter of St. Donatian and Galbert was probably associated with this institution, although he never identifies himself as a member of that institution or speaks about the canons as his closest associates. Galbert had been taught to write in Latin and had a basic education in grammar, rhetoric and dialectic and he demonstrates some knowledge of scholastic ideas about the working of the human mind. There is no reason to suppose that he studied in Laon, although he makes the remark that a number of *scholares* from Bruges were studying there. It is clear, however, that Galbert was a man of some education, and apparently, he was a clergyman in minor orders.[10]

Now we might think that the views of a clergyman on his relation to the urban community are not particularly interesting, because some clerics, such as Galbert's near contemporary Guibert of Nogent, depicted the urban community in traditional negative terms.[11] Galbert is different, however, as we will see. It is clear that Galbert was well informed about

Lernen, Lehren und Erforschen vergangener Zeiten. Festgabe für Ingrid Heidrich zum 65. Geburtstag, ed. Sabine Happ and Ulrich Nonn (Berlin: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 2004), 126–140.

[10] On Galbert's education, see: Rider, *God's Scribe*, 21–22.

[11] Guibert de Nogent, *Monodiae*, particularly III.7, ed. E.R. Labande, *Autobiographie. Les classiques de l'histoire de France au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Société d'Édition "Les Belles Lettres", 1981), 320–321; Guibert's testimony of the revolt in Laon has been an almost classic text for the rise of the town in medieval Europe; see, e.g. the discussion in Dominique Barthélemy, 'Lectures de Guibert de Nogent (Autobiographie, III, 1–11)', in *Les origines des libertés urbaines: Actes du 16ᵉ Congrès des historiens médiévistes de*

what was going on not only in the town of Bruges, but also in the wider world of the county of Flanders. He must have received his information from different sources and seems particularly well-connected to the townspeople of Bruges. Jeff Rider suspects that he lived 'a relatively secular life'.[12] There is no indication of any opposition in Bruges between the town's people and the clerics related to the collegiate chapter of St. Donatian. The provost Bertulf and his family seem to have acted often in concordance with the town, also because both parties had a common enemy in the family of Thancmar van Straten.[13] The ties between the town's people and the clerics associated with running the comital administration seem to have been rather tight. Jeff Rider, at the moment the foremost specialist on Galbert, even goes so far as to conclude that our twelfth-century historian composed his chronicle as 'a townsman writing for his fellow townsmen'.[14] In Rider's words,

> [Galbert] had a clear idea of the people for whom he was writing, could see their faces in his mind, could imagine them reading or hearing what he had written, could imagine their reactions; and the people he imagined were not, or at least not mostly, bishops, abbots, archdeacons, schoolmasters, cathedral clergy, monks, kings, counts, or barons, but notaries, clerks, town knights, and important townspeople, that is minor officials, employees, and small businesspeople, so to speak, rather than people who directed and managed major institutions of the day.[15]

If Rider is correct, Galbert's work is a privileged source for this inquiry, as we have a text written by someone from a young urban community writing from within. As such, it provides us with evidence of how a member of such an urban centre thought about the community, how he identified with it, or distanced himself from it. It shows us how a citizen—if we may use that word here—imagined the city and citizenship. Now let us see how Galbert thought and writes about the city of Bruges and its citizens.

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l'enseignement supérieur (Rouen 7–8 juin 1985) (Rouen: Publications de l'Universite de Rouen, 1990), 175–192.

[12] Jeff Rider, 'Introduction', in *Galbert of Bruges*, *The Murder*, trans. Rider, xxxii.

[13] Galbert, *De multro,* c. 45, ed. Rider, 95.

[14] Rider, 'Introduction', xix.

[15] Rider, 'Introduction', xix.

3 Galbert and the Body Politic in Bruges

City and citizenship might look like grand terms for what actually was a rather small town. Although in its age Bruges was one of the major urban centres in Europe, in modern eyes it was only a big village, with around 5000 inhabitants.[16] At the time it was not the seat of an episcopal see, and thus not a *civitas*. In general, Galbert's terminology follows this contemporary convention: he employs the term *civitas* only for the major ecclesiastical centres with a cathedral. But there are noteworthy exceptions. In chapter 47, for instance, he seems to use the word *civitas* in a more general sense when he describes how almost all the citizens of Flanders objected to William of Ypres as their new count because he was born a bastard. Galbert is here referring to a letter sent by the French king Louis the Fat, and here he speaks about *omnes fere de civitatibus* where he probably meant more than just the inhabitants of Tournai or Tournai, technically the only *civitates* in the county.[17] One could argue that Galbert here mimics the words of the French king, but it seems that *civitas* might mean more than just episcopal town. In an important chapter where Galbert describes the cooperation that existed between the towns in Flanders, Galbert refers to the citizens (burgenses) of the *civitates* and *castra* of Flanders, associating both *civitates* and *castra* with citizens.[18]

We see that Galbert uses the word *burgenses* here for inhabitants of *civitates* as well as *castra*. With the word *castrum* Galbert denotes sometimes castles, but at times, as in this passage, also towns (adjacent to

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[16] Jan Dumolyn, Marc Ryckaert, Brigitte Meijns, Heidi Deneweth, and Luc Devliegher, 'The Urban Landscape I: c.1100– c.1275', in *Medieval Bruges 850–1550*, ed. Andrew Brown and Jan Dumolyn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 52–85, here 54.

[17] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 47, ed. Rider, 97. *Igitur - quia terra conturbata est et conjurationes jam factae sunt in persona Willelmi ut violenter regnum obtineat, et contra eum omnes fere de **civitatibus** adjuraverunt se nullo modo Willelmum illum in comitem recepturos eo quod spurius sit, natus scilicet ex nobili patre et matre ignobili quae lanas carpere, dum viveret ipsa, non cessaret - volo et praecipio vobis, sine dilatione coram me convenite et communi consilio eligite comitem utilem vobis qualem et terrae et incolis praeesse consenseritis* [emphasis mine].

[18] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 53, ed. Rider, 102. *Nam ex civitatibus Flandriae et castris burgenses stabant in eadem securitate et amicitia ad invicem ut nihil in electione nisi communiter consentirent aut contradicerent.*

castles).[19] In chapter 2 he describes how the people in Flanders during the serious famine of 1125 that plagued them fled to *civitates et castra* to buy bread. These *castra* were probably also urban centres. Sometimes Galbert is more precise and speaks about the *suburbium* around the castle.[20] The towns in Flanders were therefore, in his eyes, closely associated with their castles, and thus with the claims on violence by the counts of Flanders. Such *castra* were associated with a marketplace and characterised by security, an absence of arms and by the peace of the count.[21]

In chapter 75 Galbert uses a somewhat different topography. Here he describes how, in the course of the conflict, the killers of the count were more and more confined to specific spaces in the city, one of the literary motives identified by Rider. The killers first felt unthreatened and walked around freely. Then they were confined to the town which Galbert calls *vicus loci nostri* here. They were then pressed to protect the *villam et suburbium nostrum*, by a wall and ditch. From there they had to retreat to the castle and after that to church of St. Donatian and later to the tower of the church. Finally, they ended up in a dungeon. Again, we see the castle at the centre of Galbert's topography, closely associated with comital power and with the church of St. Donatian.[22]

We have seen that Galbert uses the term *burgenses* to denote the inhabitants of towns, *civitates* and *castra*. With the term *burgenses*, he refers to the citizens of Bruges—mostly as *burgenses nostri*—Gent, Oudenaarde, Mons, St. Omer and sometimes, as we have seen, to the citizens of Flanders in general. Occasionally Galbert also uses *suburbani* for those

[19] See: Raoul van Caenegem, Albert Demyttenaere, and Luc Devliegher, *De moord op Karel de Goede door Galbert van Brugge* (Leuven: Davidsfonds, 1999), 115, fn. 13.

[20] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 27, ed. Rider, 65. *Proinde accessum fecit Gervasius cum potentia sua versus castrum in quo sese praemunierant traditores, circumiens excursus et praeveniens transitus illorum circa suburbium castri.*

[21] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 1, ed. Rider, 7. *Tandem videns gratiam pacis omnibus jucundam, indixit per terminos regni ut sub quiete et securitate absque armorum usu communiter degerent, quicumque aut in foro aut infra castra manerent et conversarentur, alioquin ipsis plecterentur armis quae ferrent. Sub hac ergo observantia arcus et sagittae et subsequenter omnia arma postposita sunt in forinsecis locis sicut et in pacificis.*

[22] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 75, ed. Rider, 128; for the theme of confinement in Galbert, see Rider, *God's Scribe*, 68–69. See also: Jeff Rider, 'Le concept de l'espace urbain chez Galbert de Bruges (1127–1128)', in *Espaces et Mondes au Moyen Âge. Actes du colloque international tenu à Bucarest les 17–18 octobre 2008* (Bucarest: Editura Universitatii din Bucuresti, 2009), 387–396, for a somewhat different reading.

living near the castle.[23] His most favourite term to denote the citizens is, however, *cives*. Whereas he uses the word *burgenses* 20 times in his chronicle, *cives* or one of its declensions is employed more than 170 times.[24] In chapter 3 Galbert distinguishes between *cives* on the one hand and *incolae terrae* on the other. For him, it seems, *cives* were clearly distinct from those who lived on the land.[25]

Most of the times the term *civis* is used for the people of Bruges, and it is interesting that Galbert almost nowhere speaks about individual citizens. This in marked contrast to when he is speaking about aristocratic or ecclesiastic personalities, which are often presented as named individuals, as real personalities. The urban community, however, is, in the eyes of Galbert, precisely that: a community, with no room for individuals. In the chronicle the townspeople almost always act as a group and although Galbert occasionally refers to disagreement among them, he never provides any details about specific individuals or families within the town. Although Galbert must have known the local community in Bruges quite well, he always presents them as a group. In chapter 35 he explains his stance as follows:

> Given the confusion and endless number of things going on, I did not note down what individuals (*singuli*) did but noted down with an intent mind only the things that were accomplished by common edict during the siege and by common action in the fighting and their causes …[26]

This is understandable, but when Galbert speaks about noblemen or prelates, he does talk about individual actions. The result of his approach is that the town community almost acts as an organic unity.

There is one instance where a fissure appears in the unanimity of the citizens of Bruges. This occurs the day after the murder in the Church of St. Donatian, when Bertulf and his men are still freely walking around. When the abbot of St. Peter's in Gent arrived in Bruges to transport the body of the dead count to his abbey, the poor of the town are the first to

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[23] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 25 and 52, ed. Rider, 61 and 101.

[24] Word counts performed through Brepolis.

[25] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 3, ed. Rider, 11. *Cervisiam quoque interdixit confici ut eo levius et melius abundarent pauperes, si a cervisia conficienda cessarent tempore famis **cives** et incolae terrae.*

[26] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 35, ed. Rider, 81.

notice that Bertulf and his fellows are trying to get rid of the body of the count. They notice Bertulf's actions, because they are waiting in line for the alms that the provost is dispensing. The other citizens were avoiding all contact with the killers of the count, so Galbert states, clearly with the objective to clear his fellow citizens of any complicity in the acts. Bertulf was apparently seeking support for his faction by handing out alms to the poor, yet it is interesting that only here the unanimity of the townspeople seems to have been fractured. The poor (*pauperes*) might be associated with the killers, and the *prudentes et discreti* should remain free of such associations.[27]

When Bertulf and the abbot of St. Peter's in Gent tried to move the dead body of count Charles, not only the poor came in action. The canons of St. Donatian, the church over which Bertulf as provost presided, also opposed moving the body and when they felt threatened by Bertulf, they armed themselves with boards, stools and candelabra and rang the church bells in order to mobilise the citizens who swiftly came to their assistance armed with swords. This show of force of the citizens made an impression and Bertulf and his companions backed down and promised not to act against the wishes of the citizens.[28] Galbert's sympathy here clearly lies with the citizens of Bruges, and it is interesting that he describes the canons at this point as closely cooperating with the citizens, even against their provost and his powerful companions. This confirms our view that the canons felt associated with the town, perhaps regarded themselves even as part of the town community, as we concluded when looking at Galbert's position in town.[29]

Yet the townsmen were not as aloof from the faction that killed the count as Galbert presents it here. Somewhat later he has to concede that they took part in deliberations with the provost, his brother the castellan and the nephews. Galbert adds that they did so only in order to keep informed of the sly plans of the killers and their companions, but this sounds more like an excuse. Interestingly he does not refer to the citizens as *cives* here, but in this context uses the term *suburbani*,

[27] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 22, ed. Rider, 53.

[28] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 22, ed. Rider, 55.

[29] Steven Isaac, 'Galbert of Bruges and the Urban Experience of Siege', in *Galbert of Bruges and the Historiography of Medieval Flanders* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 89–106, here 103–104. This discusses the 'remarkable solidarity of the town's clergy with the townspeople'.

perhaps a way to avoid compromising the *cives*.[30] Furthermore, Bertulf would have ordered the townsmen to prepare defence works around the *loca suburbani*, that is the town area around the castle, to be prepared against anyone with bad intentions. The citizens acted as Bertulf wanted, but, Galbert adds, with different intentions. Again, he seeks to dissimulate cooperation between Bertulf and the citizens of Bruges, who when reading between the lines were implicated a lot more in the affair than Galbert is willing to admit. Everyone worked day and night to build towers, ramparts and exits, a task in which the clergy worked side by side with the laity, Galbert writes, perhaps implicating that he himself took part in it as well. Galbert here writes to exonerate the urban community of cooperating with Bertulf and his men and this again shows how closely Galbert felt associated with it.

The tide turned for Bertulf and his men when on the 8th of March a nobleman Gervaas van Praat started a violent attack on them. According to Galbert the citizens of Bruges—the *burgenses*—did not feel free to show their joy when hearing about Gervaas' actions, because they were afraid of Bertulf and his men, who still moved freely and powerfully among them, he writes. Again, we can read this as a defence of the town by Galbert, who tries to cover up the fact that not everyone in the city may have been as happy with this turn of events as he wants his readers to believe. Looking closely at this story (chapter 27), we can observe that the urban community was in fact divided. Galbert informs us that some among the citizen body sent secret messengers to Gervaas and his men to swear trust, friendship and pledges of security. They swore that they would avenge the murder of count Charles and that they would let them into the town as brothers. This was all done in secret without Bertulf's men knowing about it, but it was also kept secret from most of their fellow citizens, except for a few wise men (*paucos sapientiores loci*) who acted thus for everyone's benefit, Galbert writes.[31] We may wonder what really happened here. Was this a private initiative of some local individuals or families who had ties with Gervaas, or was this really a decision reached by the urban community in secret? It is clear that there was actually substantial support among the people of Bruges for the coup staged

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[30] Galbert uses the term 'suburbani' only two times in the whole text, here c. 25 and in indirect speech in c. 52, ed. Rider 61 and 101.

[31] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 27, ed. Rider 65–67.

by Bertulf and his men, as is indicated, for example, by the judicial inquisition that was instigated by the French king and William Clito into the murder of the count.[32] So we have to conclude that there was tension and dissent within the town of Bruges.

When the following day some of the citizens had let Gervaas and his men in, those who were unaware of the secret embassy, and that was a major part of the population (*pars plurima*), accompanied the men of Bertulf fully armed. Galbert goes on to tell us that at that moment part of the population supported Bertulf and his men, while another part supported Gervaas, but once the secret pact was made public, all sided with Gervaas against the murderers of the count. Although Galbert here sketches some form of disagreement among the citizens, he only speaks in general terms and never mentions any particular persons, not even those wise men who had taken the initiative to start secret negotiations with the party of Gervaas. The tensions were also miraculously solved once the secret pact became known. This seems a bit hard to believe and should better be viewed as another instance of the way in which Galbert exonerated his townsmen in participating in the coup led by Bertulf.

A clear sense of local identity emerges from the way in which Galbert distinguishes the citizens from Bruges from those of the nearby urban centre of Gent. He relates how soon afterwards a number of leading noblemen gathered near Bruges, among whom the castellan of Gent and Diksmuide as well as the advocate of St. Peter's abbey in Gent. They negotiated with the citizens for admission into the town and when they promised to leave the town unharmed, they were allowed to enter.[33] The noblemen apparently had asked assistance from the city of Gent and on the 14 and 15th of March a group of armed people from Gent arrived at Bruges. Galbert describes the *burgenses* from Gent in a very negative way. They are a bunch of greedy looters, robbers, murderers and scoundrels, but apparently also skilful soldiers experienced in siege warfare. The arrival of their fellow citizens from Gent must have alarmed the townsmen from

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[32] For this inquisition see: Alan Murray, 'The Judicial Inquest into the Death of Count Charles of Flanders (1127)', *Tijdschrift voor Rechtsgeschiedenis* 68 (2000): 47–61. The text is edited as 'Enqueste et jugement de chiaus qui le conte Charlon avoient ochis', in *Walteri Archidiaconi Tervanensis, Vita Karoli Comitis Flandriae et Vita Domni Ioannis Morinensis Episcopi quibus subiunguntur poemata aliqua de morte comitis Karoli conscripta et quaestio de eadem facta*, ed. J. Rider, CC Continuatio Mediaevalis 217 (Turnhout: Brepols 2006), 199–209.

[33] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 30 en 31, ed. Rider, 73–75.

Bruges and they made an effort to withstand them when they entered the town. It would have come to a military confrontation, had not the wiser men from both sides come to an agreement. The men from Gent had to take an oath not to harm the town or the possessions of the citizens of Bruges and they had to send away all those who had accompanied them just for the sake of looting.

Galbert describes the military skills of the people from Gent with some admiration, but he also accuses them, when they managed to enter the castle, of being more interested in looting than in fighting. When some men from Gent wanted to gain hold of the dead body of count Charles to move it to Gent, it again nearly came to a violent confrontation were it not that the wiser men (*sapientiores*) stepped in once more. The greed of the people from Gent is criticised by the story Galbert tells about the way a young man from the mob from Gent (*ex Gendensium turba*) came to his end. When he had been able to enter the church of St. Donatian and started to loot the place, the lid of the chest that he was plundering fell on his head and thus he ended his life.[34] This was a punishment well deserved, is Galbert's implicit message here.

That many citizens felt sympathy for Bertulf and his companions is clear from an episode in which the associates of Thancmar van Straten occupied the house of Bertulf in the castle and triumphantly had put up their family banners there. This enraged the citizens of Gent to such a degree that they resorted to their weapons and wanted to hang Thancmar's nephews. In doing so they were cheered on by those members of Bertulf's party who had fled into the church. It is in this context that Galbert for the first time in his works speaks positively about Bertulf and his fellows, contrasting their friendly and honourable treatment of anyone in the town and the county, with the pride of those supporting Thancmar. According to the crowd who had gathered in the marketplace, it was Thancmar and his nephews who were to blame for the death of count Charles, not the men of Bertulf, who at that moment were in such dire straits in the besieged church of St. Donatian.[35]

On the 20th of March the French king Louis VI, the Fat, came to Flanders, to the town in Arras, to settle the problems in the county and to advance his own candidate for the countship. The king deemed it

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[34] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 42 and 3, ed. Rider, 92–93.

[35] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 45, ed. Rider, 95.

necessary, however, to invoke the support of the Flemish towns and it is particularly in the negotiations that were initiated to seek a new count for Flanders—there were no less than five serious candidates: William Clito, William of Ypres, Thierry of Alsace, the son of countess Geertruida of Holland and the count of Bergen—[36] that we see the institutional power of the Flemish towns. They clearly had a say in who would be their next ruler, at least in the eyes of Galbert. Galbert described the political deliberations that took place in Bruges among the citizen and the powerful people from the immediate neighbourhood of Bruges. Galbert clearly knows what was going on in town and there are no signs that he did not sympathise or identify with the town as such. He also sympathises with the role the towns of Flanders (*civitates et castra burgensia*) and particularly with the leading role that the city of Gent took in the process. At this point there is no sign of the irritation with the people from Gent that Galbert demonstrates elsewhere.[37] The rivalry with the town of Gent was apparently less important when the towns cooperated to defend their common interest against the nobility.

Galbert explicitly refers to the privileges that the town received upon acceptance of the new count. They were freed from paying any rent for their possessions or toll and they received the right to amend their customary laws. The agreements were confirmed by oath-taking by the parties involved. By citing these provisions Galbert underscored the agreements, never giving any indication that he had misgivings concerning these urban privileges.[38]

In chapter 59, Galbert describes tensions between one of his heroes, Gervaas van Praat, who had been appointed castellan in Bruges, and the urban community. The townspeople came to the defence of one of their members after this person had had contact with the besieged thus transgressing a rule forbidding such contacts. The arrest of one of the citizens by the new castellan was clearly a sensitive issue which could easily turn

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[36] See: Martina Häcker, 'The Language of Misogyny in Galbert of Bruges's Account of the Murder of Charles the Good', in *Galbert of Bruges and the Historiography of Medieval Flanders* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2009), 126–144, here 129–130.

[37] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 51–54, ed. Rider, 100–103.

[38] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 55–56, ed. Rider, 103–106.

into a violent confrontation between the castellan and the urban community.[39] This indicates once more that the town was not as opposed to the besieged as Galbert depicts it and that there were in fact many members of the community who had close contacts with the besieged, through family ties as in this case, or through bonds of friendship. In this conflict Galbert describes the castellan as the wiser party and seems to distance himself from the urban community.

More rifts became visible between the urban community and the new count William Clito. This had to do with the fact that the count initiated an inquisition in which he tried to identify and punish those who had provided assistance to the party of Bertulf.[40] Apparently quite a number of citizens had been involved. Another point of friction was that the count still allowed his knights to raise toll on the people from Bruges, although he had freed the citizens by privilege from paying toll.[41] Similar conflicts arose between the new count and the major towns of Ypres, St. Omer and Gent. William Clito had disturbed the relations with the towns and a number of aristocrats in such a way that these towns came to an agreement to break their bond of fealty with this robber and persecutor (*raptor et persecutor*).[42]

Bruges eventually sided with Thierry of Alsace in agreement with Gent and the major towns in Flanders. Galbert was not convinced that this was the right choice and particularly in chapters 116 and 117, at the end of his work in a part that he clearly has not thoroughly edited, he aired his doubts. William Clito had defeated Thierry at the battle of Akspoele and Galbert seems to have regarded this as a kind of ordeal. He describes how William and his men had prepared for the battle by undergoing a collective form of penance. No one in Bruges, so Galbert states, dared to reveal the true cause of the defeat and of the ensuing catastrophes. By citing Paul's letter to the Romans 13,1 'Every person should be subject to every power', Galbert indicated what he regarded as the cause of all evil befalling on the town of Bruges, a view underscored with more scriptural references. In these later chapters Galbert is no longer identifying himself unambiguously with the civic community in Bruges but is distancing

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[39] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 59, ed. Rider, 110–111.

[40] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 87, ed. Rider, 137 and see fn. 30 above.

[41] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 88, ed. Rider, 138.

[42] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 95, ed. Rider, 143.

himself from it. He is also questioning the unity of the community when he writes that when a wise person gave his opinion, he was immediately silenced with the vilest arguments. Rider suspects that Galbert may here describe his own effort to change the general opinion.[43] At least it is clear that Galbert feels alienated from the body politic of Bruges at the time.

4   Conclusions

Now that we have followed Galbert's story from the murder of count Charles the Good on the 2nd of March 1127 up to the death of William Clito on the 29th of July 1128, paving the way for the succession of Thierry of Alsace as the undisputed new count of Flanders, we can draw some conclusions regarding Galbert's ideas and ideals of citizenship. Although he was a cleric in service of the count, Galbert clearly identified himself as a member of the civic community in Bruges. That civic community was first and foremost an undivided body politic. In the turbulent period that Galbert describes, a period in which the county of Flanders was torn by civil conflict and where many parties used violence as a means to attain their political ends, the town of Bruges always acted as a unified body politic. Although within the town there were clearly different groups supporting the party of Bertulf and others supporting Gervaas of Praat, Galbert chose to present the town as a unity. Probably acting as one man corresponded not only to the legal definition of the town as a corporation but was also the best way in which towns could play a role in the fierce competition for power and wealth in the county. The citizens of Bruges had to stand together to obtain their ends. They were clearly able to defend themselves militarily, even against the French king if necessary. They were also able to take part in political deliberations with other cities and with the leading aristocrats and were capable to draw up legal documents to defend their case. The powerful town of Gent is sometimes seen as a partner, sometimes as a rival, particularly with regard to the issue of the final resting place of the body of the dead count. More than the towns of Ypres or St. Omer, we see a certain ambivalence with regard to Gent, a town that as a 'proximate other' perhaps stirred stronger emotions.

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[43] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 118, ed. Rider, 164; trans. Rider, *The Murder*, 181, fn 536.

What was it that they were fighting for? For Galbert political order under leadership of a competent count seems to have been of primary importance. A good count ensured peace in the region and thus ensured prosperity. Such a political order was divinely ordained and should be respected at all times. Galbert was also sympathetic towards self-governance within the town, and he was opposed to aristocrats levying tolls on merchants. On the role of citizens in choosing their counts, he is more ambivalent. In a crisis situation such as the one following upon the murder of Charles the Good, it seems towns can, and perhaps should, play a role, yet he also puts quite some emphasis on hereditary rights and in the end, it is always God who ordains.

Finally, we may ask who Galbert regarded as being part of the civic community in Bruges. It has already been remarked more in general that women are absent in Galbert's work, and this is all the more the case for the women in the town of Bruges.[44] The only place where they play a minor role is near the end of the book, when they occur as bemoaning the loss of their husbands after the lost battle of Akspoele.[45] The civic community of Bruges seems a male community. In a few remarkable places where women might have acted to make their views public, they are described and treated as witches (*incantatrix*).[46] In the same place where Galbert speaks of the women of Bruges, he also speaks about the unfree (*servi et ancillae*). Serfdom is, of course, a major theme in the chronicle, since it was the allegation that Bertulf and his family were of unfree descent, that caused their uprising. But as the allegation of serfdom was used to silence the opposition by Bertulf and his companions, so do the serfs remain silent in Galbert's story. Galbert as a cleric feels part of the civic community and priests also are regarded thus, although they are not always appreciated by Galbert. Yet at the end of his work Galbert feels less attached to the body politic of Bruges and as such gives us some idea

[44] Häcker, 'Misogyny'; Nancy Partner, 'Galbert's Hidden Women. Social Presence and Narrative Concealment', in *Galbert of Bruges and the Historiography of Medieval Flanders*, 109–125; Isaac, 'Urban Experience', 97–98, suggests that women may have played a role in military activities; Albert Demyttenaere, 'The Tears of Fromold. The Murder of Charles the Good, Homoeroticism, and the Ruin of the Erembalds', ibid., 145–179, here 145–150.

[45] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 114, ed. Rider, 160. *Tunc nostri loci conjuges viros suos, filii patres, servi et ancillae dominos suos perditos deflebant.*

[46] Galbert, *De multro*, c. 110 and 112, ed. Rider, 155–156.

about the situation of those who were not in the lead and whose voices were neglected by the leading men of the township. The civic community had to stand together to survive these turbulent times, but in this male-dominated society many voices were suppressed, and we should not forget that women and the unfree were an integral part of this society, although in Galbert's view of citizens and citizenship they did not belong.

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Creating Communities and Discussing Citizenship through Juridical Parody (France and Burgundy, Fifteenth Century)

Rozanne Versendaal

1 Introduction

The year is 1497.[1] In the city of Metz, in Northeast France, the *bourgeois* (citizen) Jehan Aubrion (1440–1501) attends the Carnival festivities in his town and writes about the celebrations in his diary:

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Item, the weather was very beautiful, people rejoiced greatly, and went raving through the city in great company; Lords and Ladies, *bourgeois et bourgeoises*, Church people and other sorts of people, each one of his kind. Among the others, there was a *joyant* who came out of the house of Lord Renault Le Gornais, the young *échevin* of Neufbourg; who was well over fifteen feet high and went through the town, he was a real merryman. And, on the day of Carême, at night, the foresaid *joyant* went out of the house of the aforementioned Lord Renault, and went to betroth a *joyande*, in the inn of Lord Nicholas de Heu, [she was] taller than the foresaid *joyant*. The said *joyant* and the said *joyande* were made of very subtle straws. And the clerk of the foresaid Lord Renault carried the *joyant*, and one of the servants of the said Lord Nicholas de Heu carried the said *joyande*; and they were so covered by their clothing that only the feet of those who carried them could be seen. And so they went to the town, with the *joyant* in front and the *joyande* afterwards, accompanied by the said Lord Nicholas de Heu, the said Lord Renault, Lord Nicholas Remiat, then *maître-échevin* of Metz, the abbot of a [joyful] company in Porssaillis, and the women of the said company, richly adorned and dressed. And it was a joyous thing, and all the people ran after them to see them. And, on their return, they went to the court of the said Lord Nicholas de Heu; and there they played a joyful farce, and then they took the said *joyant* and the said *joyande* to the inn of the said Lord Renault du Neufbourg.[2]

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[2] Jean Aubrion, *Journal de Jehan Aubrion, bourgeois de Metz, avec sa continuation par Pierre Aubrion, 1465–1512*, ed. Lorédan Larchey (Metz, F. Blanc, 1857), 396–397. *Item, pour le beau temps qu'il fasoit, les gens se reioyssoient fort, et alloient raver par la ville a grant compaignie; seigneurs et dames, bourgeois et bourgeoises, gens d'église et autres manieres de gens, chacun à sa sorte. Entre les autres, y ot ung joyant qui yssoit hors de la maison seigneur Renalt Le Gornais, l'eschevin le jonne, en Nuefbourg; qui estoit bien xv piet de hault et alloit par la ville, comme se fut estez ung propre joyant. Et, le jour de caresme, (de) nuyt, le dit joiant yssit hors de la maison du dit seigneur Renalt, et allit fiancer une joyande, en l'ostel du seigneur Nicole de Heu, plux grande que le dit joyant. Lequel dit joiant et la dite joyande estoient fais de cherpignies bien subtillement. Et pourtoit le clerc du dit seigneur Renalt le dit joyant, et ung des serviteurs du dit seigneur Nicole de Heu, portoit la dite joyande; et estoient tellement couvert de lor abbit cons ne veoit que les piedz de ceux qui les pourtoient. Et ainssy s'en allont avalt la ville, le joyant devant et la joyande après, acompaigniez du dit seigneur Nicole de Heu, du dit seigneur Renalt, de seigneur Nicole Remiat, alors maistre eschevin de Mets, de l'abbé d'une compaignie à Porssaillis, et des femmes de la dite compaignie bien richement parées et abillées. Et estoit chose joieuse mervilleusement; et couroit tout le peuple après pour les veoir. Et, au retour, ilz allont en la court du dit seigneur Nicole de Heu; et yllec fut jowée une farce joieuse, et après ons enmenait le dit joyant et la dite joyande en l'ostel du dit seigneur Renalt du Nuefbourg.*

This fragment illustrates some of the most important elements of late medieval urban festivities: a parade in which straw puppets are carried around, a mock marriage ceremony between two puppets, the performance of comic play and a banquet at an inn. In addition, this quotation shows that people of all layers of society were involved in the festive events, such as noblemen and noble women, citizens, the clergy, but also innkeepers, amateur dramatists and city councillors. Moreover, groups of people from surrounding towns were invited as well, such as the joyful company of the village of Porsaillis, which is nowadays part of the city of Metz itself. All these different people were brought together to celebrate the last days before the upcoming period of Lent. Since Lent was marked by abstinence and penitence in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the desert, the previous days became, in contrast, a time of liberation from ordinary social and moral constraints.

During such festive events, parodies, or role reversals, played an important role, for instance during the aforementioned false wedding ceremony and the comic farce, which could take the form of a mock sermon by a festive priest or a parodic inauguration by a festive king, the authority responsible for the organisation of a festival.[3] The purposes of such reversals of the ordinary world were multi-faceted and multi-layered, but three main goals have been discerned. In the first place, theorists such as Mikhail Bakhtin have often seen role rehearsals in terms of a 'safety valve' theory, that is, as 'rituals of rebellion' that allow controlled, safe release of the tensions of hierarchical society, set apart from the normal and everyday world.[4] Second, but still drawing on this, Natalie Zemon Davis argued that Carnival was more than merely a 'safety valve': according to her, it could reinforce the existing order, but it could also criticise it, and sometimes underpin rebellion, depending on the circumstances.[5] More recently, it has been argued that parody brought people from all layers of society together to discuss ideas about social conduct and contemporary

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[3] Katell Lavéant, 'Obscène chevauchée? Théâtre, charivari et présence féminine dans la culture joyeuse à Lyon au milieu du XVIe siècle', *Revue d'histoire du theatre* 269 (2016): 32.

[4] Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984); Herman Pleij, *Het gilde van de De Blauwe Schuit: literatuur, volksfeest en burgermoraal in de late middeleeuwen* (Muiderberg, Coutinho, 1979).

[5] Natalie Zemon Davis, 'The Reasons of Misrule: Youth Groups and Charivaris in Sixteenth-Century France', *Past & Present* 50 (1971): 41–75.

issues, such as religious reform, differences between the rich and the poor, and authority in the city.[6] Although these three views can be considered contradictory, all scholars agree that medieval parodies encompass collective activities that use role-inversion for expressive purposes, in which the negation of the established order provides a temporary opening for alternative systems to flourish. Characteristically, these parodies reinterpret certain fixed ritual acts and texts, such as religious sermons, commandments or juridical contracts, testaments or ordinances, and propose a comic content for these well-known formats, thus creating an amusing effect for the audience.[7]

Although some branches of medieval parodic texts and rituals associated with Carnival festivities have been studied in depth in relation to their impact on late medieval societies, such as comic plays (*sotties, farces*) that were performed and parades that were organised in cities like Lyon, Rouen and Paris, we still lack a profound study of many other festive texts that were presented during festivities. There is, for example, a large group of juridical parodies, more specifically the *mandements joyeux* or joyful ordinances, that were also performed during festive events. These *mandements joyeux* can be considered one of the most important performative dialogues initiated by festive authorities to evaluate civic order together with the citizens of a particular town, so that a renewed order could be established in the city after the events.[8] In this respect, parody, and juridical parody in particular, functioned as a *discourse of citizenship*. For the Late Medieval period, the question of citizenship, which can be defined as the relation between the individual and the state, has mostly been studied from a political and legal point of view.[9] However, more recently the notion of citizenship has come to focus not only on its

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[6] Katell Lavéant and Cécile de Morrée, 'Les festivités joyeuses et leur production littéraire: pratiques parodiques en scène et en textes, en France et en Europe (XVIe - XVIIIe s.). Introduction', *Cahier de recherches médiévales et humanistes* 37, no. 1 (2019): 275–276.

[7] Aurélie Godet, 'Behind the Masks, the Politics of Carnival', *Journal of Festive Studies* 20, no. 1 (2020): 1–31.

[8] For a full study of the *mandements joyeux,* see: Rozanne Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux et la culture joyeuse en France et dans les anciens Pays-Bas (XVe-XVIIe siècles)' (PhD diss., Utrecht University, 2022), https://dspace.library.uu.nl/handle/1874/416578.

[9] See, for example, Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth. Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); James

legal dimensions but also on those that are social and cultural.[10] Cultural expressions and social events shaped notions on citizenship as much as political decisions and juridical documents. As such, these discourses can be considered as discursive practices of members of urban communities allowing them to engage with civic life and to participate in events organised in their town.[11]

In this article, it will be argued that parody, as part of medieval festive culture, was used by festive authorities as a discourse on citizenship in order to shape political and religious identity. To illustrate this, the article will study two *mandements joyeux*, written and performed in urban communities in fifteenth-century Burgundy and Northern France. The focus will be on the texts themselves and on the urban contexts in which this type of parody played a major role: Carnival celebrations in Valenciennes and religious reform in Compiègne. Together, these two case studies can shed light on how parody allowed individuals and groups to engage in discussions about political and religious issues related to their cities and authorities.

This article will first introduce the *mandement joyeux* as a cultural phenomenon by situating it more broadly in the context of medieval parody. It will then turn to the first of the two case studies: the *Mandement de froidure pour le roy de le pye* (1460), written by the francophone Burgundian rhetorician Jean Molinet (1435–1507), and explore how this *mandement joyeux* contributed to the dissemination of political ideas concerning inclusive communities in late medieval Valenciennes. The second case study will show how the joyful ordinance of the *Complaincte*

en matiere de nostre diabolique (1477, author unknown) advocated new ideas about religious reform for citizens in the city of Compiègne. It is important to mention that a selection of two texts was made within a broader corpus of parodic texts. In this article, a representative picture of the form and function of *mandements joyeux* in two late medieval cities in Burgundy and Northern France will be given, but this picture is necessarily not exhaustive.

2   PARODIC DISCOURSES AND THEIR FUNCTIONING IN THE LATE MEDIEVAL CITY

As Martha Bayless has shown in her studies about medieval parody in Latin, medieval parody shares with modern definitions of parody the idea that it is 'an intentionally humorous literary (written) text that achieves its effect by imitating and distorting the distinguishing characteristics of literary genres, styles, authors, or specific texts'.[12] However, medieval parody had a particular character: instead of relying on the eccentricities of individual texts to ensure reader recognition (one of the main characteristics of modern parody), medieval parodists took as their 'models' the most widely known texts, such as sermons, ordinances, testaments and prognostic texts. Medieval authors parodied the classic and the conventional rather than anything else.[13] In the same vein, John A. Yunck has argued that '[a]ges – or individuals – which respect tradition and value orthodoxy […] tend to parody those works which they value most, rather than those which they wish to ridicule […]. The text is the parodist's weapon, not his target'.[14] Parodic texts were thus humorous imitations of well-known formats, but did not necessarily ridicule the format they imitated. This is what Yunck describes as 'exemplary parody'.[15]

Besides being 'exemplary', medieval parody is, according to Bayless, primarily social. This 'social parody' entails the act of 'imitating […] while in addition satirising or focusing on non-literary customs, events,

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[12] Martha Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages. The Latin Tradition* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1996), 3.

[13] Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages*, 3–5.

[14] John A. Yunck, 'The Two Faces of Parody', *Iowa English Yearbook* 8 (1963): 29–37, here 36–37.

[15] Yunck, 'The Two Faces of Parody', 36.

or persons'.[16] Whereas most scholars often see engagement with extra-literary social issues as outside the compass of their study of parody, Bayless considers it a crucial feature of medieval parody that it satirises something other than (only) the text or genre it parodies. Social parody was, according to Bayless,

> by far the more popular category of the genre and served as the vehicle for a significant proportion of medieval satire. Parodies went under the guise of the most familiar literature of the day – the Bible, liturgy, sermons, decrees – but the ridicule was often directed at [for example] illicit drinking, gambling, gluttony, ecclesiastical corruption, or the vileness of the peasantry.[17]

This social function of parody becomes particularly visible in urban spaces, as these were the places where most parodies were written, disseminated and performed. In fact, the parodies studied by Bayless can—especially when it comes to their performance and printing in the late medieval period—all be situated in an urban context.[18] Well-known parodies such as the joyful Sermon on St. Nobody (*Sermo de sancto Nemine*)—which treats the Latin word *Nemo*, meaning no one or nobody, as a name, and quotes the Bible to give an account of this saint's extraordinary deeds—were printed in the vernacular in larger cities and printing centres such as Paris and Lyon, and were distributed from here (see Fig. 1).[19] From readers' annotations found in early sixteenth-century editions of the Sermon on St. Nobody, it is known that this parody was read by students in catholic theology in Louvain, to learn preaching conventions, but at the same time this parody was performed before a wide Parisian audience during Carnival festivities.[20] The aim of the performance of

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[16] Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages*, 3.

[17] Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages*, 5.

[18] Andrea Livini, 'Étude de la circulation de la Cena Cypriani durant le Moyen-Âge', *Archives de sciences sociales des religions* 160 (2012): 309–358.

[19] M. Merback, 'Nobody Dares: Freedom, Dissent, Self-Knowing, and Other Possibilities in Sebald Beham's Impossible', *Renaissance Quarterly* 63, no. 4 (2010): 1037–1105.

[20] Ben Parson and Bas Jongenelen, 'The Sermon on Saint Nobody: A Verse Translation of a Middle Dutch Parodic Sermon', *Journal of American Folklore* 123 (2010): 92–107; Jelle Koopmans and Paul Verhuyck, *Sermon joyeux et truanderie* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1987).

the Sermon on St. Nobody for a broader audience was to temporarily ridicule saints' lives in general (various improbable deeds are attributed to the figure of Nobody/*Nemo*), so that the reading of hagiographical texts was taken even more seriously outside of the festive context, especially during Lent.[21] With regard to the differences between satire and parody, one could also argue that the Sermon on St. Nobody is somewhat critical about hagiography, and therefore rather satirical than parodic. With regard to medieval texts, however, scholars agree that parody can be considered as one of the subgenres of satire.[22] Parody can be a strategy, a rhetorical means, to achieve critical ends and to advocate new ideas.

The Sermon on St. Nobody scrupulously imitates the medieval sermon following the rules of the *ars praedicandi*. Joyful ordinances such as the *Mandement de froidure* and the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique,* which will be discussed in the next sections, were written according to the regular model and formulas of medieval diplomacy, as demonstrated in the *ars dictaminis*. The internal organisation of joyful ordinances is therefore often highly formulaic, the conventions in use varying little according to time and place.[23] In general, the joyful ordinances consist of three parts (the initial protocol, the text and the final protocol) and respect (most of) the following elements:

Part 1—The initial protocol:

1. invocation: an invocation of the deity;
2. superscription: a passage which identifies the authority issuing the document;
3. address: the part of the document that specifies the recipient(s). Ordinances were public proclamations and not private letters, which

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[21] Bayless, *Parody in the Middle Ages*, 7.

[22] See among others the classical studies on parody by Gilbert Highet and Linda Hutcheon: Gilbert Highet, *The Anatomy of Satire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); Linda Hutcheon, *A Theory of Parody: The Teachings of Twentieth-Century Art Forms* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1985).

[23] Anna Adamska, 'L'ars dictaminis a-t-elle été possible en langue vernaculaire?', in *Le dictamen dans tous ses états. Perspectives de recherche sur la théorie et la pratique de l'ars dictaminis (XIe–XVe siècle*s), ed. Benoît Grévin and Anne-Marie Turcan-Verkerk (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 389–414, here 413. On the rhetorics of the *ars dictaminis,* see: Martin Camargo, *Ars Dictaminis, Ars Dictandi* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1991); Benoît Grévin, 'L'ars dictaminis entre enseignement et pratique (XII–XIVe siècle)', *Revue de Synthèse* 133, no. 2 (2012): 175–193.
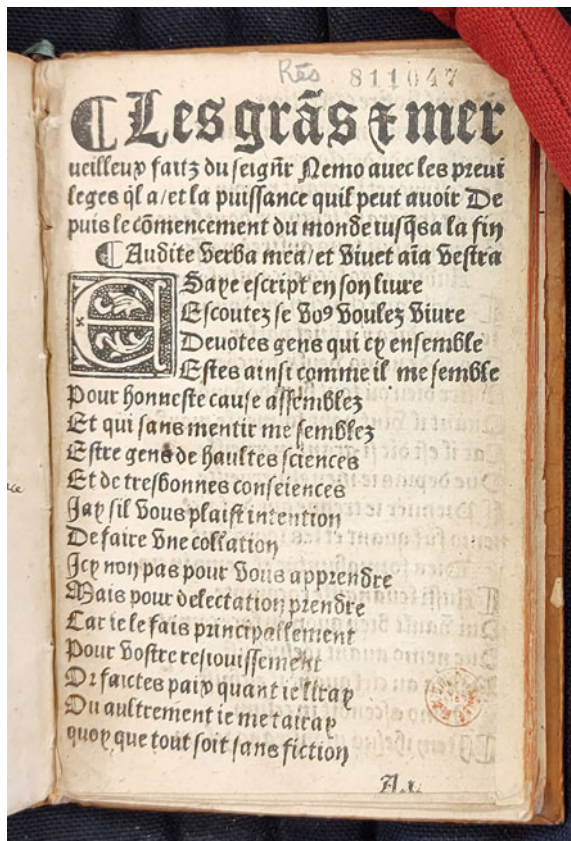
Fig. 1 Anon., *Les grans et merveilleux faitz du seigneur Nemo.* Lyon, Pierre de Sainte-Lucie, 1540. Lyon, Bibliothèque municipale, 811047 (*Photograph* Rozanne Versendaal)

is why they are often not addressed to one specific recipient, but to various (kinds of) citizens;

4. salutation: the (ceremonious) greeting, suggesting strongly that the writ was designed to be read aloud.

Part 2—The text:

   5. preamble: the preamble is a general introduction to the ordinance, explaining the exact motives for the promulgation of the act;
   6. notification: the notification is a formula expressing the authority's will by means of specific verbs, such as *faire savoir* in French;
   7. exposition: the exposition reveals the background to or circumstances of the act;
   8. disposition: the disposition reveals the essential content of the act, that is the orders;
   9. injunction: the injunction requires the fulfilment of the act;
   10. sanction: an enumeration of the punishments in case of disobedient behaviours with regard to the orders.

Part 3—The final protocol:

   11. date: the final protocol first includes a dating clause, stating when and where the act was completed;
   12. subscription: the subscription entails signatures confirming the correctness of the document and a list of witnesses.

To give a better and more precise idea of the joyful ordinance, the example of the *Mandement de froidure* will be used to describe its characteristics and its functioning.

The *Mandement de froidure pour le roy de le pie* (Ordinance of the Cold for the King of the Drinks) is known from the manuscript Tournai, Bibliothèque communale, MS 105, fol. 240v. Unfortunately destroyed during the Second World War, it contained several works from Jean Molinet. A critical edition was realised by Noël Dupire in 1936–1939, which is the reason why scholars still have access to this source.[24] The *Mandement de froidure* is a poem of 120 syllables, in which an authority, the King of the Drinks, the 'pye',[25] reveals himself in a superscription. He gathers his troops (the recipients) for a battle (the disposition) in order

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[24] Jean Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz de Jean Molinet*, ed. Noël Dupire, vol. 2 (Paris: Société des Anciens textes français, 1936–1939), 732–735. Our study is based on the transcription provided by Dupire.

[25] CNRS and Université de Lorraine, *Dictionnaire du moyen français (1330–1500)* (2012), http://www.atilf.fr/dmf/definition/pie2.

to regain the drinks that he obviously had lost because the King of Lent took them from him (specified in a preamble, verses 1–24). The king's soldiers (described in verses 29–74, with many bodily, sexual metaphors, as poor, sick, drunk) benefit from the help of 'eleven or twelve thousand cunts', which are specified in the penultimate part of the poem (verses 89–110).[26] After the battle, the soldiers will be rewarded with alcoholic drinks. The ordinance concludes with a joyful date and subscription (verses 115–120). The ordinance is, for example, dictated in the 'Palace of the Cold' (verse 117),[27] 'The twentieth of this month of ginger' (verse 116),[28] a reference to the month of February, when ginger ('gingembre') is harvested. This date refers to carnivalesque festivities that took place in this month in preparation for Lent.[29]

The form of the text may not be immediately recognisable to modern readers as an ordinance. However, this was very different for the medieval public, which was confronted with ordinances on a daily basis. Because the *Mandement de froidure* used a fixed, recognisable form to convey a festive message related to Carnival, the parodic effect was immediately obvious to medieval audiences. But what exactly is the link between the *Mandement de froidure* and the notion of citizenship? This requires a contextualisation of the joyful ordinance in the city of Valenciennes.

[26] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 734, verse 88. *bien onze ou douze mil cons*.

[27] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 735, verse 117. *pallais de froidure*.

[28] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 735, verse 116. *Le vintiesme de ce moys de gingembre*.

[29] Jean-Claude Aubailly, 'Théâtre médiéval et fêtes calendaires', *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance* 11, no. 1 (1980): 5–12; Jean-Claude Aubailly, 'Théâtre médiéval et fêtes calendaires ou l'histoire d'une subversion', *Between Folk and Liturgy*, ed. Alan J. Fletcher and Wim Hüsken (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), 31–64.

3   Reinforcing Civic Cohesion through Parody: Molinet's *Mandement de froidure* and the Integration of Valenciennes in Philip the Good's Burgundian State

Valenciennes was part of the County of Hainault. During the fifteenth century, however, under Philip the Good, the city was re-attached to Burgundy and lost its independence.[30] Valenciennes in this period had several important authors working for the Dukes of Burgundy, Jean Molinet among them.[31] As Katell Lavéant and Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès have argued, this author wrote the joyful ordinances presented in the *Mandement de froidure* for the organisers of the Carnival festivities of the city of Valenciennes, around the year 1460.[32] Despite the fact that Jean Molinet was primarily a chronicler in the service of Philip the Good and, from 1467 on, Charles the Bold and Philip the Handsome, Dukes of Burgundy, the example of the *Mandement de froidure* shows that Jean Molinet was closely connected to the city councillors as well and that he was one of the authors who was consulted when the city had to organise a Carnival festival for its inhabitants.[33] This intermediary role of writers in Valenciennes has been described in detail by literary historian Jane Gilbert. According to Gilbert, writers performed a nego-tiatory role between the Duke and the town council, something that was certainly needed at a time when Valenciennes had to give up its autonomy

[30] Graeme Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy: Political and Historical Culture at Court in the Fifteenth Century* (New York: Boydell & Brewer, 1997).

[31] Jean Devaux, 'Molinet, Jean', in *Encyclopedia of the Medieval Chronicle*, ed. Graeme Dunphy and Cristian Bratu (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2016).

[32] Marie Bouhaïk-Gironès and Katell Lavéant, 'Le Mandement de froidure de Jean Molinet: la culture joyeuse, un pont entre la cour de Bourgogne et les milieux urbains', in *Jean Molinet et son temps: actes des rencontres internationales de Dunkerque, Lille et Gand (8–10 novembre 2007)*, ed. Estelle Doudet, Jean Devaux, and Élodie Lecuppre-Desjardin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 67–82.

[33] Jelle Koopmans, 'Rhétorique de cour et rhétorique de ville', in *Rhetoric – Rhétoriqueurs – Rederijkers*, ed. Kees Meerhoff (Amsterdam: KNAW, 1995), 67–81. On Jean Molinet and court poetry and history, see: Adrian Armstrong and Sarah Kay, 'Poetry and History', in *Knowing Poetry. Verse in Medieval France from the 'Rose' to the 'Rhétoriqueurs'*, ed. Adrian Armstrong and Sarah Kay (New York: Cornell University Press, 2011), 49–70.

for Philip's centralisation policy.[34] For example, writers contributed texts for festivals and helped organising festive events.[35] These festivals also facilitated the integration of separate territories into the Burgundian possessions.

From archival sources, it is known that the city councillors of Valenciennes, under the guidance of a festive authority called the Prince of Pleasure ('Prince de Plaisance'[36]), were responsible for the organisation of festive events. The Prince of Pleasure was generally elected for one year. In Valenciennes, assuming this role of festive authority was a costly affair. The Prince and the festive committee (also elected for one year) did not only pay for all the events, but they also had to invite the town people, they had to form groups of amateur dramatists for the occasion (the so-called joyful companies), and they had to send invitations to people and groups in surrounding villages.[37] For example, the letter of invitation sent by the Prince of Pleasure to the neighbouring towns in 1448, inviting them to the Pleasure festival which was to take place in May of that year, stated that the festivities were organised 'to maintain the friendships, communications and conversations of the [...] inhabitants of the cities, towns and villages [...], and to revive all love and pleasure and recreational activities together'.[38] This quotation emphasises that the Prince of Pleasure did not only invite the people from other towns to reinforce the relationships with them, but also to discuss and communicate several issues in a joyful setting. The hospitality of the organisers was also shown to Valenciennes' inhabitants. From other archival sources that concern festivals in Valenciennes in the early sixteenth century, it is known that during parades '[q]uantities of newly-minted silver deniers were thrown, upon which the people shouted: "generosity, generosity from the Prince

[34] Jane Gilbert, 'Valenciennes (Hainault)', in *Europe. A Literary History, 1348–1418*, ed. David Wallace (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 53–69.

[35] Gilbert, 'Valenciennes (Hainault)', 64–65.

[36] Katell Lavéant, *Un théâtre des frontières: la culture dramatique dans les provinces du Nord aux XVe et XVIe siècles* (Orléans: Paradigme, 2012), 57.

[37] On these festive authorities, see: Torsten Hiltmann (ed.), *Les 'autres' rois: Études sur la royauté comme notion hiérarchique dans la société au bas Moyen Âge et au début de l'époque moderne* (Munich: Oldenbourg Wissenschaftsverlag, 2010).

[38] *Pour entretenir les amitiez, comunications et conversations des manans et habitans des villes, bourgs et villaiges a nous prochaines et voisines, et meismes pour resveiller toute amour et plaisance et nous recreer par ensemble.* Quoted in Lavéant, *Un théâtre des frontières*, 57.

of [Pleasure at] Valenciennes'".[39] In other words: coins were distributed among the participants of the festivities, and this was perceived by the people as an act of kindness. It gave them the impression that their city councillors had their best interests at heart and cared about the city and its inhabitants.

To have a better understanding of the ways in which specifically parody functioned as a discourse of citizenship during festivities in Valenciennes, the analysis of the *Mandement de froidure* by Molinet can be helpful. There are several indications in this joyful ordinance that this text may have been an invitation from the Prince of Pleasure for the inhabitants of Valenciennes and surrounding towns. For example, there are several lists of enrolment which, through the lens of a war metaphor, must be understood as a form of invitation. The festive king, the King of the Drinks, for example, calls for his 'arrière-ban' to enjoin all the soldiers who owe him obedience to rally with him in order to regain a couple of stolen drinks ('[we] command you all of you [to] be ready for battle'[40]). Instead of commanding his soldiers to follow him on a noble mission, which was often the case in official royal ordinances, the King of the Drinks of the parodic *Mandement de froidure* orders his subjects to reclaim some drinks confiscated by a hostile king. In the context of Carnival, this is not surprising. The 'soldiers', or the men participating in the joyful celebrations, are united in a battle against attempts to limit their freedom during Lent. However, apart from the 'soldiers' of the King of the Drinks, there is another category of people, namely women, who can help accomplish the mission. These women are described as vaginas of all kinds:

> For in adjuvants […],
> We have eleven or twelve thousand vaginas:
> [We] have vaginas in detail or in bulk,
> Vaginas in one blank and vaginas in half a blank,
> Vaginas in two columns and vaginas in two sheets,
> Vaginas with sleeves, vaginas with double eyelets […].[41]

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[39] Original text unknown. Quoted in: Godet, 'Behind the Masks, The Politics of Carnival', 4.

[40] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 733, verse 27. *a tous vous commandons [et] vous trouvés prestz pour livrer bataille.*

[41] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 735, verse 89–94. *Car en aide, avec poix et baccons, Nous avons bien onze ou douze mil cons; cons a detail avons et cons en gros, a en aide avec*

This list, which could be interpreted as an obscene speech, continues with the enumeration of another thirty different vaginas. Until now, it has often been regarded as a misogynistic discourse, seeking gender inequality and the sexual objectification and degradation of women.[42] However, in relation to this list, Katell Lavéant recently stated that this is not necessarily the case. She argues that the *Mandement de froidure* plays with vulgarity and language in a way that would have appealed to both men and women, far from being insulting towards female audiences. In the joyful ordinance, the vaginas have the same level of military expertise as men as is confirmed in the *mandement* when the King of the Drinks encourages the vaginas to join the men's army:

> Come forward, [you cunts], without us hurting each other,
> To help us and to serve the empire.[43]

In fact, the women are essential to defeating the hostile king, who restricts not only eating and drinking during Lent but also engaging in sexual relationships. The poem therefore offers a fresh perspective on the relationships between men and women by showing the sexes fighting together to protect their right to bodily and sexual freedom. It also implies that the festivities organised were inclusive and accessible to both sexes. In addition, the long lists of enrolment give the impression that the festivities were aimed at people from all social strata. Parodic texts like the *Mandement de froidure* in this way ensure that social cohesion is enhanced and that all people are encouraged to participate in society. During the performance of parody, values such as cooperation and mutual aid are emphasised. The discourse of citizenship put forward in *Mandement de froidure* is therefore a discourse around civic engagement, inclusion, participation, collaboration and equality.

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le Cons a ung blanc et cons a demy gros, cons a deux rengs, cons a doubles foeullés, cons a manches, cons a doubles oeillés.

[42] See in particular: Denis Hüe, 'Des mots dorés aux mots de gueule, étude sur le thème de l'or chez Molinet', *L'or au Moyen Âge: Monnaie, métal, objets, symbole*, ed. William Câlin, Jean Lacroix, and Jean Arrouye (Aix-en-Provence: Presses universitaires de Provence, 1983), 186–207.

[43] Molinet, *Les Faictz et dictz*, 735, verse 111. *Venés avant, sans ce qu'on nous empire, Pour nous aidier et pour servir l'empire [...]*.

Most of these texts used in joyful associations, however, were never intended to be kept, because they were only relevant during one specific occasion.[44] This was probably also the case for the *Mandement de froidure*, which is not included in any of the numerous editions of Jean Molinet's *Les faictz et dictz* that were printed in the first half of the sixteenth century.[45] Related to this is the idea that parodic and comic literature can be characterised by its 'situatedness' and that its meaning and identity depend largely on the specifics of particular social and cultural contexts.[46] This also implies that the emphasis on cooperation and equality in the *Mandement de froidure* was meant specifically for the inhabitants of Valenciennes, in a specific moment in history. In the context of the year 1460, this is not surprising. After a civil war, Philip the Good wrested the county Hainault from Jacqueline of Bavaria, finally, in 1433. This was also the moment when the city of Valenciennes lost its autonomy. The process of integration into Philip's Burgundian State caused several political agitations in Valenciennes, varying from protests against Philip's desire to make of Valenciennes a significant bulwark against France, to disputes about official languages (there were Romance speakers in the town, but also Low German, Rhenish and Dutch).[47] Philip's broader political agenda aimed at producing an over-arching construct, if not an identity, able to weld together his disparate domains, centralising his courts and forming his nascent nation-state. In this process, literature not only served as a means to justify his political authority, but also to promote unity in the Burgundian agglomeration.[48] In this context, the *Mandement de froidure* can be seen as a text encouraging this unity among the inhabitants of Valenciennes and surrounding villages and towns, rather than linguistic, religious or political division.

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[44] Rozaliya Yaneva, *Misrule and Reversals: Carnivalesque Performances in Christopher Marlowe's Plays* (Munich: Herbert Utz Verlag, 2013), 267.

[45] For an overview of these editions, see: Adrian Armstrong, '"Imprimé en la ville marchande et renommée d'Anvers": Antwerp Editions of Jean Molinet's Poetry', in *Between Stability and Transformation: Textual Traditions in the Medieval Netherlands*, ed. Renée Gabriël and Johan Oosterman (Hilversum: Verloren, 2016), 123–137.

[46] Jelle Koopmans, 'La parodie en situation. Approches du texte festif de la fin du Moyen Âge', *CRMH,* 15, (2008): 2. 'Le texte médiéval est souvent, de par sa nature performative, lié à des circonstances concrètes plutôt qu'à un « canon littéraire»'.

[47] Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy*, 162.

[48] Small, *George Chastelain and the Shaping of Valois Burgundy*, 162–164.

Thus, the festivities, and parody in particular, also took on political significance, which fitted perfectly into Philip of Burgundy's strategic aims.

However, *mandements joyeux* were not only used as a political tool to promote certain citizenship discourses about collaboration and cohesion but were also written to articulate that citizenship embraced first and foremost a religious identity. What this form of faith was like for Burgundian citizens is described in the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique,* a text composed in the city of Compiègne. This *mandement joyeux* will be discussed in the remaining part of this article.

4   Religious Life in Compiègne: The Example of the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique* and the Spiritual Renewal of the *devotio moderna*

From the twelfth century onwards, parody was also used in joyful ordinances sent by a particular type of authority, the Devil. These parodic ordinances, which are also called *Epistolae Luciferi* or Devil's letters, gained more and more acceptance in the thirteenth century and became widespread in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.[49] The purpose of these letters, which were written in Latin and in the vernacular, was to satirise the corrupt morality of ecclesiastics and to attack ecclesiastical governance in cities such as Rome and Avignon. The form of the Devil's letters follows the format of the official ordinances which were read during festivities.[50] As such, they were comparable to the festive *mandements joyeux*. The letters seem to have been particularly popular in places amenable to both political and religious reform, which the example of the *Complaincte en matière de nostre diabolique* (Complaint about our devilishness) can illustrate.

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[49] Chris Schabel, 'Lucifer princeps tenebrarum … The Epistola Luciferi and Other Correspondence of the Cistercian Pierre Ceffons (fl. 1348–1353)', *Vivarium* 56, no. 1–2 (2018): 126–175.

[50] This was mainly the case for the *Epistolae* that circulated in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Before the *Epistolae Luciferi* were read in monastic milieux. See: Helen Feng, *Devil's Letters: Their History and Significance in Church and Society, 1100–1500* (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, 1982). See also: Fanny Oudin, 'Lettres de Dieu, lettres du Diable: correspondances entre Terre, Ciel et Enfer', *Questes* 19 (2010): 37–55.

In the ordinance of the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique* (found in the manuscript Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, MS Vu 22, see Fig. 2), Lucifer first abundantly thanks 'our foresaid daughter, holy Religion'[51] for providing so many possibilities for abuses and corruptions in monasteries (e.g. 'drinking and eating without mitigating',[52] 'more in accordance with secular views',[53] with 'prideful hearts',[54] while 'abandon[ing] the service of God or shorten[ing] it',[55] or 'chat[ting] during the service of God'[56]). From folio 97r of the manuscript onwards, with the formula 'And we command and begin with these present [orders]',[57] Lucifer gives specific orders (dispositions) to the recipients of the text and for this reason the *Complaincte* is a *mandement* and not only a letter. With his hellish court ('We command and defend in the name of ourselves and our infernal court'[58]), Lucifer forbids any religious reformation, because this would directly lead to a decrease in the influx of the residents of hell. The recipients must therefore maintain their bad habits:

> [...] we command and begin with these present [orders] that you maintain and guard, with strong obstinacy, our daughter [the Church] in her abusive properties and possessions [...], namely envy, rancour, hatred, discord, dispute, secret manoeuvres, leagues, gangs, murmurs and other similar vice.[59]

[51] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 445. *nostre dite fille sainte Religion*.

[52] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 445. *sans tenir mesure en boire et en menger*.

[53] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444. *plus conformes aux abits seculiers*.

[54] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444. *cuers pompeux et orguilleux*.

[55] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444. *delaisser le service de Dieu ou l'abregier*.

[56] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444. *pour gengler pour baver [...] durant le service Dieu*.

[57] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 446. *'Et mandonz et commercons par ces presentes*.

[58] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 446. *En faisant commandement et deffense de par nous et de par nostre cours infernale*.

[59] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 445. *[...] mandonz et commercons par ces presentes, que tu maintiengues et gardes, par forte obstinacion nostre dite fille, en sesdites possessions et saisines abusives [...], assavoir envye, rancune, hayne fraternelle, discorde, litige, brigues, ligues, bandes, murmure et autres vices semblables*.
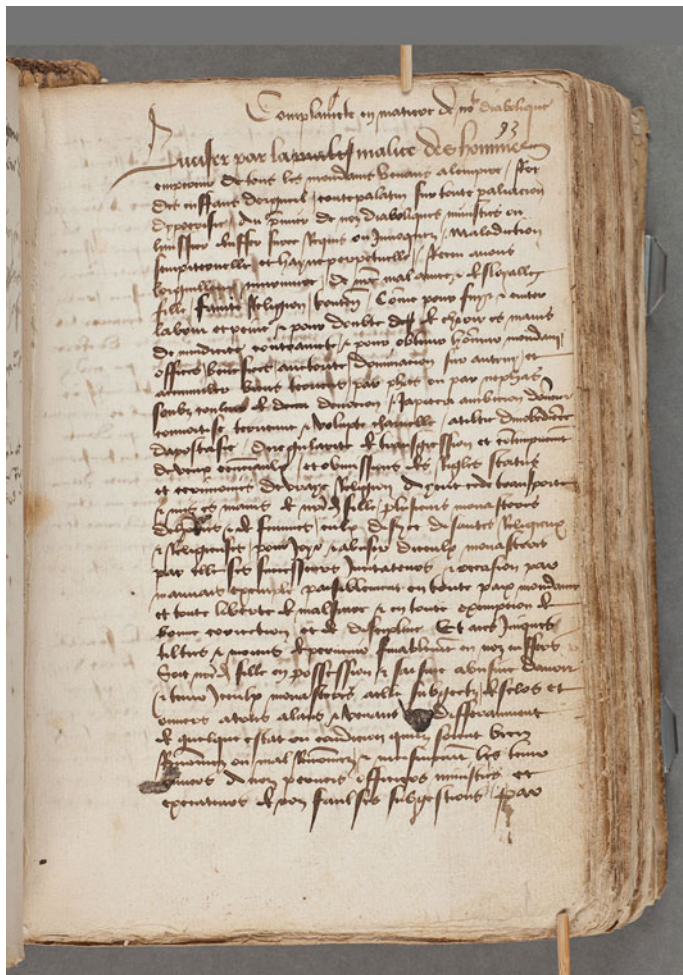
Fig. 2 First folio of the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique*. Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, MS Vu 22, fol. 93r (*Reproduction* National Library of Sweden)

Since he orders the maintenance of the abuses of the Church, Lucifer is thus opposed to any form of religious reform in general, and to monastic reforms in particular. However, it is remarkable that the *mandement* is based on a highly developed *praeteritio*, which speaks in detail about religious reforms and then prohibits them. Folios 96v and 97r set out the measures necessary to 'reduce the state of religion to its first religious institution',[60] the original aim of the reforms. After describing the reforms in detail, Lucifer states that exactly these measures he can never tolerate in the religious houses because they prevent monks and nuns from continuing the abuses. By this rhetorical figure of speech, the author of the *mandement diabolique* does not need to take full responsibility for his statement concerning measures of religious reform. At the same time, Lucifer uses the usual theological justifications for the actions necessary to achieve a higher form of devotion and a better religious life. The *praeteritio* is certainly intended to draw attention to a delicate, even confrontational or polemical subject, i.e. the proposals for reform. But what types of reforms Lucifer exactly wishes to prohibit?

The reforms are primarily concerned with the renewal of the religious impulse of the first Christians and the first Church, as the words 'those in the monastery who care for the good of the community and the Reformation and who would like to return the state of religion to its first religious institution'[61] show. In the spiritual houses, this impulse was characterised first of all by the spiritual union of monks and nuns in order to achieve purity of heart and the highest possible devotion ('union, the more pleasing to God'[62]). From folio 96r, the reforms are specified in a very precise manner:

> […] [c]ontrary to this, the Reformation, the daughter of Charity to Pursuit, established by the True Religion, has endeavoured and is endeavouring the said monasteries of high enclosures, so that no one may pass over, and of walls so closed and thick that neither men nor women other

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[60] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444, l. 43. *reduire l'estat de religion à sa premiere institucion religieuse.*

[61] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444, ll. 41–43. *ceulx et celles du monastere qui tendront au bien de la communaulte et a la Reformacion et qui vouldroient reduire l'estat de religion a sa premiere institucion religieuse.*

[62] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 444, l. 46 *plus complaire […] a Dieu*; l. 49. *union […].*

than the children of the True Religion may not enter them, nor see or look at them, nor speak to them through the boards or fences without license and good company. And of all individual wealth, [they must] make a common wealth, subject to the discretion of the prelate and the wise men or women, [they must] eat together in the same refectory, sleep in the same dormitory, have only one infirmary, the same habit of the same value and one will, that is to say, [that of] their prelate, prior or prioress, and [the Reformation has endeavoured and is endeavouring] to remove them from what was the community of apostates, that they have only one [individual] heart, one will, one affection [as opposed to the collective], and [the Reformation strives to] keep silence in the cloister, the dormitory, the refectory, and [to make them] attend divine service, sing beautifully, keep the true ceremonies and statutes of religion, while disturbing and preventing this suppliant [the Reformation] and its abusive possessions. [They do it] rightfully and for the right cause, as is the right cause, as it should be and again, every year and every day, to the great benefit and salvation of the souls [...].[63]

To return to the 'True Religion', this passage suggests that it is first necessary to strictly separate the religious space and the outside world. The religious house must be a closed space into which only 'children of the True Religion' may enter. The creation of such a sacred space, separated from the laity, goes hand in hand with strict rules, imposed by the prior, the superior of the religious house.[64] In order to stimulate the union of the heart, the religious community must 'eat together in the same

[63] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 446, ll. 106–118. *[n]eantmoins Reformacion, fille de Charité au Pourchas, et instauré de Vraye Religion, s'est efforcee et efforce clorre lesdits monasteres de la haulte closture, que personne n'y puisse pardessus passer, et de si close et espesse muraille, que homme ne femme autres que les enffans de Vraye Religion, n'y puissent entrer, ne les veoir ou regarder, ne au postes ou treillis parler sans licence, et sans bonne compaignie; et de toute les bourses particulieres, faire une bourse commune, soubzmise a la discrecion du prelat et des discretz ou discretes, menger emsemble en ung mesme refectoir, dormir en ung mesme dortoir, n'avoir que une infirmerie, ung mesme habit d'ung mesme pris et couleur, une seule voulonté, c'est assavoir de leur prelat, prieur ou prieure, et les reduire que estoit le college des apostas, qui n'avoient que ung cuer, une voulenté, une affection, et faire tenir silence en cloistre, dortoir, reffectoir, et resider au service divin, chanter attrait, garder les vrayes ceremonyes et status de religion, en troublant et empeschant ladite suppliante en sesdites abusives possessions. A droit et a bonne cause, deuement et de nouvel puis an et jour aura, au grant proufit et salut des ames [...].*

[64] On the importance of this aspect for monastic life, see: June L. Mecham, *Sacred Communities, Shared Devotions. Gender, Material Culture, and Monasticism in Late Medieval Germany* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014).

refectory, sleep in the same dormitory'. Its members must participate in the Divine Office, sing with care and beauty and respect the ceremonies and statutes of the monastery. The final objective of all these activities is to come 'to the great benefit and salvation of the souls', i.e. to attain salvation.

The dating of the *mandement* reveals that this text must be placed at the end of the fifteenth century, more precisely in the year 1477, as the date of the ordinance suggests ('mil CCCC LXXVII'[65]). The ordinance is therefore part of a rather specific context: it refers to the great influence of the pre-reformation spiritual movements of the second half of the fifteenth century. This period was characterised by major attempts at religious reform. Reform movements can be discerned among the Franciscan, Benedictine, Dominican and Augustinian orders, but also among the Brothers of the Common Life (Canons of Windesheim), belonging to the *devotio moderna* movement.[66] At the time of the composition of the *Complaincte en matiere de nostre diabolique*, the ideas about reforms were thus far from new. More precisely, the reforms proposed in the *Complaincte* are in line with the ideas of *devotio moderna*. This spiritual movement originated in the Low Countries and reached its greatest development in the fifteenth century, in the Eastern Low Countries, in the Burgundian agglomeration and in the Holy Roman Empire. The aim of the *devotio moderna* was to return to the way of life of the first Christians in order to recover the true Christian religion.[67] While following the models of early Christianity, the *devotio moderna* re-emphasised the importance of unity of heart and soul and thus the uniformity of practices in religious houses in order to achieve the greatest possible devotion.[68] The *devotio moderna* was also a strongly urban movement which is highlighted by the fact that their monasteries were located in the city centres. Religious life and the world outside merged from the moment a monk

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[65] Versendaal, 'Le mandement joyeux', 446.

[66] Michel Kaplan and Patrick Boucheron, 'Grands centres monastiques et intellectuels en Occident', in *Le Moyen Âge, XIe–XVe siècle* (Paris: Bréal, 1994), 127; Jean-Marie Le Gall, 'Réformer l'Église catholique aux XVe–XVIIe siècles: restaurer, rénover, innover?', *Réforme, Humanisme, Renaissance* 56 (2003): 61–75.

[67] R.R. Post, *The Modern Devotion. Confrontation with Reformation and Humanism* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 216–227.

[68] R.T.M. van Dijk, C. Caspers, and R. Hofman, *Twaalf kapittels over het ontstaan, bloei en doorwerking van de moderne devotie* (Hilversum: Verloren, 2012), 255.

or nun stepped out of the door of the religious house. This mixed religious and urban life was an attractive concept for city councillors, who sometimes financially supported the formation of religious houses.[69]

If one takes the provenance of the Vu 22 manuscript into account, most probably the city of Compiègne,[70] it is conceivable that this manuscript was produced in an urban environment that was associated with the ideas of the *devotio moderna*. Indeed, Compiègne was besieged and taken from the Kingdom of France by Philip the Good in the middle of the fifteenth century, which could explain the influence of the *devotio moderna*, that flourished in Burgundy, in this city.[71] Again, the parodic mode of the joyful ordinance can be related to a political context, i.e. to promote spiritual renewal and purification of the French cloisters in and around Compiègne. In fact, this political 'mission' is also evident in the other texts bound in the manuscript. These texts are not parodic, but testify to an aversion to the Kingdom of France and a sympathy for the Burgundian State.

5   Conclusion: Engaging with Civic Life

Juridical parodies from the late Middle Ages, such as parodies of ordinances, were highly intertwined with specific social contexts. They were used by festive authorities in order to promote or shape political and religious identity in the city. In a performative context, they encouraged people to participate in city life. As such, parody can be considered a discourse of citizenship.

The parodies were versatile in the sense that they could be used for various purposes. The traditional view that parody entertained and provided relief from the authoritarian discourse of their 'official' counterparts does certainly play a role in certain situations, but this was not

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[69] Post, *The Modern Devotion*, 227.

[70] There are notes by former owners of the manuscript on fols. 211v, 212r and 260v, with the signatures 'Jehan de Jouengnes, controleur de Compiegne sur Oyse', Claude Fauchet (1530–1601) and Paul Petau (1558–1614). These people came from the Compiègne region. On these notes, see the notice of the manuscript published on Arlima: https://arlima.net/no/2243 (consulted on 2 July 2022).

[71] M. Sommé, 'Le testament d'Isabelle de Portugal et la dévotion moderne', *Publications du centre européen d'études bourguignonnes: La dévotion moderne dans les pays bourguignons et rhénans des origines à la fin du XVIe siècle* (1989): 38–45.

the only function of these texts, as the examples of Valenciennes and Compiègne have shown. Parodic ordinances served the political purpose of creating unity in the city and could emphasise social criticism or even satire in the matter of religious reform. The texts always deal with matters that are affecting all of the inhabitants of the city, and as such they are texts that reflect what citizenship can, could or should entail.

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Imagining the City

Protecting the *Civitas,* Warning the *Civis*: Spiritual Defences in Two Sermons by Maximus of Turin

Merel de Bruin-van de Beek

1   Introduction

From the first centuries of Christianity up to and throughout the early Middle Ages a wide range of sources attest to the variety of ways in which Christian authors applied vocabulary, images, and notions pertaining to

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city, citizen, or citizenship both in their speaking and writing. Informed by both Scripture and the classical world in which Christianity was rooted and developed Christian thinkers could tap into and invent a wide array of this 'civic imagery' to convey the proper ways of life as a Christian and to converse about what it means to be part of God's community.[1] The soul, in need of protection against sin and vice, could be visualised as a city with its defensive barriers.[2] Martyrs and bishops could be described as the very walls of their city providing protection to their community.[3] In addition to the material aspects of a city, the communal notions inherent to the term c*ivitas* (*polis*, *politeia*) provided a template to think about becoming and being a member of God's people on earth and in heaven.[4]

Late antique sermons constitute a particularly profitable source for the study of this rich field of Christian civic imagery.[5] Given the fact that sermons were often delivered within an urban context,[6] terms like *civitas* and *civis* could be rhetorically deployed by bishops to relate to their congregants' associations, expectations, and experiences as members and inhabitants of the *civitas*. In doing so, these preachers may have hoped to render their instructions and exhortations and, more generally, their efforts of building and fostering a Christian community particularly effective.

[1] For examples of Christian applications of citizenship vocabulary, see: Rose, 'Citizenship Discourses', 1–21; Claudia Rapp, 'City and Citizenship as Christian Concepts of Community in Late Antiquity', in *The City in the Classical and Post-Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*, ed. Claudia Rapp and Harold Allen Drake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 153–166; Megan Welton, 'The City Speaks: Cities, Citizens, and Civic Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Traditio* 75 (2020): 1–37; Robert Flierman and Els Rose, 'Banished from the Company of the Good. Christians and Aliens in Fifth-Century Rome', *Al-Masāq* 32, no. 1 (2020): 64–86.

[2] Welton, 'The City Speaks', 6–7; Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 157.

[3] Welton, 'The City Speaks', 10; Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 158.

[4] Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 159–163; Rose, 'Citizenship Discourses', 10–12.

[5] For an overview of the various applications of the terms *civis* and *civitas* in late antique sermons I refer to my PhD dissertation: Merel de Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming).

[6] Éric Rebillard, 'Sermons, Audience, Preacher', in *Preaching in the Patristic Era*, ed. Anthony Dupont, Shari Boodts, Gert Partoens, and Johan Leemans (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 87–102, here 88.

For the purpose of this article two sermons of Maximus of Turin (d. ca. 408/423[7]) will take centre stage. Maximus preached in a time when Christianity was officially recognised as the state religion, but, in the view of Maximus at least, had yet to take proper shape in the *civitas* of Turin.[8] Maximus as a spiritual leader faced the challenge of building and fostering a Christian community in a city that was still very much rooted in and functioned according to pagan traditions and classical values and systems.[9] Indeed, studies on Maximus' sermons have revealed the bishop's many rhetorical efforts of making his congregants adapt their lives according to the Christian moral yardstick and of driving out pagan elements from the *civitas* and its surrounding countryside.[10]

Furthermore, Maximus was at some point(s) during his episcopacy confronted with the challenge of managing his community during especially troublesome times for the city. Several of his sermons refer to battles and 'barbarians' and show that the inhabitants of Turin anticipated hostile attacks; they also reveal how fear of hostilities made citizens decide to flee

[7] Clemens Weidmann, 'Maximus of Turin. Two Preachers of the Fifth Century', in *Preaching in the Patristic Era*, ed. Anthony Dupont, Shari Boodts, Gert Partoens, and Johan Leemans (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 347–372, here 348; Andreas Merkt, *Maximus I. von Turin. Die Verkündigung eines Bischofs der frühen Reichskirche im zeitgeschichtlichen, gesellschaftlichen und liturgischen Kontext* (Leiden, New York, Cologne: Brill, 1997), 6–7.

[8] The date of Maximus' consecration is uncertain. Weidmann mentions that Maximus' 'ordination was possibly related to the establishment of Turin as an episcopal see and to the synod held there on 22 September 398': Weidmann, 'Maximus of Turin', 349; Andreas Merkt proposes the period of ca. 400–420 as Maximus' time as bishop: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 7; William Fahey argues for the 'possibility' that Maximus was consecrated bishop earlier: William Edmund Fahey, 'Maximus of Turin and his Late Antique Community' (PhD diss. The Catholic University of America, 2002), 428. Fahey for example mentions the option of a consecration 'in 381/391': Fahey, idem, 427.

[9] Fahey for example states that '[t]hrough the sermons we encounter a world in transition, moving from its pagan roots to something new': Fahey, 'Maximus', 224. For another example of the difficulties a bishop could encounter when trying to make his urban audience adhere to the desired Christian way of life, see: Éric Rebillard, *Christians and Their Many Identities in Late Antiquity, North Africa, 200-450 CE* (Ithaca, NY, London: Cornell University Press, 2012), here chapter 3 ('Being Christian in the Age of Augustine'), 61–91.

[10] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, chapter 3 ('Christianisierung der *civitas*'), 69–144; Fahey, 'Maximus', chapter 4 ('*Mulier illa, quae dicitur abscondere in farina fermentum*: the community of Maximus'), 222–287, and chapter 5 ('Christianization in Turin: the tradition of regulating time'), 288–358.

their city[11] and instigated preparations of Turin's material defences.[12] The anxiety and anticipation that seep through these sermons can amongst others be linked to a period in and around the first decade of the fifth century when Northern Italy formed the scene of battle and the corridor for moving troops, including those of the Goths.[13]

Amongst the many instances of exhorting, correcting, and guiding his flock we can observe how Maximus made use of civic imagery to elucidate, enliven, and strengthen his instructions.[14] For the purpose of this chapter two instances of this rhetorical employment of civic imagery will be closely examined. I will focus on two sermons where Maximus makes use of the notion of a city under threat with the purpose of turning the congregants' attention to the necessity of accepting and building spiritual protection. In both sermons this notion of a city under threat is particularly linked to the prospect of future Judgement Day.

The discussion of these two sermons will provide insight into the ways in which this imagery of a city or citizen community under threat could be applied, as well as the kind of situations that could induce the use of this imagery. More importantly, however, this chapter will show how the bishop could connect to the urban context in which he preached—including his congregants' daily experiences and expectations concerning civic well-being and safety—and use this in conjunction with specific Scriptural passages to point his audience towards the importance of spiritual safety.

[11] Sermon 82, Maximus of Turin, *Sermones*, ed. Almut Mutzenbecher, *Sermonum collectio antiqua, nonnullis sermonibus extravagantibus adiectis*, CCSL 23 (Turnhout: Brepols, 1962), 335–337.

[12] Sermons 85 and 86, ed. Mutzenbecher, 347–353.

[13] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 39–47; Merkt notes that Turin was also under threat when Eugenius moved into Italy in 393, but given the uncertainty about whether Maximus already functioned as bishop of Turin in that year, Merkt proposes the hypothetical timeframe of 401–408/412: Merkt, idem, 41 and 47. According to Fahey some 'invasion sermons' may be related to 387 when the troops of the usurper Magnus Maximus crossed the Alps: Fahey, 'Maximus', 211; Fahey also states that '[i]t is not necessary to interpret all references to barbarians in the sermons of Maximus as references to invading forces': Fahey, 'Maximus', 210, n. 144.

[14] For a discussion of the application of the terms *civitas* and *civis* in Maximus' preaching I refer to my PhD dissertation: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming); for various examples of how Maximus in his preaching presents city life and is informed by it, see: Fahey, 'Maximus', 224–227.

2   Sermon 85: Defending Turin, protecting the City within

As noted in the introduction several of Maximus' sermons allow us to observe a preacher at work during a time of anxiety and insecurity. They provide insight in how the bishop aimed to steer his audience towards a proper understanding of the situation and the necessary course of action.[15] In sermons 81 and 82 for example, held on two subsequent Sundays, Maximus uses the biblical story about the Ninevites, whose city was threatened with destruction because of the citizens' sins, to convince his audience that they could save Turin by staying in the city, by abandoning sin, and through fasting and prayer.[16] In sermon 85, Maximus approaches the fear of hostilities from quite a different angle. Maximus spends a significant part of this sermon on the importance of taking care of one's spiritual *salus*. He uses the real-life preparations for the defence of Turin as an image for the spiritual defences of a person's inner city.

In what follows I will discuss how Maximus in sermon 85 utilises the fact that the city of Turin was being fortified and armed in the anticipation of hostilities to instruct the audience how to properly protect their soul, the inner city. We will see how Maximus presents the erecting of spiritual defences as fulfilling multiple tasks: they provide the necessary protection against the threat of Judgement Day, but at the same time these spiritual defences constitute a fundamental factor in the protection of Turin against earthly threats. Furthermore, the sermon reveals how the entire congregation is enabled to participate in the defensive preparations.

Maximus begins his sermon by addressing possible feelings of concern amongst his congregants. He observes that continually hearing about the battles that take place (*tumultus bellorum et incursiones proeliorum fieri*) may cause them ('you', *uos*) to be troubled; they may be even more troubled because of the question why these things are taking place 'in our times'.[17] In what follows, Maximus provides his audience with an interpretation of these events, explaining how the nearby battles are proof that the coming of Christ is near. Maximus presents this first of all as

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[15] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 47–59 and 59–68.

[16] Sermon 82, ed. Mutzenbecher, 335–337.

[17] Sermon 85, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 348, ll. 1–2; trans. Boniface Ramsey, *The Sermons of St. Maximus of Turin*, (New York, NY, Mahwah, NJ: Newman Press, 1989), 203.

consolation. Maximus states that the arrival of the adversary (*uenientem aduersarium*) is not to be feared, as it signals the coming of the Saviour (*saluatorem*). Furthermore, the bishop contrasts the temporal anxiety that the adversary incites with the eternal *salus* that the Saviour will bring and presents Christ as the powerful Lord who can repel the hostile dread (*hostilem* [...] *pauorem*) from 'us' and impart his presence and protection (*suam* [...] *praesentiam*) upon 'us'.[18]

The events are, therefore, not only to be seen as a signal that eternal salvation is near. The idea of Christ's coming is also presented as an antidote to the anxiety experienced by the audience.[19] Maximus at this point does not explain how the protection provided by Christ is to be understood, whether it helps against fear or wards off hostile events themselves, or both. This particular issue of proper protection, as we will see, and what it consists of, is an essential part of Maximus' subsequent instructions.

Maximus moves from his consoling words towards a cautionary message on what the people should truly be fearful about. The battles that are taking place do not only signal the arrival of Christ the Saviour, but as Maximus points out, also that of Judgement Day. They furthermore do not only form the prelude, so to say, of this day (*futurum enim iudicium dei haec inquietudo praecedit*), but they also have an admonitory function: the fear and caution incited by the current—and visible—tribulations will make one considerate of the fearful things to come and more cautious about the things one hopes for.[20] In what follows Maximus explains to

[18] Sermon 85, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 348, ll. 2–16.

[19] For a discussion of Maximus' theological-eschatological explanations of the threatening events and the coping strategies that Maximus offers his audience in reaction to these hostile threats, see: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 47–68.

[20] Sermon 85, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 348, ll. 17–22. *Per hos igitur bellorum tumultus mundi quoddam significatur excidium; futurum enim iudicium dei haec inquietudo praecedit. Est autem quoddam conmonitionis iudicium dei uidere quod metuas, ut possis intellegere plus superesse quod metuas; dum enim cauti sumus ad ea quae cernimus, cautiores ad illa efficimur quae speramus*; translation: 'By these warlike disturbances, then, the destruction of the world is somehow signified, for this unrest precedes the future judgment of God. But it is a kind of warning judgment of God to see what you should fear, so that you may understand that you should fear what is still to come, for in being careful about what we see we are made more careful about those things for which we hope'. trans. Ramsey, 204; Maximus here opposes '*cernimus*' to '*speramus*', which may be an allusion to Romans 8, 24–25, where the apostle Paul explains that hope relates to things that are not (or not yet) visible.

his audience what they are to do in the face of these current fearful events and the prospect of God's judgement:

> But <a wise man> (Ramsey: one who is wise) is instructed by these earthly events as to how he must avoid the coming judgment of the world. For, as he perceives how, in this universal confusion, the leading men prepare for safety <for the city (walls)> (Ramsey: by building ramparts), he himself is warned as to how to prepare a defense for Christian souls in the future destruction of the world.[21] (trans. Ramsey, 204, adapted)

Here Maximus refers to the activities deployed by the leading men of the city (*primores uiros*) who prepare protection for the city (walls) (*tuitionem moenibus*). Maximus presents these activities, which the congregants may have witnessed daily,[22] as an instruction to 'the wise man' (*Vir* […] *sapiens*) of how to protect the Christian souls in the face of Judgement Day.

Before going into more detail about what these spiritual defences should be like, it is first necessary to shortly reflect on the identity of the *primores viri* Maximus mentions. These men can be identified as the most prominent ruling men of the city. As Leonard Curchin observes, the *principales viri*, who in some cities were referred to as *primores* or *primates*, made part of the local *curia* and 'acquire[d] a special, legally recognised status, becoming a kind of oligarchic inner circle or "executive committee" of the council after the mid-fourth century'.[23] The tasks of these *principales* included 'assessment and collection of taxes', 'enrolment

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[21] Sermon 85, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 348, ll. 22–27. *Vir autem sapiens his actibus terrenis instruitur, quemadmodum futurum saeculi debeat declinare iudicium. Dum enim perspicit in hac conmuni perturbatione primores uiros tuitionem moenibus praeparare, ipse admonetur quemadmodum in futura euersione mundi defensionem christianis praeparet animabus.*

[22] Merkt notes how in this passage Maximus makes use of the events 'das sich vor den Augen der Turiner abspielt': Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 51.

[23] Leonard A. Curchin, 'The End of Local Magistrates in the Roman Empire', *Gerión* 32 (2014): 271–287, here 276–277. For more background on the governing of the late antique city, and certain of the social dynamics in relation to the *curia*, the elite, and the *plebs*, see respectively: Robert M. Frakes, 'The *Defensor Civitatis* and the Late Roman city', *Antiquité Tardive* 26, (2019): 127–147; Carlos Machado, 'Civic Honours and Political Participation in Late Antique Italy', *Antiquité Tardive* 26 (2019): 51–71.

of new members in the *curia*' and providing aid 'to suppress Christian heresies'.[24]

Judging by Maximus' words, in the unsettling times in which he delivered sermon 85 these *primores viri* were engaged in the preparation of Turin's defences. Furthermore, the sermon for the subsequent Sunday (sermon 86) seems to point to a specific responsibility of these men to care for the safety of the city and its citizens. Although Maximus on that occasion does not specifically refer to *primores* or *principales* he seems to address this group of men when he states that one's own *salus* should first be taken care of, before one engages in providing for the *salus* 'of many' (*saluti* […] *multorum*).[25] Several lines later Maximus observes that security for the citizens (*securitatem ciuibus*) can truly be provided by one who prepares the city's fortification (*munitionem praeparat ciuitati*) in God's name.[26]

In the case of sermon 85 Maximus' words are not geared towards reminding the *primores viri* of their responsibility. Instead, he uses the protective activities of the leading men as a 'manual' so to speak to activate a much broader range of people. By introducing the notion of a wise or prudent man (*vir sapiens*) the bishop seems to aim at enticing all his listeners[27] to prepare proper spiritual defences for the Christian soul. As we will see below, Maximus pictures the soul as a city that needs protection against the future judgement of God and the destruction of

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[24] Curchin, 'The End of Local Magistrates', 277–278.

[25] Sermon 86, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 352, ll. 15–21. *In uanum ergo iste uigilat qui putat propria cura se armare ciuitatem, cum ipse fidei arma non habeat. In uanum plane laborat qui aestimat se tuitionem alii parare posse, cum ipse sit dei gratia destitutus. Ait dominus in euangelio: Medice, cura te ipsum! Hoc exemplo dicendum est: Prius tu, homo, tuae consule saluti, ut possis saluti prouidere multorum!* trans. Ramsey, 206. For a discussion of the notion of *salus multorum* in Maximus' preaching see: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 138–143, especially 140–142. Merkt explains how *salus multorum* is an antique notion that concerns community well-being and that Maximus regards those with power to have the higher responsibility for providing this; here Merkt especially describes the connection between communal well-being and adherence to the Christian faith.

[26] Sermon 86, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 352, ll. 33–34. *Ergo qui in nomine domini munitionem praeparat ciuitati, iste uere securitatem ciuibus parat.*

[27] Possibly in this instance female listeners may also have been included in the term '*vir*', similar to how, according to Igor Fillipov, Caesarius of Arles' application of the vocative *fratres* 'may designate Christians of both sexes': Igor Filippov, 'Legal Frameworks in the Sermons of Caesarius of Arles', *Medieval Sermons* 58 (2014): 65–83, here 74.

the world; at the same time this city's spiritual defences are presented as a way to be relieved of fear and as a base requirement for earthly victory.

In his discourse on the spiritual protection of the inner city Maximus not only draws from the activities deployed by the *primores viri.* For his defensive imagery he also makes use of Scripture, amongst others Psalm 117/118. The theme of the Psalm in general closely relates to the circumstances in which Maximus and the congregants find themselves. The psalmist speaks about tribulation (v. 5), enemies (v. 7), and being surrounded by nations (vv. 10–12). Furthermore, reminiscent of Maximus' comforting words about the coming of Christ the psalmist speaks of not being afraid of man and about God's salvation. The Psalm also conveys the message that it is better to trust in and hope for God than to trust in men or to set one's hope on rulers (*in principibus,* v. 9).[28] This message, as we will see, also plays an important role in Maximus' message and rhetoric on preparing spiritual city defences.[29]

The first explicit reference to the Psalm follows Maximus' statement about the wise man and the protective actions of the *primores viri.* Maximus cites Psalm 117/118:19, '*aperite mihi portas iustitiae*',[30] and interprets the 'gates of righteousness' in such a way that it fits his earlier reference to city defences:

> Seeing that the gates of the city are fortified, we ought first to fortify the gates of righteousness in ourselves, for there are gates of righteousness, about which the holy prophet said: *Open to me the gates of righteousness*, and so forth. But the city gate can be secured only if the gate of righteousness in ourselves is first made secure […].[31] (trans. Ramsey, 204)

In Maximus' exegesis the Psalm's gates become positioned 'inside us' (*in nobis*) and it is these that must be armed and strengthened; additionally, through the comparison with the defensive activities deployed

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[28] *The Vulgate Bible, Douay-Rheims translation*, vol. 3, ed. Swift Edgar with Angela M. Kinney (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 2011), 470–475.

[29] And, if the Psalm was sung or recited earlier in the service, the Psalm's theme and phrasings may also have resonated with the audience during Maximus' sermon.

[30] As cited by Maximus, see below, note 31.

[31] Sermon 85, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 348, ll. 27–p. 349, l. 32. *Cernimus armari ciuitatis portas, debemus etiam prius in nobis portas armare iustitiae. Sunt enim portae iustitiae, de quibus sanctus propheta dixit: Aperite mihi portas iustitiae et reliqua. Tunc autem ciuitatis porta munita esse poterit, si prius in nobis porta iustitiae muniatur; […].*

for the audience's real-life city gate[32] those of the Psalm are implicitly characterised as *city* gates. This notion of an inner city gate that must receive proper protection is subsequently expanded upon: through a series of parallels the material defences that are being prepared for the city gates (*illa*) are matched with a spiritual counterpart for the inner city gate (*haec*):

> The one is built of iron, stones, and spikes; let the other be armed with <compassion> (Ramsey: mercy), innocence, and chastity. The one is guarded with a large number of spears; let the other be defended with frequent prayers. And for the complete protection of cities the ensigns of <rulers> (*principum*, Ramsey: 'princes') usually stand before the gates, but let the ensign of the Savior stand before the gates or our souls.[33] (Ramsey, 204, adapted)

Here, for each protective measure applied to the city gate of Turin Maximus exhorts his listeners to provide their inner city gate with a spiritual protection. As Merkt notes, the historical events observed by the people of Turin are here, as an *allegoria in factis*, provided with a deeper spiritual meaning and, amongst others, applied as a moral instruction of how to prepare spiritual defences.[34] The iron, stones, and stakes become images of the virtue or moral conduct of 'compassion, innocence and chastity'; the many spears stand for 'frequent prayers' with which the inner city gate is to be defended, and lastly, the signs of the rulers that are positioned in front of the city gates (*urbium portas*) as a full protection (*ad*

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[32] Here Maximus also prescribes a required order in the preparations of defences: first (*prius*) the gates 'inside us' must be properly taken care of, before the city gate (of Turin) can be properly armed. I will return to this aspect of prioritisation below.

[33] Sermon 85, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 349, ll. 33–39. *Illa enim construitur ferro saxis et sudibus, haec armetur misericordia innocentia castitate; illa telorum multitudine custoditur, haec orationum frequentia defendatur. Et ad plenam tuitionem urbium portas principum solent signa praecedere, animarum autem nostrarum portas signum saluatoris anticipet.*

[34] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 51–52. Furthermore, in connection to Maximus' later reference to the spiritual arms of Ephesians 6:14–17 Merkt in his chapter on Maximus' war-related sermons observes how the 'Kriegsmetaphorik' is especially effective because it is 'erschreckend real' to Maximus and his audience: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 52.

plenam tuitionem) are paralleled to the sign of the Saviour which is to stand before the gates of 'our souls' (*animarum* […] *nostrarum*).[35]

It is clear that Maximus by means of this vivid imagery of protective measures applied to the city of Turin strives to convince his audience of the necessity of providing the soul with proper protection. What needs yet to be addressed however is to what end the congregants were to make these spiritual defences.

Previously we noted how Maximus grounds the necessity of proper spiritual protection first of all in the light of the threat of God's judgement and the destruction of the world. That it is *this* threat that needs to be anticipated and prepared for is brought back to mind when Maximus, after his enumeration of spiritual city defences, again directs the attention to the future judgement of the world (*propter futurum mundi iudicium*), and exhorts the congregants to arm and protect themselves with heavenly arms, the breastplate of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of God's word (here referencing Ephesians 6:14–17).[36] However, directly following this exhortation, Maximus conveys to his audience how those who carry heavenly weapons do not fear present tribulations, nor God's future judgement (*nec praesentem perturbationem metuit nec futurum iudicium pertimescit*).[37] Reminiscent of the introduction of the sermon, where Christ is said to be able to drive away the fear of the enemy,[38] the

[35] This sign may be a reference to the sign of the cross that Christians received on their forehead when baptised and/or when initiated as catechumen. It could also refer to the act of signing oneself. Ramsey explains it as a mark received with baptism: Ramsey, *The Sermons*, 345 n. 5 and 9 to sermon 85; for a discussion of the cross as a sign on the foreheads of catechumen and of signing oneself on the forehead, see: Matthieu Pignot, 'Ritual Performance and Christian Belonging: Signing Foreheads with the Cross in the Writings of Augustine of Hippo', *Sacris Erudiri* 58 (2019): 111–143, here 113–115. At a later point in sermon 85 Maximus again talks about a protective, salutary sign, when reflecting on how Goliath was killed when hit on his forehead by David's stone. This stone, so Maximus explains, is a reference to Christ (here referring to the notion of Christ as cornerstone, inspired by Psalm 117/118:22. Goliath was killed by this stone because the sign of salvation (*signum salutis; signaculum saluatoris*) was not found on his forehead. Thus, Maximus states, Goliath was killed on that place where he was not protected by the mercy of God (*nudus a dei gratia*): Sermon 85, 3, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 349, ll. 53–65.

[36] Sermon 85, 3, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 349, ll. 40–42, with on the same page noting the reference to Ephesians 6:14–17.

[37] Sermon 85, 3, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 349, ll. 42–44.

[38] See above.

spiritual defences are thus not only presented as instrumental in protecting against God's future judgement, but also as offering assistance in the present unnerving events.[39]

   This support in present times reaches beyond a mitigation or dissolving of anxiety. In his reflection on the gates of righteousness from Psalm 117/118 Maximus introduces a causal relation between the effectiveness of material defences of the city on the one hand, and the care one takes of one's own soul on the other. The gates of the city, the bishop states, can only be fortified, when first (*prius*) the inner gates of righteousness are fortified.[40] Subsequently, he notes how it is of no use to protect the walls with defensive structures while offending God with sins (*ceterum nihil prodest muros munire propugnaculis et deum prouocare peccatis*).[41] Additionally, in connection with a later observation that David did not carry heavy weapons when confronting Goliath Maximus concludes his sermon with the statement that 'victory is not to be hoped for from arms alone but is to be prayed for in the name of the Savior' (*non in armis tantum speranda uictoria est sed in nomine saluatoris oranda*).[42]

   The spiritual protection is thus presented as serving more than one purpose: first, and primarily, it provides the soul protection from God's judgement and the destruction of the world. Second, proper spiritual protection provides the necessary support in present tribulations. With the spiritual defences set in place one does not have to worry about what the current events might bring. And without these defences, the preparations of Turin's material protection are to no avail. By including these multiple reasons in his argumentation, Maximus may have sought to maintain a balance between offering the congregants consolation in their anxiety on the one hand and impressing upon them the urgency of spiritual salvation on the other. In the light of the latter, by presenting

[39] For a discussion of Maximus' views on the relationship between the behaviour and religious attitude of the city's inhabitants and the safety of the city, see: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, here, for example, 53–55 and 60–63.

[40] For the Latin text and translation including references, see above, n. 31 with the corresponding quotation.

[41] Sermon 85, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 349, ll. 32–33.

[42] Sermon 85, 3, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 350, ll. 71–72, trans. Ramsey, 205; see also: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 62–63.

the spiritual defences as a base necessity for the effectiveness of the physical protective measures Maximus may also have wanted to increase the congregants' willingness to take care of their spiritual safety.

Given the above considerations, the way in which Maximus relates to the activities deployed to strengthen Turin's defences may not only be interpreted as an *allegoria in factis* as discussed above, that is, as an instructive image representing spiritual protection. It may additionally be seen as supporting Maximus' message of prioritising spiritual defences over the material ones. The parallelism that Maximus applies when speaking about the signs of the rulers (*principum [...] signa*) and the sign of the Saviour (*signum saluatoris*) in his enumeration of city defences may corroborate this interpretation. The pairing of the two types of signs can be understood as a specific rendering of Psalm 117/118:9, where it is stated that it is better to trust in the Lord than in rulers (*in principibus*). Possibly, by mirroring the signs of the rulers with the sign of the Saviour Maximus wanted to convey the message that the congregants should first of all not seek salvation from hostile threat in the protective measures of the *primores viri*, but in God. Here it is relevant to recall how in this sermon, in contrast to the sermon of the subsequent Sunday (86), Maximus does not address a specific group of people responsible for the city's and citizens' security. Instead, he aims to activate every wise man and woman to start or keep working on the protection of the Christian inner city. This way they will be able to withstand the threat of Judgement Day, as well as play their own part in building Turin's material defences.

3   SERMON 92: THE BISHOP ON GUARD

In sermon 92 we encounter another instance where Maximus connects imagery of outside attacks on the city or citizen community to the notion of spiritual threat. Here Maximus does not make any mention of his audience anticipating actual attacks on their city. Instead, the bishop focuses on quite a different issue that required his and the congregants' attention. The sermon is the first in a series of three sermons preached on subsequent Sundays where Maximus focuses on the task, the function and the effect of a bishop's preaching.[43] In all three sermons Maximus

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[43] For a discussion of Maximus' views on the task of preaching, see: Fahey, 'Maximus', 105–165.

works with the notions of outside attacks on a city or citizen community but does so in different ways. In sermon 93 and 94 Maximus uses the story of Jericho's demise in Joshua 6 to explain the effectiveness of a bishop's preaching. Like the Israelite priests who with the sound of their trumpets broke down Jericho's walls, with his voice the bishop is able to soften the heart, to destroy sin[44] and, having broken down bad thoughts and destroyed every work of unrighteousness, to reach the bare soul.[45]

In sermon 92, in contrast, the preaching bishop is pictured not as an assailant breaking down city walls, but as a watchman protecting the citizen community against the dangers of enemy attacks. In the introductory words of the sermon Maximus addresses the fact that people are aggravated by their bishop's stern preaching.[46] Maximus phrases their complaints as follows: 'For they say: "How severely and bitterly the bishop has preached!"[…]'[47] (trans. Ramsey, 213). It is this criticism that leads Maximus to emphasise how his preaching is much more an unavoidable necessity (*necessitas*), than something that he wants to do (*uoluntas*).[48] Through an intense rhetoric spiked with judicial language of crime, guilt, and condemnation Maximus expounds how he must speak up about a congregant's wrongdoings and in this way correct that person, because otherwise he will be condemned himself.[49] He is placed in such a position (*In hoc enim positi sumus*), he states, that if he has not addressed sinners about their crimes (*ut si delinquentibus non eorum scelera dixerimus*), the guilt of their crimes involves him (*scelerum ipsorum etiam nos reatus inuoluat*).[50] With this rhetoric Maximus wants to make it indisputably clear that his preaching is born out of a necessary, unavoidable task that

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[44] Sermon 93, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 375, ll. 52–54.

[45] Sermon 94, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 377, ll. 18–23.

[46] He for example mentions how many (*plerisque*) find his words too harsh (*asperior*): Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 2–5.

[47] Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 5–6. *Dicunt enim: 'Quam dure et amare praedicauit episcopus!', […].*

[48] Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 7–11.

[49] See for example: Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 12–16. *Haec autem est condicio praedicantis, ut non alterius peccata taceat, si sua uult declinare peccata; et emendet obiurgando fratrem, ut in se possit non perdere sacerdotem. Ceterum si uoluerit dissimulare silere celare, et illum tacendo non corrigit et se non praedicando condemnat.*

[50] Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 18–20.

is inherent to his position and role as bishop, ánd that by not obeying to this task he himself will not be spared from condemnation.[51]

To support this presentation of the heavy responsibility inherent to his position as bishop Maximus introduces a Scripture passage from the book of Ezekiel. He cites from Ezekiel 3:17–18, or the very similar passage from Ezekiel 33:7–8,[52] where God speaks to Ezekiel and appoints the prophet as a *speculator*, a watchman, over the people of Israel. It is his task to point out to the sinner that he, i.e., the sinner will die because of his sins, so that the sinner takes heed about his godless way. If the *speculator* does not do so, not only will this unrighteous person die, but God will ask the blood of this person of the hand of the *speculator* himself.[53] In his subsequent reflection on this passage Maximus once more conveys to his audience the critical and perilous nature of his task: the *speculator* is judged guilty (*illum reum statuat*) when he does not want to censure the unrighteous, he notes, and the wrongdoings of the sinner make the bishop stand accused (*sacerdos arguitur*).[54] In fact, the sinner himself can blame the bishop for his silence on the Day of Judgement (*ne silentium nostrum in die iudicii idem peccator accuset*).[55]

Maximus, by referring to Ezekiel's *speculator* taps into an existing strand of Christian reflections about the bishop's responsibility for the

[51] He also explicitly speaks about fearing for his own *salus*: Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 11–12.

[…]; *et metuenda aliis ingerimus, dum ipsi saluti propriae formidamus.*

[52] For a rendering of and reflection on these passages in relation to the bishop as *speculator*, see: Michael H. Hoeflich, 'The Speculator in the Governmental Theory of the Early Church', *Vigiliae Christianae* 34 (1980): 120–129, here 120–121; see also: Brent Donald Shaw, 'Go Set a Watchman: the Bishop as Speculator', in *Leadership and Community in Late Antiquity: Essays in Honour of Raymond van Dam*, ed. Young Richard Kim and Alexandra E.T. McLaughlin (Turnhout: Brepols, 2020), 63–89, here 67.

[53] Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, pp. 371, ll. 21–25. *Et tu, fili hominis, speculatorem te dedi domui Israhel, et audies ex ore meo uerbum; cum dicam peccatori: Morte morieris; et non loqueris, ut caueat impius de uia sua, ipse iniquus in iniquitate sua morietur, sanguinem autem eius de manu tua exquiram et reliqua.*

[54] Merkt notes that '*sacerdos*' is in Maximus' sermons the term most often applied to denote a bishop: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 76; on the terms applied for bishops see: Christine Mohrmann, 'Episkopos-Speculator', in *Études sur le latin des chrétiens*, vol. IV, ed. Christine Mohrmann (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1977), 231–252, here 231.

[55] Sermon 92, 1, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 371, ll. 25–34.

people placed under his care.[56] It is important to note that within this strand of thinking about the bishop as *speculator* the passage from Ezekiel 33 (Ezekiel 33:1–8, here especially vv. 2–6) forms an important point of reference. There the passage about the prophet being assigned the role of *speculator* is preceded by a description of a hostile and war-like scenario. There the *speculator* is presented as appointed by the people to stand above them (*constituerit eum super se speculatorem*, v. 2) and when seeing hostile threat to provide the people with a timely warning for hostile attacks (*ille viderit gladium venientem super terram*, v. 3) by blowing his trumpet.[57]

In the following discussion we will see how Maximus in his further reflections on the bishop as *speculator* works with a similar kind of battle or war-like setting.[58] But we will also see how Maximus makes particular rhetorical choices in how he presents this setting and the *speculator*'s role, namely: repeatedly opposing the people to the hostile threat for which the people need to be warned, highlighting the caring nature of the *speculator*'s task, and imbuing the setting as a whole with notions of civic well-being.

First, Maximus provides his audience with an elaborate explanation of what a *speculator* is and what is to be expected of such a person:

> What is a watchman? A watchman is one who, while standing, as it were, on a lofty pinnacle (*in quadam sublimi arce*), looks out on the populace

[56] Shaw, 'Go Set a Watchman', 63–89; Mohrmann, 'Episkopos-Speculator', 231–252; Hoeflich, 'The Speculator', 120–129. For a discussion of this tradition of Christian thinking and writing about the bishop as a *speculator* including additional bibliography, I refer to my PhD dissertation: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss, Utrecht University, forthcoming).

[57] *The Vulgate Bible, Douay-Rheims translation*, vol. 4, ed. Angela M. Kinney (Cambridge, MA, London: Harvard University Press, 2012), 828–831. For the notion of the bishop being appointed to stand above the people in connection to the passage from Ezekiel: Hoeflich, 'The Speculator', 121; for a reflection on the ideas concerning a bishop's responsibility and the *speculator*'s position on a high look-out point: Hoeflich, 'The Speculator', 121–122; Shaw, 'Go Set a Watchman', 82–83.

[58] For a reflection on what Shaw considers the 'military' or 'military-civic' strand in the application of the *speculator* as an image of the bishop in comparison to the *speculator* as the guard of the vineyard, see: Shaw, 'Go Set a Watchman', 67ff, with p. 85 for the term 'military-civic'. For a reflection on *speculator* in relation to military functions, including bibliography, I refer to: De Bruin-van de Beek (PhD diss., Utrecht University, forthcoming).

(*populo*) around him so that no enemy might fall unexpectedly upon it but so that, as he keeps careful watch, the \<people\> (or: community: *plebs*; Ramsey: 'the citizens') might retain the sweetness of peace. If he should suddenly see something hostile, he lets it be known at once, he proclaims it without cease, both so that the \<citizen\> [*ciuis*; Ramsey: 'the city'] might be prepared for the danger and so that the enemy, once detected, might flee. Otherwise, if the watchman is careless or silent or negligent while the enemy attacks, the consequence is that the unprepared people (*populus*) are seized and the enemy overcomes them and rages uncontrollably. And therefore the whole guilt is ascribed to the one who was unwilling to speak so as to save the many (*ut saluaret plurimos*) but preferred to be silent so that he himself would perish with the many.[59] (trans. Ramsey, 214, adapted)

In Maximus' description the *speculator* is first of all positioned on a high look-out point, specifically defined as an '*arx*'. This *arx* can be interpreted as a height or summit but may additionally carry the connotation of a fortress or stronghold.[60] Possibly, Maximus even had a high fortified place of a city in mind, similar to Isidore of Seville's' definition of '*arx*' in his seventh-century *Etymologiae*.[61]

How Maximus talks about the task of the *speculator* is reminiscent of the image of the *speculator* we discussed above, in that he is said to warn the people when he perceives oncoming hostile attacks. However, Maximus' rhetoric emphasises particular features of and adds certain elements to this picture. First of all, he applies a repeated contrast between the people and the enemy for which the people need to be warned. Maximus repeatedly alternates between those who need protection (*populo*; *plebs*; *ciuis*; *populus*) and the enemy against which protection

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[59] Sermon 92, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 372, ll. 36–47. *Quid est speculator? Speculator utique dicitur qui uelut in quadam sublimi arce consistens adiacenti populo prospicit, ne quis in eum subito hostis obrepat, sed illo sollicite curam agente plebs pacis dulcedine potiatur; qui si aliquid aduersi repente conspexerit, mox indicet constanter adnuntiet, ut et ciuis ad cauendum periculum sit paratus et hostis fugiat depraehensus. Ceterum si ingruente aduersario speculator dissimulauerit tacuerit neglexerit, tunc fit ut inopinatus praeoccupetur populus et inimicus superueniens debacchetur. Atque ideo omnis culpa ei adscribitur qui loqui noluit ut saluaret plurimos, sed tacere maluit ut periret ipse cum pluribus.*

[60] Charlton T. Lewis and Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1951; first ed. 1879), s.v. *arx*.

[61] On the interpretation of '*arx*', and Isidorus' description of '*arx*' as a part of the city in his *Etymologiae*, 15.2.32, see: Welton, 'The City Speaks', 7 and n. 20.

is to be provided (*hostis*; *aduersi*; *hostis*; *aduersario*; *inimicus*). This repeated contrast may have functioned to underscore the extent and reality of the spiritual threat, and thereby the necessity of the *speculator*'s precautionary actions.

Second, Maximus phrases the *speculator*'s task in terms of providing care. The term '*prospicit*', first of all, does not only refer to the act of looking into the distance, to see from far off and keeping watch, but also implies the notion of taking care.[62] Maximus furthermore notes how the people (*plebs*) have peace because of the unceasing care that is provided by the *speculator* (*illo sollicite curam agente*).[63]

Third, when talking about the people that depend for their peace on the *speculator*'s watchful gaze the bishop not only applies the terms '*populus*' and '*plebs*', but also the term '*ciuis*'. By vocalising the beneficiary of the *speculator*'s action as a *ciuis* Maximus leaves no doubt about it that the *populus* and *plebs* are here to be understood as a community of citizens and, by extension, the *speculator* as a watchman of citizens.

Taking into account the above considerations it is relevant to note that Maximus describes the *speculator*'s warning as having the purpose of saving many (*ut saluaret plurimos*). This phrasing is reminiscent of how Maximus talks about the people preparing the city's defences, as discussed in the previous section. In sermon 85, the defensive activities are said to be deployed by the leading men of the city, the *primores viri*; in sermon 86, as we have seen, the preparation of the city's defences is linked to the notion of providing *salus multorum* and *securitas ciuibus*.[64] Thus, the phrasing '*saluaret plurimos*' in combination with the application of the term '*ciuis*' in this sermon (92) suggests that Maximus aimed to relate the *speculator*'s duty to expectations concerning the special responsibilities of the city's leading men to provide for the safety and well-being of the citizens. We will return to this idea later.[65]

After reflecting on what it means when the *speculator* does not fulfil his task—the people are unexpectedly seized, the enemy comes upon them,

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[62] Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *prospicio*.

[63] Here also note Ramsey's translation 'as he keeps careful watch': Ramsey, *The Sermons*, 214, see full quotation above.

[64] See above, including no. 21, 25 and 26.

[65] See below.

the *speculator* is held guilty and dies along with 'the many'[66] (*periret ipse cum pluribus*)—Maximus applies the image of the *speculator* to the role of the bishop:

> These watchmen who have been established by the Lord, then – who do we say that they are if not the most blessed bishops? Having been set, as it were, on a kind of lofty pinnacle of wisdom (*in sublimi quadam arce sapientiae*), they look out over a distance for oncoming evils for the sake of the people's safety (*ad tuitionem populorum*) and, while still far away, they survey future distress not with the sight of the fleshly eye but with the vision of spiritual prudence. Therefore they cannot be silent but are compelled to cry out, lest by their silence the enemy, the devil, invade Christ's flock.[67] (trans. Ramsey, 214)

The speculator is now explicitly connected with the figure of the bishop (*beatissimos sacerdotes*).[68] Standing on an *arx* of wisdom the bishops observe and warn their people for oncoming bad things (*supervenientia mala*) and future sufferings (or torments: *futura supplicia*). Maximus here places much emphasis on the scrutiny and attentiveness with which the bishops apply their 'spiritual gaze' and observe and survey (*intuentur*; *contemplantur*) those things that constitute a spiritual danger to the people placed under their care. Like the *speculator* the bishops are explicitly said to have a caring function: they look out for danger '*ad tuitionem populorum*'. This phrasing implies both care, protection, and being a guard.[69] This care here acquires a specific pastoral tone as Maximus defines the people as the '*gregem Christi*'.[70]

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[66] Ramsey, *The Sermons*, 214, see full quotation above.

[67] Sermon 92, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 372, ll. 47–54. *Hos ergo speculatores a domino constitutos, quos esse dicimus nisi beatissimos sacerdotes, qui uelut in sublimi quadam arce sapientiae conlocati ad tuitionem populorum superuenientia mala eminus intuentur; et adhuc longe positi contemplantur futura supplicia non oculi carnalis intuitu sed prudentiae spiritalis aspectu? Et ideo tacere non possunt sed clamare coguntur, ne per silentium gregem Christi diabolus hostis inuadat.*

[68] On *sacerdos* referring to 'bishop', see above, n. 54.

[69] Lewis and Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. *tuitio*.

[70] See also Kevin Uhalde's reflections on the pastoral aspect of the bishop as a *speculator*: Kevin Uhalde, *Expectations of Justice in the Age of Augustine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), here 109 and 130.

Above we observed how Maximus' representation of Ezekiel's *speculator* reveals an association with the notion of caring for the citizens' well-being and the specific responsibility of those with power to provide in this. But for whom did Maximus think he as a bishop had to provide care and protection? In his concluding reflections on Maximus' war-related sermons Merkt states that Maximus sees himself as responsible for the entire *civitas* and regards his religious responsibility as having 'eine politisch-soziale Dimension'. As part of this argumentation Merkt relates to sermon 92, observing that Maximus regards himself as Ezekiel's '"Wachter" der Stadt'.[71] Merkt also observes how Maximus at another occasion associates himself with the biblical king of the city of Nineveh who rallied the city to penance when his city was threatened with destruction.[72] However, although it is very likely that Maximus saw his episcopal role as extending to the *civitas* as a whole, in sermon 92 the focus is more narrow as he explicitly defines the beneficiaries of the bishop's care as the *grex christi*, that is, the Christian community.

Concerning what exactly the *grex christi* needs to be protected against Maximus remains somewhat ambiguous. First, he talks about the invasion of the devil (*diabolus hostis inuadat*). This phrasing could be interpreted as the dangers of succumbing to the temptations of sin and vices, but this is not explicitly said so. Instead, Maximus focuses most of his attention on the future Judgement of God. Not only does he talk about *futura supplicia,* but he explicitly points to the danger of Judgement Day. Having discussed how the image of the *speculator* can be applied to the bishops he turns to the things he himself has observed:

> For look, we foresee the day of judgment coming, and already in our very thought we sense the <punishments of sinners> (Ramsey: punishment of

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[71] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 67 and 75; Fahey, 'Maximus', for example 240 and 308; for a discussion of how Leo I sought to care for the *civitas* and *urbs* of Rome through the expulsion of heresy, see Flierman and Rose, 'Banished', 64–86.

[72] Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 142 and n. 431; in sermon 81 Maximus also explicitly associates this king of Nineveh with the notion of *salus civium*: Sermon 81, 1–2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 332, ll. 19–20 and ll. 29–31. See also Merkt's comment on the bishop's responsibility: Merkt, *Maximus I.*, 140.

sin). And so we announce to each person that he should turn away from the path of his wickedness […].[73] (trans. Ramsey, 214, adapted)

Here the foreseen (or: discerned, *praeuidemus*) arrival of Judgement Day becomes specifically ominous by Maximus' reference to the punishment of the sinners and how he perceives or senses these punishments in his thought.[74] It is because of this (*ideo*), so the bishop states, that he proclaims to every person to return from his or her impious ways. In the subsequent and concluding lines of his sermon Maximus makes this call to reform concrete by admonishing the drunk to strive for temperance in drinking and the greedy person not to venerate his wealth.[75]

There is no way of knowing whether Maximus' concluding exhortations had any effect on his addressees. But it is certainly possible to imagine Maximus expecting his corrections to meet less criticism and have a greater chance of swaying his congregants because of his rhetorical efforts. The sermon reveals to us a bishop who by highlighting the necessity and heavy duty of preaching, and by painting the actions of the bishop-*speculator* with a hue of civic well-being, sought to make his message land with a critical audience.

4   Conclusion

The preceding discussion has shown us two different ways in which Maximus made use of the imagery of a city or citizen community under threat to convince his audience of the necessity of proper spiritual defences, especially in view of Judgement Day. Sermon 85 reveals how the bishop tapped into the experiences of the congregants by relating to the building of Turin's defences and combined this with the imagery of the Scriptural gates to direct the people's attention to the issue of the safety of one's inner city. In Sermon 92, the figure of the *speculator* is first of all drawn from Scripture and informed by the Christian tradition of thinking about the bishop's responsibility. But we have also seen how Maximus, when picturing the function and actions of the *speculator*,

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[73] Sermon 92, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 372, ll. 54–56. *Ecce enim praeuidemus diem aduenire iudicii et peccatorum poenas iam ipsa cogitatione sentimus. Atque ideo adnuntiamus unicuique, ut auertat se a uia inpietatis suae […].*

[74] On Uhalde's reflections on the bishop's pastoral role, see also above, n. 70.

[75] Sermon 92, 2, ed. Mutzenbecher, p. 372, ll. 57–64.

emphasises the idea of enemy threat as well as reaches out to the notion of providing civic well-being. This in order to have his 'harsh' preaching more favourably and effectively received by his critical congregants. Thus, we could say that in two different ways Maximus was able to combine Scriptural imagery with the congregants' desire for living a life in peace and safety to have them make work of their own spiritual *salus*.

In both sermons the bishop expects his audience to take action, in the first case by building the defences of their inner city, in the other by taking heed of the warnings issued by their guardian bishop. A significant difference, however, pertains to the way in which the imagined city or citizen community is related to the audience. In sermon 85, the spiritual city is positioned inside each person, and each person is exhorted to protect his or her inner city through the application of spiritual defences. In sermon 92, the notion of a citizen community under threat relates to the audience on a communal level: the citizen community is used as an image for the *grex Christi*, for which the bishop, like a *speculator*, is to take watch and to provide timely warnings. I would suggest that this communal character is first of all born from the fact that the sermon revolves around explaining the bishop's responsibility towards the people placed under his care; second, it may also be informed by the fact that the sermon focuses on the act of preaching, an act which the bishop typically performed in a communal setting.

Overall, we have seen how Maximus tapped into the urban context in which he preached to relate to his audience's experiences and expectations with relation to civic well-being and the safety of their city. This in close conjunction with the imagery that Scripture provided. Furthermore, the two sermons testify of how the bishop by means of this civic imagery wanted his audience to extend their gaze from their worldly temporal concerns and desires towards the spiritual. In the light of Judgement Day, the congregants were to acknowledge the necessity of spiritual safety and act upon this under the watchful gaze of their bishop.

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CHAPTER 13

All Manner of Precious Stones: Civic Discourse and the Construction of the Early Medieval City

Megan Welton

1   Introduction

Civic discourse provided an important avenue along which early medieval authors traveled between spiritual and terrestrial *loci*. At the same time, this discourse provided the language through which citizens themselves could be figured as part of the physical fabric of civic space. This tension, so this chapter argues, persisted in early medieval conceptions of cities both heavenly and terrestrial, virtuous and vicious. Conceptions of the heavenly city offer insights into how particular authors conceptualised how earthly cities and civic communities should function. At the same time, outsize concern for terrestrial cities troubled some early medieval authors, who feared that a focus on their perfectability would cause their citizens to lose sight of the *celestis urbs*.

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In order to demonstrate these connections, this chapter concentrates on how early medieval authors instrumentalised the malleable connotations concerning stone and construction as part of their broader applications of civic discourse throughout the early medieval period. Each section concentrates on one body of sources, starting with scriptural exegesis. The first section concentrates on how late antique and early medieval exegetes correlated abstract conceptualisations of 'living stones' (*vivi lapides*) of the heavenly city as present in the Psalms and Revelations with explicit links to citizens in the terrestrial realm in their works. With the link between the heavenly and terrestrial citizens established, the following section concentrates on the liturgical rite known as the *Missa pro civitatis sive loci custodia* in order to demonstrate how these bonds between these two bodies and citizens and civic spaces were emphasised in an effort to seek divine protection for a city on earth. The possibilities and limitations of the creation of sanctified space on earth through construction are then explored through two further bodies of evidence: the ideal construction of sanctified space on earth through the *Vita s. Chrothildis* and the problematic nature of this ideal in two ninth-century letters composed during the Carolingian period. Together, this analysis of these diverse sources illuminates the ongoing correspondence between medieval conceptions of civic space and civic bodies throughout each of these diverse texts.

2   CIVIC STONES: EXEGESIS, URBAN STRUCTURES, AND VIRTUE

Scripture furnished late antique and early medieval exegetes with the material through which they could explain the qualities of specific civic structures and expand upon their broader allegorical meaning in order to exhort those within Christian communities to emulate and enact virtuous action.[1] The image of walls surrounding temporal and sacred structures,

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[1] For more on the intersection between *lapides vivi* and temple construction in Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, see: Joseph C. Plumpe, '*Vivum saxum, vivi lapides*: The Concept of "Living Stone" in Classical and Christian Antiquity', *Traditio* 1 (1943): 1–14; Christel Meier, Gemma spiritalis: *Methode und Gebrauch der Edelsteinallegorese vom frühen Christentum bis ins 18. Jahrhundert* I (Munich: Wilhelm Fink, 1977), 73–83; Karl Moseneder, '*Lapides vivi*. Über die Kreuzkapelle der Burg Karlstein', *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 34 (1981): 39–69; Günther Binding, *Der früh- und hochmittelalterliche Bauherr als* sapiens architectus (Darmstadt, 1998), here 327–348; Stefan Trinks, '*Saxum vivum* and *lapides viventes*: Animated Stone in Medieval Book Illumination', in

for instance, inspired vivid reflections on how the church protects and guides its members. At the same time, such reflections led late antique and early medieval theologians to contemplate the composition of the heavenly city's foundational gemstones. Such gems furnished potent imagery through which exegetes explored how individual and collective bodies should mold themselves into citizens of these sacred spaces.

The walls of celestial Jerusalem anchored both theological musings on the composition of Ecclesia as a civic space and consideration of the roles of individual members as ideal citizens. Bishop Ambrose of Milan (d.c.397) grasped onto this very dynamic towards the end of his *apologia* addressed to the reigning emperor Theodosius on the biblical king David, with a commentary on the penitential Psalm 50.[2] In the final chapter, Ambrose centered on the allegorical implications of crying out for the walls of Jerusalem to be built in the context of professing one's own sins. Such *muri Hierusalem*, in Ambrose's view, constitute 'the ramparts of faith, the defences of disputations, the bulwarks of the virtues'.[3] Ambrose

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Canones: The Art of Harmony. The Canon Tables of the Four Gospels, ed. Alessandro Bausi, Bruno Reudenbach, and Hanna Wimmer (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 193–208; Ilka Mestemacher, 'Matter of Life and Death? The "Living Stones" and Medieval Gospel Books', in *Steinformem: Materialität, Qualität, Imitation*, ed. Isabella Auguart, Maurice Saß, and Iris Wenderholm (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 179–190; Ilka Mestemacher, *Marmor, Gold und Edelstein: Materialimitation in der karolingischen Buchmalerei* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021).

[2] Ambrose of Milan, *De apologia prophetae David ad Theodosium Augustum*, 17.82–17.83, CSEL 32.2, ed. K. Schenkl (Prague: P. Tempsky, 1897), 353. For the broader context of this work, see: Hartmut Leppin, 'Das Alte Testament und der Erfahrungsraum der Christen: Davids Buße in den Apologien des Ambrosius', in *Die Bibel als politisches Argument: Voraussetzungen und Folgen biblizistischer Herrschaftslegitimation in der Vormoderne*, ed. Andreas Pecar and Kai Trampedach (Munich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2007), 119–133; Fabian Schulz, 'Ambrosius, die Kaiser und das Ideal des christlichen Ratgebers', *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 63 (2014): 214–242; Mikhail A. Boytsov, 'The Good Sinful Ruler: Ambrose of Milan and Theodosius I', in *The Good Christian Ruler in the First Millennium: Views from the Wider Mediterranean World in Conversation*, ed. Philip Michael Forness, Alexandra Hasse-Ungeheuer, and Hartmut Leppin (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021), 65–86. For the reception of Ambrose's *De apologia prophetae David* in subsequent centuries, see for instance: Hélène Yagello, 'Histoire, exégèse et politique: L'apologie de David d'Ambroise de Milan et les Carolingiens', *Sources: Travaux Historiques* 49–50 (1997): 103–122; Sarah Hamilton, 'A New Model for Royal Penance? Helgaud of Fleury's *Life of Robert the Pious*', *Early Medieval Europe* 6 (1997): 189–200.

[3] Ambrose, *De apologia prophetae David*, 17.83, ed. Schenkl, 353. *muri itaque Hierusalem fidei propugnacula, disputationum munimenta, virtutum culmina sunt.*

delved further, proceeding from the abstract to the more concrete expressions of these walls in Ecclesia herself. For, so Ambrose claimed, 'the walls of Jerusalem are the gatherings of the churches established throughout the whole world'.[4] After casting Song of Songs 8:10 in the voice of Ecclesia ('I am the wall, and my breasts are like towers'), Ambrose went on to aver that the walls of Jerusalem were not only constituted by the collective *conventus* of churches but even unto the individual members, 'since everyone who enters the church by good faith and good works becomes a citizen and inhabitant of that city on high that comes down from heaven'.[5] Thus, Ambrose concluded, the *structura* of living stones builds these walls, the walls of the church and the walls of heavenly Jerusalem alike.[6]

Such structures and their constituent parts, however, must be constantly guarded, lest they be altered for devious ends. In his widely influential *libellum regularum* for unlocking the hidden treasures imbedded within Scripture, Ambrose's contemporary, the North African theologican Tyconius (d.c.400) underscored the dual potential of precious stones.[7] After noting that God listed twelve stones to denote perfect wholeness, Tyconius argued that while God only constructs goodness, the devil can indeed change their application, if not their nature.[8]

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[4] Ambrose, *De apologia prophetae David*, 17.83, ed. Schenkl, 353. *muri Hierusalem ecclesiarum conventus sunt toto orbe fundati*

[5] Song of Songs 8:10, in *The Vulgate Bible III: The Poetical Books (Douay-Rheims Translation)*, ed. and trans. S. Edgar, Dumbarton Oaks Medieval Library 21 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011), 752. *Ego murus, et ubera mea sicut turris*; Ambrose, *De apologia prophetae David*, 17.83, ed. Schenkl, 353. *quoniam quisquis bona fide atque opere ingreditur ecclesiam fit supernae illius civis et incola ciuitatis, quae descendit de caelo.*

[6] Ambrose, *De apologia prophetae David*, 17.83, ed. Schenkl, 353. *Hos muros lapidum aedificat structura uiuorum.*

[7] For a recent exploration of Tyconius' *Liber regularum*, see: Matthew R. Lynskey, *Tyconius' Book of Rules: An Ancient Invitation to Ecclesial Hermeneutics* (Brill: Leiden, 2021), here 232–274. For the broader context of Tyconius' complex relationship with the Donatist church and the development of North African ecclesial factions, see: Jesse A. Hoover, *The Donatist Church in an Apocalyptic Age* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), here 161–181.

[8] Tyconius, *Liber Regularum*, 7.14.2, ed. and trans. W.S. Babcock, *Tyconius: The Book of Rules* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989), 136. *Et in Apocalypsi eadem civitas duodecim lapidibus fundata construitur. Omnem inquit lapidem optimum, et eunumeravit ducodecim, ut ostenderet in duodenario numero perfectionem. Omnia enim quae fecit Deus bona sunt: horum diabulus usum non naturam mutavit.*

In this leap from *naturam* to *usum*, Tyconius also leapt from the divine to the human. All people of outstanding sense and powerful character, Tyconius averred, 'are gold and silver and precious stones by nature'.[9] However, their ultimate civic destiny lay not in their innate character, but by their own will, for Tyconius asserted that 'they will belong to the one in whose service they employ their powers, by choice not by nature'.[10]

Early medieval exegetes ruminated on these same passages, crafting interpretations that emphasised defensive civic structures, while also deriving nuanced distinctions that reflected contemporary concerns. As a scholar well versed in the works of both Ambrose and Tyconius, the eighth-century Northumbrian monk Bede (d.735) likewise capitalised on the interpretative potential springing from the intersection of civic bodies and civic construction in his own extensive exegetical works.[11] In his commentary on the Song of Songs, Bede declared that Ecclesia is rightly called a wall because she was composed of living stones joined together by the glue of charity, which can withstand any blow of any heretical battering ram.[12] Bede, however, made an important distinction in rank by highlighting the physical features of these defensive structures. Ecclesia's towers, Bede claimed, signify those that have been granted greater grace by God 'so that through the extraordinary height of their virtues they surpass the common life of the faithful as much as towers surpass walls', and, like towers 'repel all the spears of those who have gone astray

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[9] Tyconius, *Liber Regularum*, 7.14.2, ed. and trans. Babcock, *Tyconius*, 136–137. *aurum sunt et argentum et lapides pretiosi secundum naturum, …*

[10] Tyconius, *Liber Regularum*, 7.14.2, ed. and trans. Babcock, *Tyconius*, 136–137, with emendations. Many thanks to Robert Flierman for clarifications on this particular passage. *… sed eius erunt in cuius obsequio voluntate non natura suis fruuntur*.

[11] For Bede and Tyconius, see the preface to his *Expositio Apocalypseos*, in which he succinctly summarised the seven hermeneutical principles in Tyconius' *Liber regularum*: Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos*, Praefatio, 223–231. See also: Jean-Marc Vercruysse, 'Bède lecteur de Tyconius dans l'*Expositio Apocalypseos*', in *Bède le Vénérable: Entre tradition et postérité*, ed. Stéphane Lebecq et al. (Villeneuve d'Asq: CeGes Université Charles-de-Gaulle-Lille, 2005), 19–30. For the broader reception of Ambrose by Bede and the possibility of Ambrose's *Apologia prophetae David* in his Northumbrian orbit, see: Rosalind Love, 'The Library of the Venerable Bede', in *The History of the Book in Britain* I, ed. Richard Gameson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 606–632, here 624.

[12] Bede, *In cantica canticorum*, 5.8, in *Bedae Venerabilis Opera* II, 2B, 165–375, ed. D. Hurst (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 351–352. *Ego quidem murus recte cognominor quia de uiuis sum compacta lapidibus quia glutino caritatis adunata quia super fundamentum immobile locata sum quia nullo ictu arietis heretici possum deici.*

with their superior powers of speaking'.[13] In essence, Bede concluded, Ecclesia embodies these defensive structures since she 'constantly drives hostile armies away from injuring that city and always strives to rear new peoples' for God.[14]

This image of Ecclesia as a well-defended city, however, could be inverted. The Carolingian abbot Paschasius Radbertus often reflected upon the civic construction of Holy Jerusalem and its effects on the civic body of the church in his biblical commentaries, including in his commentary on Matthew.[15] In Book III, Paschasius contemplated why the *civitas* seated on a mountain cannot be hidden. Amongst his discussion of the twelve splendid gems of Holy Jerusalem and the fortifications of the virtues, Paschasius reflected upon how the *rex et artifex* of this city forbids its citizens (*cives*) from concealing their faith, so that they may be surrounded by the stronger arms of the virtues.[16] This carefully crafted balance, however, could face significant challenges from within its very structures. In his *Expositio in Lamentationes*, Paschasius correlated the walls of the Ecclesia with *pastores*, claiming that when these walls, these guardians of souls, 'are destroyed by their own acts, the enemy easily pulls down and plunders all precious things within and becomes like a city which is being sacked'.[17] Strong structures figured as cities are not

[13] Bede, *In cantica canticorum*, 5.8, ed. D. Hurst 352. ...*turris murum tantum generalem fidelium uitam speciali uirtutum altitudine transcendunt...omnia tela peruersorum eximia dicendi potentia quasi turris firma repellant*; Arthur G. Holder (trans.), *The Venerable Bede:* On the Song of Songs *and Selected Writings* (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 241.

[14] Bede, *In cantica canticorum*, 5.8, ed. D. Hurst, 352. ...*hostiles a laesione ciuitatis illius acies constanter eicio et nouos semper ei populos educare contendo*; Holder (trans.), *The Venerable Bede*, 241.

[15] For a recent explication of Paschasius' *Expositio in Matthaeum*, see: Owen M. Phelan, '"Beautiful Like Helen": A Study in Early Medieval Theological Method', *The Catholic Historical Review* 106 (2020): 202–226.

[16] Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Matthaeum*, III.5.14, CCCM LVI, ed. B. Paulus (Turnhout: Brepols, 1984), 311. ...*cuius rex et artifex ciuitatis longe ad ita iturus interdicit abscondendi fiduciam ciuibus, ut fortioribus virtutum se circummuniunt armis*.

[17] Paschasius Radbertus, *Expositio in Lamentationes*, 11. *Sed cum muri eius pastores uidelicet ac custodes animarum suis destruuntur actibus facile hostis omnia introrsus speciosa civitatis deicit et diripit fitque quasi ciuitas quae uastatur*; For the translation of this passage, and the wider context, see: Hannah W. Mattis, *The Song of Songs in the Early Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 194–195.

enough; those who populate the figurative city must themselves persist in virtuous action in order for the city and her inhabitants to survive.

Returning to Bede, the monk from Wearmouth-Jarrow famously elaborated upon the specific gemstones that constituted the walls of the New Jerusalem, as described by John in Revelations, in his *Expositio Apocalypseos*.[18] The various gemstones signified the virtues, not only of the physical stones themselves and their ability to withstand any potential spiritual enemy, but also of those inhabitants of the celestial city. Earlier exegetes crafted this correlation between celestial Jerusalem's gems, the virtues, and the saints.[19] Bede, however, further emphasised how these stones-as-saints shone as moral *exempla* for inhabitants of the terrestrial realm. Sapphire, for instance, signified not only the radiant light of the mind of the saints (*sanctorum animus*) illuminated by rays of divine light, but the light they emanated persuaded others to raise their minds to the skies and seek the eternal.[20] The gold and gemstones that pave the streets of New Jerusalem signified for Bede that 'there are many, even of a commoner and lower life, who are surrounded with the highest virtues in the Church, and who shine with a purity of mind and effulgence of work'.[21] For Bede, therefore, the metaphors assigned to these foundational stones reached beyond the spiritual world, signifying the ways in which God's saints and martyrs could influence and persuade even ordinary people who adhere to Christian virtues.

While the stones that structure the heavenly city emanate the virtues of the saints for earthly citizens to contemplate and emulate, the precious

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[18] Peter Kitson, 'Lapidary Traditions in Anglo-Saxon England: Part II, Bede's *Explanatio Apocalypsis* and Related Works', *Anglo-Saxon England* 12 (1983): 73–123.

[19] See, for instance, Jerome's recension of Victorinus of Pettau, *Explanatio in Apocalypsin una cum recensione Hieronymi*, V. 89–97, CCSL 5, ed. R. Gryson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2017), 259–261. In the same chapter, Jerome continues on to affirm that the three gates on each of the four sides of single pearls of heavenly Jerusalem represent the four virtues of prudence, temperance, justice, and fortitude, which in turn represent the twelve apostles, 'who, shining in the four virtues as precious pearls' manifest the light of their doctrine unto the saints.

[20] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXVII, CCSL 121A, ed. R. Gryson (Turnhout: Brepols, 2001), 533–555.

[21] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXVII, ed. Gryson, 561. *Multi enim sunt etiam vitae latioris et inferioris, summis in Ecclesia cincti virtutibus, et puritate mentis et radio fulgent operis*; Edward Marshall (trans.), *The Explanation of the Apocalypse by Venerable Bede* (Oxford: James Parker and Co, 1879), 163.

stones and ornamentation that adorn the *terrena civitas* often serve in Bede to illustrate the temporary delights tied to the human body. The kings, merchants, and sailors lament their fallen city, as Babylon's adornments signify how 'all the ostentation of the world, and indeed those things that are gratifying to the body, or convenient to external uses, is failing'.[22] Instead of reflecting the internal virtue of the heavenly citizen, the different kinds of metal that glimmer on Babylon only delight the external sense of sight, a hollow sensation.[23] Bede further compares the *civitas saeculi*, loaded down by the burden and delusion of its sins, to an unstable mass that will not be able to weather the coming storm.[24] The Church stands in direct opposition with the secular world as she bears the qualities of 'a stone, but one that is stable and steadfast, which spurns the assaults of the tempests'.[25]

Such a stone cannot weather external storms or hostile enemies without vigilance and sacrifice. In his commentary on 1 Peter 2:5, Bede declared that the stones that compose the *paries* of the Christian community must be hewn, cutting away all imperfections. As *vivi lapides*, those who long to be within this wall must have 'at the discrimination of a learned teacher, their undesirable actions and thoughts cut off, as if squared off by the blow of an axe'.[26] Such incisions would then allow these living stones to be held up by the righteous who came before them 'just as some rows of stones in a wall are held up by others'.[27] At the

[22] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXII, ed. Gryson, 481. *Cunctas mundi pompas et ea quae vel sensibus corporis suavia vel externis sunt usibus accommoda, deficere lugent*.

[23] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXII, ed. Gryson, 481. *Species enim metallorum ad visum…pertinent*.

[24] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXIII, ed. Gryson, 485. *Civitas saeculi pro peccatorum pondere et errore, instabili molae comparatur*.

[25] Bede, *Expositio Apocalypseos* XXXIII, ed. Gryson, 485. *Et Ecclesia quidem lapidi similatur, sed stabili et firmo, qui tempestatum spernat incursus*.

[26] Bede, *In epistolam II Petri*, 2.5, CCSL 121, ed. D. Hurst (Turnhout: Brepols, 1983), 234. *Per discretionem eruditi doctoris amputatis actibus et cogitationibus superfluis, velut ictu quadrantur securis*; David Hurst (trans.), *The Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles of Bede the Venerable* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1985), 82.

[27] Bede, *In epistolam II Petri*, ed. Hurst, 234. *Et sicut ordines lapidum in pariete portantur alii ab aliis…*; David Hurst (trans.), *The Commentary on the Seven Catholic Epistles*, 83.

same time, those freshly carved stones could now themselves instruct and support those who follow.[28]

In subsequent centuries, early medieval authors adopted this metaphorical interplay between individual celestial stones, virtues, and civic language. One tenth-century anonymous monk, for instance, condensed and reconfigured pertinent passages from Bede's *Expositio Apocalypseos* into a new hymn that survives in more than twenty extant manuscripts.[29] In the first and last stanzas, the author surrounded the celestial stones and their attendant virtues with civic terminology, situating the *cives* already in heaven and those who strive to become their co-citizens in conversation with one another. In the first line, the hymn implored 'Citizens of the celestial *patria* / sing together to the King of kings'.[30] God not only ruled over all, but also was acknowledged as the *supremus artifex* of the heavenly city, whose foundation will now be explored through the recitation of the twelve gemstones that structure the *uranica civitas*.[31] After dedicating a stanza to each of the stones, the hymn drew the conclusion that 'these precious stones / signify human beings of flesh and blood / the variety of colors is / the multiplicity of virtues'.[32] The stones themselves represented carnal beings, capable of sin, but also capable of harnessing the virtues on the path to eternal life. Indeed, so the hymn averred, 'Whosoever shall have flowered in these / can be their fellow-citizen (*concivis*)'.[33] After speaking directly to Jerusalem herself, the hymn closes by entreating God as king of the *civitatis celice* to grant

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[28] Bede, *In epistolam II Petri*, ed. Hurst, 234. *Qui cum a prioribus portetur, quem portare debeat ipse sequentem non habebit.*

[29] For critical edition, translation, and extensive analysis of this hymn, see: Kitson, 'Lapidary Traditions', 109–123. Kitson postulates that this hymn most likely was composed by an unidentified monk in tenth-century England in his persuasive argument against later ascriptions of this work to such late eleventh-century authors as Marbod, St. Anselm, or Amato of Monte Cassino.

[30] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patrie*, l.1–2, ed. and trans. Kitson, 115. *Cives celestis patrie, / Regi regum concinite.*

[31] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patriae*, l.3–6, ed. and trans. Kitson, 115. *Qui est supremus artifex / Civitatis uranice / In cuius edificio / Talis extat fundatio.*

[32] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patriae*, l.79–82, ed. and trans., Kitson, 119. *Hi pretiosi lapides / Carnales signant homines; /Colorum est varietas / Virtutum multiplicitas.*

[33] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patriae*, l.83–84, ed. and trans. Kitson, 119. *Quicumque his floruerit / Concivis esse poterit.*

those present the *consortium* with those who already reside above.[34] 'Together in the companies of the saints', the hymn beseeches, 'let us sing songs to thee'.[35] Through the perfection of the virtues embodied in the celestial stones, and through the songs reverberating on earth and in heaven, this hymn made audible the abstract notions found in scriptural exegesis and in moral instruction, crossing from the celestial realm to the terrestrial city.

3   The Celestial and the Terrestrial City Meet: *Missa pro civitatis sive loci custodia*

The dangers associated with the terrestrial city—invasion, structural collapse, and moral decay—and their spiritual solutions to these issues found expression in a wide array of early medieval genres, including in the liturgy. An extraordinary addition to a sacramentary contained in Tours, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 184 (s.ix^ex) makes an anxious connection between the celestial city and God's protection for a *civitas* and the civic community that resides in her.[36] Together with Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS lat. 9430, this Tours manuscript features as one of two manuscript compilations of three ninth-century sacramentaries, whose gatherings had at some point been disseevered and subsequently reassembled into two manuscripts.[37] Originally, these sacramentaries were copied in the later ninth- and early tenth-centuries, the earliest of which

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[34] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patrie*, l.91–94, ed. and trans. Kitson, 120. *Concede nobis, agie / Rex civitatis celice, / Post cursum vite labilis / Consortium in superis.*

[35] Anonymous, *Cives celestis patrie*, l.95–96, ed. and trans. Kitson, 120. *Inter sanctorum agmina / Cantemus tibi cantica.*

[36] Tours, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 184 (s.ix^ex), f. 286r. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/mirador/index.php?manifest=https://bvmm.irht.cnrs.fr/iiif/25711/manifest. For the dating of this Mass, see: Leslie Webber Jones, 'The Script of Tours in the Tenth Century', *Speculum* 14 (1939): 179–198.

[37] Scholars largely follow Jean Deshusses' classification of this complex transmission into three manuscripts: Tu1, Tu2, and Tu3. Jean Deshusses, 'Les anciens sacramentaires de Tours', *Revue Benedictine* 89 (1979): 281–302. For earlier alternative reconstructions, see: Léopold Delisle, *Mémoire sur d'anciens sacramentaires* (*Extrait des Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres,* Tome xxxii, 1^re partie) (1886), 130–140. Victor Léroquais, *Les sacramentaires et les missels manuscrits des bibliothèques publiques de France* I (Paris, 1924), 43ff, who largely follows Delisle. See also: Arthur Westwell, 'The Lost Missal of Alcuin and the Carolingian Sacramentaries of Tours', *Early Medieval Europe* 30 (2022): 350–383.

(identified by Jean Deshusses as Tu1) was copied for usage at the Abbey of Saint Martin de Tours, while the later two (Tu2 and Tu3) were copied for the usage of the cathedral of Tours, which was dedicated at that time to St. Maurice, with Tu3 copied from Tu1.[38] On fol. 286r of Tours MS 184, a significant addition stands out from the page in comparison with the original text with its lighter ink, lack of rubrication, and later additions in much darker ink that provided alternative terminology and grammatical endings for a rite that primarily focused on the more generic term of *locus*. On this folio following a Mass praying to St. Maurice to defend his congregation, a tenth-century scribe added a new *Missa pro civitatis sive loci custodia* that is a votive Mass 'for the protection of the city or region'.

The first line of the Mass calls upon the sempiternal God as the 'builder and guardian of the city of Jerusalem' to protect this city (*civitate ista*) along with its inhabitants, so that they may live in a *domicilium* of safety and peace.[39] In quick succession, this *missa* ties the spiritual and terrestrial spaces together, imploring God to extend his protection of his own *civitas* to the inhabitants of this earthly city, in effect warding off any and all threats to their city's moral and physical health. The *missa* then invokes the intercession of the blessed mother Mary and of all the saints, that is the citizens of heavenly Jerusalem. Together with the earthly city's prayers, the collected saintly and terrestrial community might entreat God to govern and sustain this *familiam civitatis* with care in times of insecurity and through the bestowal of the virtue of *fortitudo* in times of hardship.[40] From the internal character of the civic family, the prayers then turn to the physical defence of the city, as they prayed to God to liberate them from all adversity. The Mass ends by entreating to God to 'surround this city with its inhabitants with the wall of your protection so that with all adversity having been repelled' it would always be a *domicilium* of tranquility and peace.[41]

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[38] Dehusses, 'Les anciens sacramentaires de Tours', 189.

[39] *Omnipotens sempiternae deus aedificatur et custos Hierusalem civitatis superne custodi civitatem istam cum habitatoribus suis, ut sit in ea domicilium incolumitatis et pacis*. For a complete transcription of this Mass, see Appendix.

[40] *Familiam huius civitatis quaesumus domine intercedente beata dei genitrice Maria atque omnibus sanctis tuis perpetuo guberna moderamine ut adsit nobis et in securitate cautela et inter aspera fortitudo.*

[41] *…muro custodie tuae hanc civitatem cum habitantibus in ea circumda ut omni adversitate depulsa sit semper domicilium tranquillitatis et pacis.*

This remarkable *missa* wove the heavenly and secular city and their citizens into one sacred temporal space through the recitation and interpolation of older prayers applied originally not to the civic arena, but the monastic. This final prayer can be found in the mid-eighth-century manuscript known as the Old Gelasian Sacramentary, a remarkably influential work composed in Francia, possibly at Chelles around 750. In an *oratio* for the monastery, the prayer calls for the *murus custodiae* to envelop not the city and her citizens, but instead the holy sheepfold (*sanctum ovile*) of the monastic foundation.[42] Likewise, a complex late ninth or early tenth-century liturgical manuscript known as the Leofric A (as part of the so-called Leofric Missal) contained this very prayer to surround their own holy flock in the wall of God's protection, as well as a further prayer later found in the *Missa pro civitatis sive loci custodia*.[43] Instead of the *familiam huius civitatis*, however, these prayers beseeched Mary and the other saints to intercede for 'this family of monks'.[44] Such a figuration of the monastery or convent as the celestial city and its monks or nuns as co-citizens of the heavenly *patria* featured as a significant expression of the broader appropriation of civic discourse in the late antique and early medieval worlds.[45] The sacred words that were

[42] *Suscipe, Domine, preces nostras et muro custodiae tuae hoc sanctum ovile circumda, ut, omni adversitate depulsa, sit hoc semper domicilium incolumitatis et pacis.* Interestingly, the metaphor that opened this *oratio* recalled not God as the builder and guardian of heavenly Jerusalem, but instead as 'you who prepare an abode in heaven for those who reject this world'. (*Deus, qui renuntiantibus saeculo mansionem paras in caelo,...*). Old Gelasian Sacramentary (Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, MS Reg. lat. 316, f.224v-225r, *LXXX. Item orationes in monasterio*, ed. L.C. Mohlberg, et al., *Liber sacramentorum Romanae Ecclesiae ordinis anni circuli* (Cod. Vat. Reg. Lat. 316 / Paris Bibl. Nat. 7193, 41/56) (Sacramentarium Gelasianum), Rerum ecclesiasticarum documenta, Series major, Fontes 4 (Rome: Herder, 1968), 229. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.lat.316.

[43] Leofric A (Oxford, Bodleian, MS 579, f. 227v, s.ix^ex), *Missa monachorum propria*, in *The Leofric Missal II: Text*, ed. N. Orchard (London: Henry Bradshaw Society, 2002), 343. *quesumus domine, intercedente beata maria semper virgine \et sancto benedicto confessore tuo/ et omnibus sanctis, perpetuo guberna moderamine ut adsit eis et in securitate cautela et inter aspera fortitudo.* A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/97b5f725-af6d-4934-ad75-575eb081838f/surfaces/0acb33b3-4ec8-471e-a560-ccc01991fb93/.

[44] Leofric A, *Missa monachorum propria*, ed. Orchard, 343. *Familiam huius \sacri/ cenobii.* Orchard identified the additions, including *sacri*, to the later tenth century.

[45] See, for instance: Claudia Rapp, 'Monastic Jargon and Citizenship Language in Late Antiquity', *Al-Masāq* 32 (2020): 54–63.

once the province of those protected by monastic enclosures now were appropriated to sanctify and unify members of an earthly civic family.

In the centuries that followed, the prayers and collects contained in this short *missa* continued to be applied to both monastic and civic spaces. Such orations appeared in collects for a monastic foundation in an eleventh-century Benedictine sacramentary now housed in Barcelona, as well as in a Mass 'for the protection of the monastery and its inhabitants' in the twelfth-century liturgical manuscript known as the Corpus Irish Missal.[46] These prayers were also incorporated into new liturgical rites reflecting present concerns, including entreaties to God for the protection of specific terrestrial cities. Cecilia Gaposchkin has elucidated how, for instance, the Hospitaller priory at Autun interwove the prayer that opened this *missa pro civitate* into a Mass for the feast of the liberation of Jerusalem in a missal dated to the fourteenth century.[47] The collect in question encourages the gathered congregation, in Gaposchkin's view, to pray not only for the protection of their own city, but also for the protection of the earthly city of Jerusalem itself.[48]

These prayers for protection of constructed and communal space echoed throughout several centuries, finding expression in manuscripts throughout medieval Christendom. The initial pleas for God to guard monastic communities to their celestial *civitas* inspired a tenth-century

[46] Barcelona, Biblioteca Universitaria, MS. 827, f.24r-24v, *Item alia missa (pro congregatione)*, ed. J. Janini, 'Un sacramentario benedictino pirenaico del siglo XI', *Analecta sacra tarraconensia* 53/54 (1980/1981), 253–266, here 260. *Omnipotens sempiterne deus aedificator et custos Ierusalem ciuitatis superne, hedifica et custodi locum istum cum habitoribus suis, ut perpetuum sit in eo domicilium incolomitatis et pacis. … Suscipie quesumus domine preces nostras, et muro custodie tue hoc locum cum habitantibus in eo circumda, ut ab omni aduersitate depulsi, sit semper hoc domicilium tranquillitatis et pacis*; Oxford, Corpus Christi College, MS 282, f.20r-v, *Pro custodia monasterii et habitatorum eius*. E.F. Warren (ed.), *The Manuscript Irish Missal Belonging to the President and Fellows of Corpus Christi College, Oxford* (London: Pickering & Co., 1879), 67. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/d8877048-45f1-4093-b699-3d7 1ba938109/surfaces/21aab2f1-de08-4c61-a830-6831e651de25/. *Omnipotens sempiterne deus edificator et custos superne civitatis ierusalem edifica et custodi monasterium istud cum habitatoribus eius ut sit in eo domicilium incolomitatis et pacis.*

[47] Paris, BnF, MS nouv. acq. lat. 1689, ff.231r-v (s.xiv).

[48] C. Gaposchkin, 'The Echoes of Victory: Liturgical and Para-liturgical Commemorations of the Capture of Jerusalem in the West', in *Crusades and Memory: Rethinking Past and Present*, ed. Megan Cassidy-Welch and Anne E. Lester (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), 13–34, here 32.

scribe to implore God in His role as *custos* to protect not a monastic but a civic space. In doing so, the scribe did not eradicate the previous application, but instead built upon this sacral foundation, extending God's protection and presence to the entire civic *familia* who dwelled within the walls of the city while at the same time directing the inhabitants of this civic space towards their ultimate destination: the celestial city of Jerusalem. While later rites would add further temporal dimensions to these prayers for the earthly Jerusalem, the tenth-century Tours *Missa pro civitatis sive loci custodi* crafted an intercessory link between the celestial and terrestrial civic spaces, as it sought to create a peaceful, well-guarded *domicilium* on earth as God has built in heaven.

4   Constructing the Kingdom: *Vita s. Chrothildis*

As the *Missa pro civitate sive loci custodi* concentrated on the communal bond of its citizens through their prayers for protection to God, other authors narrowed in on the role of the individual. In early medieval *vitae*, prominent members of civic communities could personally shape their wider community's relationship to the celestial city through construction in the terrestrial realm. The *vita* of the Merovingian queen, Clothild, presents a remarkable exposition of this intricate connection between a sanctified individual, sanctified space, and a sanctified community.[49] The *vita* itself survived in only a few manuscripts, the earliest of which dates to the twelfth century.[50] Karl Werner and others, however, have dated the composition of Clothild's life to the tenth century, drawing specific connections with the tenth-century Queen Gerberga and her intellectual circle at the late Carolingian court.[51]

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[49] *Vita sanctae Chrothildis*, MGH SRM 2, ed. B. Krusch (Hannover: Hahn, 1888), 342–357.

[50] The oldest extant manuscript is Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, MS nr. 8690-8702, f.129r-134v (s.xii). At least three more manuscripts (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 917, ff. 24r-44v; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 5333, ff. 101v-114r; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, lat. 12612, ff. 172r-178v) dated to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries transmitted Clothild's *vita*.

[51] Werner postulated that Adso of Montier-en-Der authored this *vita*, yet this has been challenged by Goullet and others, even as the dating of the text remains accepted. See: Karl Ferdinand Werner, 'Der Autor der *Vita sanctae Chrothildis*: Ein Beitrag zur Idee der heiligen Königin und des Römischen Reiches im X. Jahrhundert', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 24/25 (1989/1990): 517–551; Monique Goullet, 'Adson hagiographe',

The *vita* frames its entire narrative through the language of civic construction from the initial line of text. The first word, *urbis*, situated the minds of its audience in an urban context through which the author could then create two contrasting edifices: the destroyed buildings of Jericho and the shimmering palaces of Jerusalem.[52] More specifically, the author distinguished between the fabrication of the inanimate stones and marble of the terrestrial city and the construction of Jerusalem's *palatium* with the 'souls of the holy'. The former were doomed to fail; the latter 'will never crumble but will stand forever'.[53]

After setting this urban scene, the author of Clothild's life concentrated on one particular structure: the celestial city's gate. This *porta urbis* gleams with precious pearls, pearls which themselves are the blessed apostles, martyrs, confessors, virgins, widows, and spouses who inhabit the celestial city.[54] Through these gates configured of all the saintly exemplars, God as *rex huius urbis* populated his city with devoted subjects 'from all the people of the world of both sexes'.[55] These men and women, after suffering the trials and uncertainty of the temporal sphere, were liberated as they entered and became united with those who had come before into their new *urbs* 'whose walls will never fall'.[56] In their extended discussion of Jerusalem's structure, the author fused the physicality of the city gate and its walls with the composition of her citizens themselves,

in *Les moines du Der, 673-1790*, ed. Patrick Corbet (Langres: D. Guéniot, 2000), 110–113; Monique Goullet, *Adso Dervenensis Opera Hagiographica*, CCCM 198 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), xlix–l; Simon MacLean, 'Reform, Queenship and the End of the World in Tenth-Century France: Adso's *Letter on the Origin and Time of the Antichrist* Reconsidered', *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 86 (2008): 645–675; Simon MacLean, *Ottonian Queenship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 66–73.

[52] *Vita sanctae Chrothildis*, c.1, ed. Krusch, 342. *Urbis Ihericuntine ruitura aedifitia terrenis lapidibus et marmoribus fabricantur, celestis vero Iherosolime palatia animabus sanctorum edificantur....*

[53] *Vita sanctae Chrothildis*, c.1, ed. Krusch, 342. *...nonquam casura, sed in aeternum permansura*. Jo Ann McNamara (trans.), 'Clothild, Queen of the Franks (d.544)', in *Sainted Women of the Dark Ages* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1992), 40.

[54] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.1, ed. Krusch, 342. *Porte huius urbis renitent preciosis margaritis, sanctis scilicet apostolis, martiribus, confessoribus, virginibus, viduis et coniugatis*; McNamara (trans), *Sainted Women*, 40.

[55] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.1, ed. Krusch, 342...*gentibus famulos utriusque sexus sibi adscivit.*

[56] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.1, ed. Krusch, 342...*in prefatae urbis menibus non casuris.*

thereby underscoring the living quality of the eternal city as distinct from the lifeless structures of the present world.

At two significant junctures, the *vita*'s author recalled the construction of the celestial city: at the beginning of marriage negotiations between Clothild and her future husband, Flodoveus, and at the end of her life, when she was buried at St. Peter's and St. Paul's basilica in Paris. After King Flodoveus declared his desire to wed Clothild, the author momentarily turned their gaze from the distant past into the Carolingian present. Praising Flodoveus' choice, the author declared that it was proper that from Clothild's noble lineage, the future kings of the Franks would spring. These kings, in the author's view, were 'destined to build for God, the immortal king, the many monasteries that now exist all over Gaul'.[57] By constructing such 'perishable churches', the Frankish kings and queens might gain 'the joys of the celestial Jerusalem, the church which endures forever'.[58]

After her life's end, Queen Clothild found her final resting place in a church she herself founded, namely the basilica dedicated to Sts. Peter and Paul in Paris. The *vita*'s author noted that in this very church resided the relics of Clothild's contemporary Saint Geneviève.[59] Clothild's hagiographer exclaimed how fitting it was that this religious site should 'be adorned by the body of that virgin and the limbs of so glorious a queen, so devout a widow, mother of Roman Emperors, and the genetrix of the king of the Franks'.[60] As the gates of celestial Jerusalem were composed of the precious pearls of the holy choirs and the city composed of the souls of the saints, so too was this Parisian basilica founded upon the bodies of these sanctified *corpora*.

The fundamental importance of construction in creating the ideal space and community, with the corresponding destruction of illicit spaces,

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[57] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.3, ed. Krusch, 343. *Decebat enim, ut reges Francorum futuri, Deo inmortali regi monsteria multa quae sunt Galliam edificaturi*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 42.

[58] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.3, ed. Krusch, 343. *et per edificationem periture ecclesie pervenierent ad gaudia celestis Iherosolime, ecclesie sine fine permansure*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 42.

[59] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.14, ed. Krusch, 348. *...in qua etiam basilica requiescit corpus sancte Genovefe virginis*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 50.

[60] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.14, ed. Krusch, 348. *...decoretur tante virginis corpore membrisque regine tam gloriose et vidue tam devote Romanorum imperatorum matris, et regum Francorum genitricis*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 50.

recurred as a prominent theme throughout Clothild's *vita*. The Merovingian queen embarked on a program of intensive building of churches and monasteries in or near cities including Paris, Rouen, and Laon that continued throughout her life.[61] Indeed, on one such building site, Clothild herself sent the builders a cup from which habitually transformed water into wine of a superior vintage, so long as the builders worked on their foundation.[62]

Yet, the transformative connection between physical structures and its community found its clearest expression at the central moment of Clothild's *vita*: the Baptism of the Merovingian king Flodoveus, who arose from the baptismal waters as Clovis. After the king decided to convert to Christianity, Clothild first prayed (*orat*) for the Frankish *populus* and their conversion, and then immediately adorned (*ornat*) the church with a host of ecclesiastical ornaments.[63] In the ceremony of Baptism itself, however, Clothild not only proceeds through the space which she had adorned, but she *becomes* a living embodiment of *Ecclesia*. The Holy Spirit, according to this *vita*, had ordered the key figures of the baptismal procession into the church to represent a deeper symbolism, for in his view, the royal couple's counselor and legendary bishop, Remigius, proceeded at the head of the procession *vice Christi Iesu*, while Clothild followed *vice ecclesie*.[64]

Together, the newly baptised king and his stalwart queen set out to redraw the boundaries of those who should belong—and, more directly, who should *not* belong—within their regnal and Christian community. At a public assembly in Paris soon thereafter, Clovis declared to his collected people that he wanted to oust the Arians from Gaul, from the newly sanctified land with its newly sanctified king.[65] Clothild, according to her

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[61] See, in particular: *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.11–13, ed. Krusch, 346–347.

[62] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.12, ed. Krusch, 346–347.

[63] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.7, ed. Krusch, 344. *Orat sancta regina Chrothildis indesinenter Deum, expetit suppliciter, ut eripiat regem cum populo a laqueo diabolico, et ut purgetur baptismate sacro, operante in eo Spiritu sancto. Ornat preterea ecclesiam cortinis et palliis et ceteris ecclesiasticis ornamentis*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 44.

[64] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.7, ed. Krusch, 344. *...hec omnia Spiritu sancto tipice operante. Erat enim congruum, ut, veniente rege pagano ad baptismum, precederet sanctus Remigius vice Christi Iesu, ut subsequeretur sancta regina Chrothildiis vice ecclesie Deum interpellantis*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 44.

[65] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.8, ed. Krusch, 345.

hagiographer, then counseled the king that if he wished to succeed in his endeavour that they should 'build in this place an *ecclesia* in honor of Saint Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, that with his help you will succeed in subjugating the Arian peoples to yourself'.[66] Clovis agreed, and while the king and his armies attacked, Clothild remained in Paris to build this church into which the royal couple would at the end of their lives be interred.

The public approval and success of this new church functioned as a victory for Clothild. Previously, on her wedding night, Clothild had implored her new husband to grant her three interrelated requests: to convert to Christianity, to destroy his idols, and to restore the Christian churches he had destroyed.[67] In both moments, Clothild connected Clovis' success in the subjugation and removal of a heretical faith with the construction of a new church. The building of St. Peter's basilica in Paris and the destruction of non-Christian spaces, in Clothild's view, could lead directly to the construction of a better regnal community.

5   The Celestial and the Terrestrial City Diverge: Epistolary Counsel and the Limits of the City

The creation of the ideal city or kingdom on earth, however closely it approached the celestial *patria*, was always understood as a mere approximation. However much an early medieval author or ruler desired to replicate celestial civic structures, their ultimate aim should always be not perfection on earth, but instead working towards their entry as citizens of their true *patria* in heaven. The exegetical, liturgical, and hagiographic sources analysed above touched on this tension, but its overt expression finds an immediacy in another body of early medieval evidence, namely letters. The letters below—one sent from Alcuin of York to Charlemagne in the wake of grief; one sent by Bishop Elipandus to his rival Migetius in the midst of an aggressive dispute—illustrate the rhetorical potential imbedded in the long-standing association of civic bodies and construction beyond the idealised citizen and structures crafted by the authors discussed above. Even in their divergent contexts, the two letters below

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[66] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.8, ed. Krusch, 345. ...*fac in hoc loco ecclesiam in sancti Petri principis apostolorum honore, ut, eo auxiliante, valeas tibi Arrianam gentem subiugare et eo preduce cum victoria redire*; McNamara (trans.), *Sainted Women*, 45.

[67] *Vita s. Chrothildis*, c.5, ed. Krusch, 343.

both reflect on this tension imbedded in the ideal city and its place on earth, one from the consolatory reflection on mortality and loss and the other as a biting invective against a political foe.

Unexpected death inspired the first reflection on the ideal city and the impossibility of truly emulating it in the terrestrial sphere. On 4 June 800, the young Carolingian queen Liudgard suddenly died of an unknown illness at the monastery of Saint Martin of Tours, while traveling with Charlemagne and the Frankish court through Neustria.[68] In two extant missives, the learned abbot Alcuin of Tours sent letters of praise for the deceased and consolation and counsel to the king in the aftermath.[69] After his *salutatio*, Alcuin opened the latter missive with praise for his ruler's empire as a *perpetuae pacis civitas* through the juxtaposition of Jerusalem, as a failed biblical ruin and as the city yet to come.[70] While the latter city was 'destroyed by the Chaldean fires', Charlemagne governed and guided his present-day kingdom as the heavenly *civitas*, constructed with the blood of Christ and 'whose living stones are bound together by the glue of *caritas* and whose walls of heavenly edifice from the various gems of the virtues stretch to lofty heights'.[71] Instead of calling upon two cities, Alcuin grounded his civic binary in the single entity of Jerusalem as both a historical ruin and the celestial

[68] *Annales regni Francorum*, a. 800, MGH SRG 6, ed. G. Pertz and F. Kurze (Hannover: Hahn, 1895), 110.

[69] These letters were transmitted together in at least three ninth- and tenth-century manuscripts. The first two manuscripts contain the same *lemma* heading for these two letters: *Epitaphium Liogardae feminae nobili* and *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* [sic]. Troyes, Bibliothèque municipale, ms.1165, ff.38r-41v. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://portail.mediatheque.grand-troyes.fr/iguana/www.main.cls?surl=search&p=*#recordId=2.2072; Vatican, Bibliotheca Apostolica Vaticana, Reg. lat. 272, f.35r-37v. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.lat.272; London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 218, f.196v-207v. A digitised version of this manuscript can be accessed here: https://images.lambethpalacelibrary.org.uk/luna/servlet/media/book/showBook/LPLIBLPL~17~17~179664~126907.

[70] Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep.198), MGH Epp. 4, ed. E. Dümmler (Berlin: Weidmann, 1895), 327.

[71] Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep.198), ed. Dümmler, 327. *Dum vestrae potentiae gloriosam sublimitatem non periturae Chaldeis flammis Hierusalem imperare scio, sed perpetuae pacis civitatem pretioso sanguine Christi constructam regere atque gubernare, cuius lapides vivi de caritatis glutino colliguntur et caelestis aedificii ad altitudinem ex diversis virtutum gemmis muri consurgunt.*

civic ideal. In doing so, the erudite abbot deftly appropriated terminology associated with the construction of the heavenly city in order to apply these charged metaphors to Charlemagne himself in his role as this city's builder, governor, and guardian.[72]

Under Charlemagne's protection, Alcuin figures himself in this letter not only as part of Charlemagne's court, but of his *civitas*.[73] As the living stones of both the celestial and Charlemagne's city are bound by love, so Alcuin is sending his letter to help heal the Frankish ruler's wounds as he mourns his recent loss. In the letter that follows, Alcuin counsels Charlemagne to remember that they, as Christians, are but exiles from their *patria*, pilgrims who should seek the road towards the city of heavenly Jerusalem.[74] 'Death of good people', so Alcuin writes, 'is a migration towards a better life, which is not to be mourned, but instead to be celebrated'.[75] The emphasis must be placed on the *boni homines*, for in this life Alcuin asserts that they must continue to endeavour to do good works, so that they might be worthy to belong to their heavenly *civitas* and *patria* in the future. Alcuin, in essence, reminds Charlemagne that although his own kingdom, his own *civitas*, emulates the ideal city, he must always remember that he too is still a pilgrim towards his true *patria*.[76]

There is a tension inherent in Alcuin's letter regarding replicating the celestial city on earth that was borne out further not in another

[72] Such terminology resonated with the words that would be later inscribed onto the Palatine Chapel at Aachen, words which also evoked the celestial city and the vibrant harmony of the *lapides vivi* that ensure the entire building 'shine brightly and the pious labor of mortal men is crowned with success'. For the broader context of this inscription, see: Erik Thunø, 'Living Stones of Jerusalem: The Triumphal Arch Mosaic of Santa Prassede in Rome', in *Visual Constructs of Jerualem*, ed. Bianca Kühnel, Galit Noga-Banai, and Hanna Vorholt (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014), 223–230 here 229–230.

[73] Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep.198), ed. Dümmler, 327. *Unde ego, minima quaedam huius civitatis portio.*

[74] Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep.198), ed. Dümmler, 327. *Via est haec vita pergentibus ad patriam.*

[75] Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep.198), ed. Dümmler, 327. *Mors boni hominis migratio est ad meliorem vitam, quae non est plagenda, sed congratulanda.*

[76] In the body of the letter, Alcuin proclaimed that *Via est haec vita pergentibus ad patriam*. He concludes his latter with a short carmen, reminding the new David of his ultimate civic resting place: *Divitias tribuat veras tibi, David amate, / Cum sanctis pariter Christus in arce poli.* Alcuin, *Item alia consolatoria pro eiusdem morti* (Ep. 198), ed. Dümmler, 329.

consolatory missive, but instead in a combative one: Bishop Elipandus of Toledo's epistolary invective against his fellow Iberian author, Migetius.[77] Scholars have rightly concentrated on this letter in relation to Iberian theories of the human and divine natures of Christ—often termed Spanish Adoptionism—and Carolingian responses to these theological debates.[78] In this letter, Elipandus crafted a biting response to a (now lost) letter sent by Migetius, a letter that Elipandus characterised as written with such madness that Migetus' words emitted the most foul odor.[79] Amongst a series of evocative metaphors to castigate his recipient, Elipandus framed his response with civic terminology. Migetius' *aegritudo* had passed the point of smooth remedies of wine and oil, but required the sharp end of the sword to excise him completely, as one must do with a rotting wound.[80] The civic imagery becomes more explicit, as Elipandus related this extreme remedy would be administered:

> We first advance to shatter the citadel of your pride with the battering-ram of justice, lest the shadow of its error should be applied to the faithful as a pernicious malady. We first endeavour to ruin the construction of your insanity with the stone of reason, lest it should endeavour to offer a fortification of defence for the foolish.[81]

[77] Elipandus of Toledo, '*Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*', in *Corpus Scriptorum Muzarabicorum*, ed. J. Gil (Madrid: Instituto Antonio de Nebrija, 1973), 68–78. This letter has survived in a single manuscript compilation with materials dating from the ninth to the eleventh centuries (Toledo, Archivo y Biblioteca Capitulares, MS 14.23, ff.16v-26r). A bilingual edition and translation into Spanish can be found in Albertodel Campo Hernandez et al. (eds. and trans.), *Beato de Liébana: Obras Completas y Complementarias* II: *Documentos de su entorno histórico y literario* (Madrid: Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, 2004), 399–413.

[78] For the broader context of this letter within late eighth-century theological debates on both sides of the Pyrenees, see: John Cavadini, *The Last Christology of the West: Adoptionism in Spain and Gaul, 785–820* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), here 10–12.

[79] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 2, ed. Gil, 69. *Uerum tamen antequam ad nos scribta uesanie tue perlata fuisset, antequam odor uerborum tuorum nobis fetidissimus adspirasset…*

[80] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 2, ed. Gil, 69. *Non enim fomento uini et olei tua iam curanda est egritudo, set gladio ex utraque parte acuto tua precidenda est diuturna putredo.* Many thanks for Robert Flierman for his incisive comments on this particular passage.

[81] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 2, ed. Gil, 69. *Prius quidem turrem superuie* [sic] *tue ariete iustitie elidere nitimur, ne umbra erroris eius exitiabili morbo fidelibus*

Migetius' false edifice must crumble in a public fashion, lest the others fall prey to such foolish notions and find refuge in the wrong urban space in their minds.

Such violent language inverted the civic imagery that described the celestial city as depicted by late antique and early medieval exegetical authors. Ambrose, for instance, had described the walls of heavenly Jerusalem as *disputationum munimenta*; here, Elipandus described the work of Migetius as a dangerously insane *fabrica*, which if not torn down, would provide *munimentum* for fools' speech. Likewise, Bede's characterisation of *Ecclesia* as a wall that could withstand any strike of an heretical battering ram was turned around by Elipandus, as he promised to strike Migetius' *fabrica* with a battering ram of justice. Whether direct references or not, Elipandus called upon civic imagery of construction and deconstruction of the ideal or damned city in a provocative fashion to inflict sound rhetorical blows and to redirect Migetius back towards the right path.

As the letter concluded, Elipandus waged a final charge at Migetius: his insistence that Rome was the New Jerusalem.[82] According to Elipandus, Migetius sought to exalt Rome as an episcopal seat without parallel, which alone possessed the *potestas dei* and therefore persisted as the only church on earth without blemish.[83] Elipandus scoffs at Migetius' impudence and foolishness by subverting the idea that Rome as an episcopal see and as a civic body was ever virtuous. He inquires how Migetius could ever think so, when the fourth-century Pope Liberius was damned amongst the heretics, and, extending even further into the city of Rome itself, he reminds Migetius that Gregory the Great 'protest[ed] that so many wicked men were in Rome'.[84]

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inpendatur. Prius amentie tue fabricam rationis lapide euertere conamur, ne munimento defensionis insipientibus preuere conetur.

[82] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 12–13, ed. Gil, 77–78.

[83] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 12, ed. Gil, 78. *Nam quod asseris quia ipsa est eclesia sine macula et ruga et quia non intrabit in ea aliquid qvoinquinatum et faciens abominatione et medacium,…*

[84] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 12, ed. Gil, 78. *…si ita est, quare Liberius eiusdem eclesie pontifex inter ereticos damnatus est? Quur beatus Gregorius toth scleratos homines in Roma fuisse protestatur?*

From the fallen humanity of Rome's citizens, Elipandus then moves on to refuting Migetius' remarkable claim about Rome's civic structures. According to Elipandus, Migetius had claimed 'that the stones of the same *urbs* or the walls of the very *civitas*…have descended from heaven'.[85] Elipandus found this assertion beyond the realm of sanity, particularly as St. Peter himself had labeled the city as Babylon.[86] While scholars have suggested that Elipandus' sensitivity on this point may have stemmed from a long-standing tradition of the See of Toledo's relative independence from the Holy See, it is important to note the process through which Elipandus constructed his biting invective against Migetius' claims about Rome as the celestial city on earth. Whereas Alcuin redirected Charlemagne through praise and gentle instruction, Elipandus deconstructed Migetius' arguments for Rome's exalted position with biting invective. Elipandus inverted Rome as populated with citizens as wicked, instead of virtuous, and its structures not as descended from heaven, but instead the embodiment of the worst aspects of the terrestrial city figured as a fallen Babylon.

6   Conclusion

In the early Middle Ages, civic stones transversed many boundaries: from the vicious to the virtuous, from the terrestrial to the celestial, from life to death. Their animate qualities laid bare in Scripture reverberated across the early medieval theological landscape and beyond, transcending the written word into the lived environments of early medieval civic and sacred communities. Yet, throughout these diverse assortment of texts analysed here, each author emphasised an element of choice as exercised by the stones themselves. The citizens that constructed the celestial city all had to subject themselves to hewing and honing in order to find their perfect place in the impregnable walls of heavenly Jerusalem; the citizens that dwelled on earth had to choose constantly to orient their minds and their bodies to travel to their true *patria* by crafting perishable structures

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[85] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 13, ed. Gil, 78. *…lapides eiusdem urbis aut menia civitatis ipsius…de celo descendisse credendum est.*

[86] Elipandus, *Epistola [M]igetio eretico directa*, 13, ed. Gil, 78. *Nam Petrus eam Babilonem appellat scriben quibusdam: 'Salutat uos que est in Babilone eclesia'.*

and imperfect arguments in this world. In each realm, the *vivi lapides* ultimately determined the fate of their city, whether they would shine for eternity or crumble into the dust of the past.

Appendix

Missa Pro Civitatis . Sive Loci Custodia

Omnipotens sempiternae deus aedificator et custos hierusalem .
                         + locum istum
ciuitatis superne custodi ciuitatem istam cum habitatoribus

suis . ut sit in ea domicilium incolumitatis et pacis . per. alia
                  + loci
Familiam huius ciuitatis quaesumus domine intercedente beata dei geni

trice Maria . atque omnibus sanctis tuis . perpetuo guberna mode

ramine . ut adsit nobis et insecuritate cautela et inter

aspera fortitudo . per . Super oblatam Piis sacrifitiis domine quaesumus

placatus intende . ut qui proprius oramus absolui delicitis . non

grauemur externis . et ab omnibus liberemur aduersis . per.
                         + hunc l[87]
Ad complendum. suscipe domine preces nostras et muro custodie tue
hanc

ciuitatem cum habitantibus in ea circumda . ut omni aduersi

tate depulsa sit semper domicilium tranquillitatis et pacis . per .

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[87] The rest of the word, which would presumably form *locum*, has been cut at a later date, when the manuscripts were rebound.

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Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 917.
Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, lat. 5333.
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Imagining Rome: Reading a Ninth-Century Carolingian Manuscript in Its Monastic Context

Klazina Staat

1   IMAGES OF ROME: AN INTRODUCTION

Different though they are in medium and visual outlook, ancient and early medieval visual representations of Rome share an important characteristic: they convey an interest in depicting the city in a rather abstract and symbolic manner.[1] Scholars argue that the Severan Marble Plan (*Forma Urbis Romae*) (203–211 CE), which was long seen as a locator map or

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[1] Franz Alto Bauer, 'Die Stadt Rom im Spiegel spätantiker und frühmittelalterlicher Beschreibungen', in *Das antike Rom und sein Bild: Internationales und Interdisziplinäres Kolloquium zum Thema "Das antike Rom und sein Bild"*, ed. Hans-Ulrich Cain, Annette Haug, and Yadegar Asisi, Transformationen der Antike, vol. 21 (Berlin etc.: De Gruyter, 2011), 93–111.

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cadaster record indicating property boundaries,[2] had an ideological more than a practical function: it showed the 'scale and grandeur of the city, but not its specificity'.[3] The symbolic nature is most evident from personified images of Rome, for instance, the one appearing on the *Peutinger Table* (*Tabula Peutingeriana*), a thirteenth-century copy of a road map of the Roman empire that may date back to the fourth or fifth century CE. Rome is depicted as a crowned figure, sitting on a throne, clad in a purple toga, and holding a sceptre, globe, and shield (Fig. 1), symbolising the city's imperial authority in a time when it was already more of a fiction than a reality. Rome keeps being depicted in such fashion also after the fall of the Western Roman empire, for instance, as a woman seated holding a globe on coinage struck by the emperor Anastasios I (r. 491–518) in Constantinople (Fig. 2). The example indicates that Rome has become an 'idea' that, disconnected from the physical city, could get a more universal meaning as a symbol of imperial authority. This was how Rome remained to be depicted and remembered in the Middle Ages, not just in Byzantium but also among the Carolingians.

A telling illustration can be found in a couple of fifteenth-century manuscripts with Latin geographical texts, which are a close copy from the humanist era that go back to a Carolingian manuscript from Speyer now lost (Fig. 3). Rome is depicted in a similar fashion as on the *Peutinger Table*, as an enthroned figure, clad in a toga, having a spear and shield, and crowned with a halo.[4] The image occurs on the frontispiece of the *Notitia Urbis Romae*, a text from the Constantinian period which lists the various administrative regions of Rome and functional

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[2] Cf. Tina Najbjerg, 'The Severan Marble Plan of Rome (Forma Urbis Romae)', *Stanford Digital Forma Urbis Romae Project*. Consulted online on October 13, 2022. http://formaurbis.stanford.edu/docs/FURmap.html.

[3] Diane Favro, 'The IconiCITY of Ancient Rome', *Urban History* 33, no. 1 (2006): 20–38, here 38. Consulted online on September 9, 2022. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0963926806003506.

[4] The image is found in Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 9661, f. 65v (consulted online on October 17, 2022, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b6000542r/f134.double); similar images appear in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Canon. Misc. 378, f. 80v (consulted online on October 17, 2022, https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/3eb32a9c-616b-4ce6-ae15-411881ee1625/surfaces/dafc0b4c-f793-4377-96a6-959f8bce9dcf/) and München, Staatsbibliothek, Clm 10291 (1542 and 1550–1551), f. 165 (consulted online on December 22, 2022, https://www.loc.gov/resource/gdcwdl.wdl_04103/?sp=165&st=image).

Fig. 1   Rome represented in personified fashion, with the St. Peter's basilica (*Scm Petrum*) to the left and Ostia below. Detail of the *Peutinger Table*, thirteenth-c. copy of a (probably) fourth–fifth c. original. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. 324, Segment 4. Reproduced with permission from the ONB/Wien

elements of Rome's ancient grain distribution system (the *cura annonae*), such as quarters, insula's, houses, and granaries.[5] Inscriptions identify the figure as *Roma* and the 'Annona of the city of Rome' (*Annona urbis Romae*). Another inscription calls Rome the 'city which, once desolated,

[5] For the *Notitia Urbis Romae* and the *cura annonae*, see: Paola Brandizzi Vittucci, 'Considerazioni sulla Via Severiana e sulla Tabula Peutingeriana', *Mélanges de l'école française de Rome* (1998): 929–993, here 984–985. On p. 984, Brandizzi Vittucci comments upon similarities between the images of Rome. See also: Bauer, 'Die Stadt Rom', 95–96 and 109–110.

Fig. 2 Half follis struck by Anastasios I (491–518) in Constantinople. Copper (Photograph from the Dumbarton Oaks Online Catalogue of Byzantine Coins, accession no. BZC.1967.17.1, © Dumbarton Oaks, Coins and Seals Collection, Washington, DC. Consulted online on December 21, 2022, https://www.doaks.org/resources/coins/catalogue/BZC.1967.17.1/view)

is now restored even more brightly by the most pious authority' (*urbs quae aliquando desolata nunc clariosior piisimo imperio restaurata*). These inscriptions recall contemporary poetic descriptions, for instance, Alcuin's portrayal of Rome's desolation ('Of Rome, capital and wonder of the world, golden Rome, only a barbarous ruin now remains'[6]). It also brings to mind Moduin's praise of Charlemagne:

> Our times are transformed into the civilisation of Antiquity.
> Golden Rome is reborn and restored anew to the world!

> *Rursus in antiquos mutataque secula mores.*
> *Aurea Roma iterum renovata renascitur orbi.*[7]

Moduin refers to Charlemagne's building campaigns in Aachen, which he conceived of as a new Rome. His poem also recalls Charlemagne's support

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[6] Alcuin, *Carmen* 9.37–38, ed. Ernst Duemmler, MGH Poet. 1, 230; trans. Peter Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London: Duckworth, 1985), 128–129. *Roma, caput mundi, mundi decus, aurea Roma, / Nunc remanet tantum saeva ruina tibi.*

[7] Moduin, *Nasonis Ecloga* 1.1.26–27, ed. Ernst Duemmler, MGH Poet. 1, 385; trans. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 193.

Fig. 3 Personified representation of Rome. Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 9661, f. 65v (fifteenth c.) (Photograph from BnF/Gallica. Consulted online on October 17, 2022, https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv 1b6000542r/f134.double. Reproduced by permission of BnF)

of the extensive building and restoration campaigns undertaken by the popes such as Hadrian I (772–795) and Leo III (795–816) to embellish the real city of Rome.[8] The same may be remembered in the inscription accompanying the personification of Rome in the *Notitia*-manuscripts. On a more general level, the inscription aligns with the Carolingian idea of *renovatio*, in which the Frankish kingdom was seen as the glorious successor to the ancient empire and Rome as the most important symbol of imperial power. This meaning of Rome is underscored by the emperor-like depiction of the city in the *Notitia*-manuscripts.

This chapter focuses on another work from the Carolingian time that presents a rather symbolic and abstract image of Rome. It is a collection of five writings, most of them focusing on Rome, which is now kept in a larger composite manuscript in the Stiftsbibliothek of Einsiedeln, Codex 326 (1076). The five texts form one codicological unit, all written in the same hand in a Carolingian minuscule from the ninth century.[9] Four texts directly focus on Rome: (1) an anthology with inscriptions from Rome and Pavia (the so-called *Sylloge Einsidlensis*, ff. 67r–79v), (2) an *Itinerarium* ('guidebook') with twelve walking routes through Rome (ff. 79v–85r), (3) a description of the Aurelian walls (ff. 85r–86r), and (4) a description of the rites and processions according to the 'Roman rite' ('*Ordo Romanus*') in and around the Jerusalem-church (the current Sa. Croce in Gerusalemme) and the St. John Lateran in Rome during the final three days of the Holy Week (ff. 86v–88r). The collection ends with (5) what I call the '*Einsiedeln Anthology*', a collection of mostly poetic texts that are not connected to the physical city of Rome (ff. 88v–97v).[10] The ownership inscription '*Iste liber est Monasterij fabariensis*' ('This book is from the monastery of Pfäfers', f. 104v) suggests that the

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[8] For the restoration and building campaigns by these popes, see: Richard Krautheimer, *Rome: Profile of a City, 312–1308. With a New Foreword by Marvin Trachtenberg* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 111f.

[9] Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex 326 (1076), f. 67r–97v (consulted online on September 9, 2022, via e-codices, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/searchresult/list/one/sbe/0326). The dating of the manuscript is by Odo Lang, 'Einsiedeln, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex 326(1076)' (consulted online on September 9, 2022, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/description/sbe/0326/).

[10] The texts are edited in Gerold Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung und der Pilgerführer durch Rom (codex Einsidlensis 326)* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1987) (the *Sylloge, Itinerarium and Wall Description*); Michel Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du haut Moyen Age*, vol. 3 (Leuven: Spicilegium, 1951), 263–73 (*Ordo Romanus*

manuscript was initially kept in Pfäfers, an abbey founded by monks from Reichenau. It was perhaps made in Pfäfers—the monastery had a scriptorium—or brought there from Reichenau.[11] A link with Reichenau is also evident from two funerary epitaphs at the end of the *Anthology*, dedicated to Carolingian noblemen who acted as donors to the monastery: Gerold (d. 799), the prefect of Bavaria and brother of Charlemagne's wife Hildegard, and Bernald (d. 840), the bishop of Fulda.[12] In the fourteenth century, the manuscript was transferred to the Stiftsbibliothek in Einsiedeln, where it was combined with some other, partly Carolingian, writings in a composite codex.[13] Henceforth, I will call the collection of five writings the 'Pfäfers manuscript', to distinguish it from the larger composite codex in which it is kept still today.

This chapter examines what image of Rome is evoked in the various writings of the Pfäfers manuscript, and how the image relates to the original context in which the manuscript was created and used, most likely a Carolingian monastery such as Pfäfers abbey. So far, scholarship has not paid much attention to the Carolingian background of the manuscript, focusing mostly on its supposed utilitarian function as a guidebook for pilgrims in Rome. Contending this view, I aim to demonstrate the importance of the monastic context of origin and use of the manuscript for the understanding of its function and the symbolic meaning of the image of Rome evoked in the work.

23, including commentary); and Theodor Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Anthologie', *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie, Neue Folge* 9 (1854): 296–304 (the *Anthology*).

[11] Klaus Gugel, *Welche erhaltenen mittelalterlichen Handschriften dürfen der Bibliothek des Klosters Fulda zugerechnet werden? Band I: Die Handschriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Knecht, 1995), 61.

[12] *Epitaphium Geroldi* and *Epitaphium Bernaldi*, ed. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Anthologie', 299–300. See also: Anna Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders. The Medieval Guidebooks to Rome', in *Rome and the Guidebook Tradition: From the Middle Ages to the 20th Century*, ed. Anna Blennow and Stefano Fogelberg Rota (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 33–87, here 50.

[13] For an overview of the history of the manuscript, see: Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 34–37.

2   THE PFÄFERS MANUSCRIPT: A TRAVEL GUIDEBOOK?

The Pfäfers manuscript is often interpreted as an aid for pilgrims in Rome. According to Gerold Walser, editor of the *Sylloge*, *Itinerarium* and *Wall Description*, the writings were composed by a Carolingian monk, who may have been in Charlemagne's retinue during one of his visits to Rome under Popes Hadrian I or Leo III (by whom he was crowned emperor in 800). Indeed, the *Itinerarium* mentions many of the monuments that were rebuilt or restored by these popes with Frankish help, which makes a dating in the early ninth century likely.[14] As scholars have it, the *Itinerarium* and *Wall Description* would record the monk's circuits in Rome, while the greater part of the *Sylloge* consists of the inscriptions he saw there. The monk would have gone there via Pavia, where he copied some of the other inscriptions in the *Sylloge*.[15] He would have entrusted the *Sylloge*, *Itinerarium* and *Wall Description* to the library of his monastery on his return, where they waited to be used by later pilgrims.[16]

Scholars usually pay most attention to the *Itinerarium*, arguing it is a guidebook for pilgrims that provides information on the most important monuments to see in Rome.[17] Indeed, many of the listed places were of special value to pilgrims: churches and shrines of the saints inside and

[14] Franz Alto Bauer, 'Das Bild der Stadt Rom in karolingischer Zeit: Der Anonymus Einsidlensis', *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte* 92 (1997): 190–228, here 225–228; Stefano Del Lungo, *Roma in età carolingia e gli scritti dell'anonimo Augiense* (Rome: Presso la Società alla Biblioteca Vallicelliana, 2004), 18–20; Riccardo Santangeli Valenzani, ''Itinerarium Einsidlense': Probleme und neue Ansätze der Forschung', in *Vedi Napoli e poi muori – Grand Tour der Mönche*, ed. Peter Erhart and Jakob Kuratli Hüeblin (St. Gallen: Verlag am Klosterhof, 2014), 33–37, here 36; Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 42–43.

[15] Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 9. See also: Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 37–38. The Greek inscriptions are no. 73 (an epitaph of L. Iulius Vestinus in Rome) and no. 80 (a Greek inscription on a mosaic in the San Pietro in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia) in Walser's edition.

[16] Del Lungo, *Roma in età carolingia*, 18–20. See: Santangeli Valenzani, 'Itinerarium Einsidlense', 33–37, for a critical discussion.

[17] Christian Hülsen, 'La Pianta di Roma dell'anonimo Einsidlense', *Atti della Pontificia accademia Romana di archeologia* 2, no. 9 (1907): 377–424, here 382–383; Henri Jordan, *Topographie der Stadt Rom im Altertum* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1871), 329–356; Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 9–11 and 159–160; Del Lungo, *Roma in età carolingia*, 18–20; Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders' (including an extensive bibliography).

outside the city walls, deaconries (*diaconiae*)—places of residence for the sick and needy where pilgrims also found shelter—, baths, and fountains supplying fresh water.[18] The remarkable page layout of the *Itinerarium* has also been interpreted in the light of travelling, as an aid to navigate the city.[19] Instead of running text, the *Itinerarium* consists of lists of monuments along the routes grouped in three columns on the left, on the right, and in the middle of the bifolio. The columns correspond to the position of the monuments in relation to the traveller in Rome: to his left or right, or in the middle in case the traveller has to cross a square or go under an arch. An example is route 1 (Fig. 4), in which the names of the Roman Forum (*forum Romanum*) and the Arch of Severus (*arcus Severi*) are written in the middle of the bifolio. Sometimes the rubrics *in dextra* or *IND* ('to the right') and *in sinistra* or *INS* ('to the left') are added in red ink, further emphasising the location of monuments in real space. The routes are preceded by a title in red capitals, indicating the starting and end points of the route, often one of the gates in the Aurelian walls. As scholars have it, these various elements would have helped the pilgrim to identify monuments along the road while walking with the book through Rome.

Also the other Rome-centred writings in the Pfäfers are interpreted in the light of Rome pilgrimage. The inscriptions in the *Sylloge* would have been 'local guides' giving more information about the cityscape in which the itineraries were outlined.[20] The liturgy description in the *Ordo Romanus* gave the traveller more information about Rome's liturgy, being 'symptomatic of the high relevance that religion has always had, and to a large extent still has, regarding journeys to Rome'.[21] The *Wall Description*, which provides an overview of the towers, battlements, windows, and latrines of the Aurelian walls, could have served the traveller 'as a means of measuring the distance between each gate along the way' when visiting the Christian sanctuaries outside the walls.[22]

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[18] For the importance of deaconries, fountains, and baths for pilgrims in Rome, see: Debra J. Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1998), 133–135.

[19] Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 42, 58, and 68. See also: Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 159–160.

[20] Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 70.

[21] Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 69.

[22] Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 50.
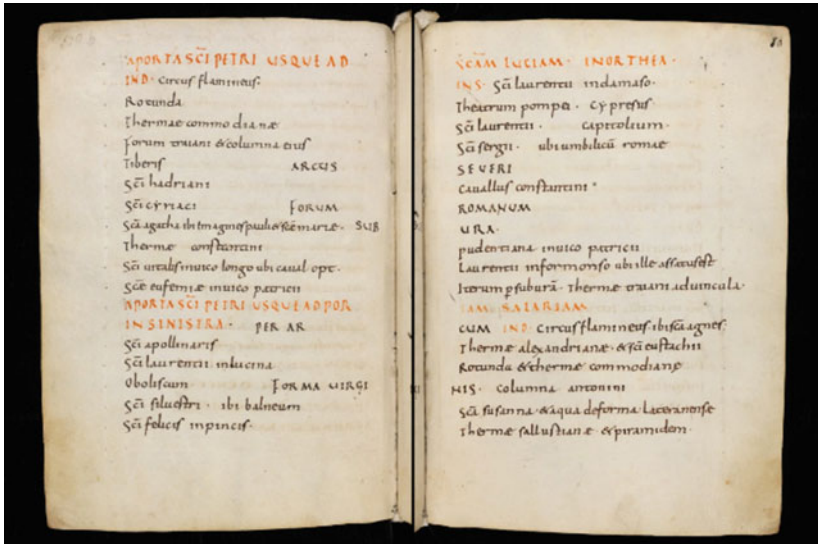
Fig. 4   Routes 1 and 2 in the *Itinerarium Einsidlense* (f.79v–80r).
Photograph from e-codices, 'Codex 326(1076)', consulted online on September
9, 2022, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/doubleview/sbe/0326/79v/.
License CC-BY-3.0)

However obvious it may seem, there are several reasons to question
the interpretation of the Pfäfers manuscript as a book by and for Rome
pilgrims. First, the identification of the scribe as a Frankish monk in the
retinue of Charlemagne during one of his journeys to Rome rests on shaky
ground. The manuscript does not give any information about the scribe,
and reports of Charlemagne's Rome-visits do not refer to monks in his
retinue.[23] Second, the *Einsiedeln Itinerarium* does not seem very helpful
as a guidebook for a pilgrim in Rome. As Bauer notes, the indications
of the position of the monuments (left or right) are often too general to
be used on a journey, while the routes are not always easy to follow in

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[23] Cf. *Annales regni Francorum* on Charlemagne's visit to Rome in 800–801, ed.
Georg H. Pertz and Friedrich Kurze, MGH SRG 6 (Hannover: Hahn, 1895), s.a. 800–
801, 110–112; Einhard, *Vita Karoli,* c. 27–28, referring to Charlemagne's four visits
to Rome (including the one in 800–801), ed. Oswald Holder-Egger, MGH SRG 25
(Hannover: Hahn, 1911), 32–33.

reality.[24] Similarly, the references to the locations of inscriptions in the *Sylloge* are rather vague, of the type *In Foro Palatino* (f. 71r), *In Via Appia* (f. 71v) or *Ad Tiber* (f. 73v). Third, one wonders what the aim was of the final component of the Pfäfers manuscript, the *Anthology* of mostly poetic texts. It does not provide any information about the city of Rome (which probably explains why it is often left out of account by scholars highlighting the guidebook function of the Pfäfers manuscript).

Bauer, who questions the idea that the *Itinerarium* was meant as a guidebook for pilgrims in the real city of Rome, suggests that the manuscript had a different function and intended audience: '[The *Itinerarium*] should serve the reader far from Rome, should develop an image of the city of Rome, which could provide those who did not know the city an idea of its size, its pile of monuments, and the ancient and Christian sanctuaries there'.[25] The aim was to create an 'image' (*Bild*) of Rome that could function as a visual guide for the reader far away from Rome and represent the city 'in its entirety' (*der Vergegenwärtigung der Gesamtheit der Stadt Rom*). The *Itinerarium* should be seen as a kind of schematic travelogue, providing 'a rather abstract portrayal of the city' (*eine eher abstrakt gehaltene Stadtdarstellung*), that 'could no longer serve a potential visitor of Rome' (*die einem potentiellen Rombesucher nicht mehr nutzen konnte*).[26] Similarly, Maya Maskarinec argues that the manuscript 'offered a guide to Rome for armchair readers north of the Alps who had never visited the city of Rome and probably never would. Readers far from Rome were invited to conjure up a Rome in the mind—an imaginative exercise that, if done properly, was for the benefit of their soul'.[27]

Building on the views of Bauer and Maskarinec, I hypothesise that the *Itinerarium* and other writings in the Pfäfers manuscript were not meant

[24] Bauer, 'Das Bild', 216–217.

[25] Bauer, 'Das Bild', 225. '[Das *Itinerarium*] sollte dem Leser fern von Rom dienen, sollte ein Bild der Stadt Rom entwerfen, das gerade dem Romunkundigen eine Vorstellung von der Größe der Stadt, der Monumentenfülle, der dortigen antiken Bauten und christlichen Heiligtümer vermitteln konnte' (here and elsewhere: my translation).

[26] Bauer, 'Das Bild', 225–226, 228. See also: Santangeli Valenzani, 'Itinerarium Einsidlense', 35–37.

[27] Maya Maskarinec, *City of Saints: Rebuilding Rome in the Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018), 140.

as aids for real pilgrimages but were aimed at a reader that should probably be sought in a place far from Rome, most likely, as I would see it, a monk in one of the Carolingian monasteries, for instance, Pfäfers. So far, no attention has yet been paid to the specific context in which that reader was located and the implications of their context for understanding the function and interpretation of the manuscript. As I argue in the next section, the *Anthology* of mostly poetic writings at the end of the Pfäfers manuscript is crucial for understanding the function of the Pfäfers manuscript in its original context of use.

3   The Monastic Context of the Manuscript

Despite their thematic variety and diverse religious orientation, the materials in the *Anthology* have as a common denominator that they can be classified as school texts.[28] According to Maskarinec, the riddle of the black and white soldiers at the beginning of the *Anthology* represents the type of 'puzzles that were in vogue among the Carolingian elite as pedagogically useful for sharpening that most rational part of the soul, the mind'.[29] The second poem, Ausonius' epigram on Hercules, originates from the poet's *Eclogae* or *Epyllia*, a cycle of didactic epigrams dealing with a range of topics that were taught in schools from Antiquity onwards, such as the names and days of the week and the months, the Roman feast days, and the virtues of a good man.[30] The third poem, sometimes attributed to Alcuin and recording a conflict between Spring and Winter (*Conflictus veris et hiemis*), is strongly indebted to Virgil's eclogues, an important school text in the entire Middle Ages, used as a model of good grammar and style. As Peter Godman notes with respect to the *Conflictus* poem, 'Its origins lie in the classroom, and its form is influenced both by the style of exchange in which instruction was conducted and by the

[28] For a discussion of the texts in the *Anthology*, see: Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 142–143.

[29] Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 142.

[30] For more discussion of the cycle, see: Roger Green, *Ausonius: The Works of Ausonius* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 420–422. See there on pp. 103 and 432 for the text and a commentary on the poem (listed as *Ecl.* no. 17). See also: Luca Mondin, 'Talia in cattedra: usi didascalici dell'epigramma tardolatino', in *Forme di accesso al sapere in età tardoantica e altomedievale*, ed. Lucio Cristante and Vanni Veronesi (Trieste: EUT Edizioni Università di Trieste, 2016), 189–235, here 213–220, for late antique didactic epigrams in Latin, including the one by Ausonius appearing in the Pfäfers manuscript.

authors, particularly Virgil, of pastoral eclogue studied there'.[31] As I will explain in more detail below, the same is probably true of the fifth poem in the collection, a late antique and pseudo-Damasian Tityrus-poem, which alludes to the Virgil's first eclogue in language and structure.

In between the two poems we find an epigram on envy, which may have been used in a school setting as a warning for students ('Nothing is more just than envy, which straightaway gnaws on its own creator and torments the soul').[32] The sixth text, a point-by-point enumeration of the different elements of the soul, is a gloss based on Isidore's *Etymologies*, one of the most popular textbooks in the Carolingian time.[33] It is followed by an excerpt of a poem by Martial, who continued to be read as a school author in the Middle Ages.[34] Prudentius' *Dittochaeon*, the subsequent text in the *Anthology*, has been characterised as a 'common elementary reader' in the Middle Ages, providing the student with models of virtue and vice, while also showing various typological connections between the Old and New Testaments—a core idea in Christian theology.[35] The educational dimension of the texts is a strong indication that the *Anthology* was first and foremost meant to be read in a context of study and education.

This reading has implications for the Rome-centred writings with which the *Anthology* forms one codicological unit in the Pfäfers manuscript, suggesting that they should be understood in a context of study and education as well. As the ownership indications of the Pfäfers

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[31] Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 21.

[32] Ed. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Anthologie', 298; trans. Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 143. *Iustius invidia nihil est quae protinus ipsum / Corrodit auctorem excruciatque animam.*

[33] Hundreds of copies have been transmitted from the Carolingian time. See further: Sinéad O'Sullivan, 'Isidore in the Carolingian and Ottonian Worlds: Encyclopaedism and Etymology, *c.* 800–1050', in *A Companion to Isidore of Seville,* ed. Andrew Fear and Jamie Wood (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 524–568.

[34] Mart. 4.88, ed. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Anthologie', 299; see also: Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 244 n. 33; John Spaeth, 'Martial and the Pasquinade', *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 70 (1939): 242–255, here 247–248.

[35] Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000 [1998]), 139. For more discussion of the importance of the *Dittochaeon* as a text for (moral) education in the Middle Ages, see: Paul Gehl, *A Moral Art: Grammar, Society, and Culture in Trecento Florence* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press**,** 1993), 143–156.

manuscript suggest, this context was most likely to be found within the walls of the monastery. It raises the question why monks would be interested to learn more about Rome, its monuments, inscriptions, and liturgies. As Rosamond McKitterick argues, the teaching and study in Carolingian monasteries was largely inspired by spiritual motives: 'There is a clear preoccupation with the Bible and the particular types of knowledge and scholarship this generated, for the effort to understand the Bible and Christ's teaching is one of the clear impulses of Carolingian education and learning'.[36] This is evident from Carolingian book lists and inventories of monastic libraries.[37] Although the order is not fixed, they convey a certain overarching structure. They first list copies of the full Bible (pandects) or particular books from the Old and New Testaments, followed by exegetical works of Church fathers, which were considered the most important tool for explaining the Bible and exploring Christian doctrine, life, and history. Subsequently, a range of other writings are listed that could be used for exegesis: religious and intellectual treatises by Church fathers and major authors such as Isidore, liturgical works and homilies, utilitarian works (law and medicine), educational works (schoolbooks and grammars), monastic and ascetic works (rules and saints' lives), and all kinds of historiographical, geographical, and poetical writings, both medieval and from classical Antiquity.[38] These works were used both as exegetical tool and practical instrument in the training in reading, which was the first necessary step in learning how to interpret the Bible. Something similar pertains to the world maps (*mappae mundi*) and the variety of geographical, topographical, and cosmographical works recorded in library catalogues: they were used to explore the space of the Holy Land and to get more insight into God's creation.[39]

[36] Rosamond McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 165–166.

[37] McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, 165–210; Rosamond McKitterick, 'Script and Book Production', in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 221–247, here 241–242.

[38] McKitterick, *The Carolingians and the Written Word*, 210; McKitterick, 'Script and Book Production', 226–227; Anna Grotans, *Reading in Medieval St. Gall* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 23–33.

[39] Natalia Lozovsky, 'Carolingian Geographical Tradition: Was It Geography?', *Early Medieval Europe* 5 (1996): 25–43; Natalia Lozovsky, *'The Earth Is Our Book': Geographical Knowledge in the Latin West ca. 400–1000* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan

The study and reading of earlier writings was not only spurred by spiritual motifs. Aligning with the wider interest in *renovatio*, Carolingian scholars and monks also used earlier writings from both the ancient pre-Christian and Christian post-classical world as the model for imitation and emulation in new literary works.[40] As I will argue in the next two sections, these approaches to learning and literature—as exegetical tool and model for inspiration—are important to evaluate the function and meaning of the Pfäfers manuscript. Rome appears as a repository of knowledge and learning, from which Carolingian scholars and monastics could draw inspiration in various realms. One of them was the development of liturgical rites.

4   Rome as Resource of Liturgy: The *Itinerarium* and *Ordo Romanus*

Although they appear at different places in the Pfäfers manuscript, the *Itinerarium* and *Ordo Romanus* are closely connected with one another, providing an image of Rome as a resource of liturgical rites. As I argue, both texts seem to focus on the stational processions taking place between churches ('stations') where liturgical celebrations were performed at important feast days in Rome's liturgical calendar.[41] This is most clearly evident from the *Ordo Romanus*, describing the stational procession of the bishop of Rome and his retinue in and around the Lateran palace, the St. John Lateran, and the Jerusalem-church (the current Santa Croce in Gerusalemme) on the final three days of the Holy Week.[42] The liturgy

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Press, 2000), 152–155; Natalia Lozovsky, 'Roman Geography and Ethnography in the Carolingian Empire', *Speculum* 81, no. 2 (2006): 325–364.

[40] Cf. Mary Garrison, 'The Emergence of Carolingian Latin Literature and the Court of Charlemagne (780–814)', in *Carolingian Culture: Emulation and Innovation*, ed. Rosamond McKitterick (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 111–140, here 129–131; Donald Bullough, 'Roman Books and Carolingian *renovatio*', in *Carolingian Renewal: Sources and Heritage*, ed. Donald Bullough (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press), 1–38; Bauer, 'Die Stadt Rom', 110.

[41] The Roman stational system was probably developed in the mid-fifth century after the model of the liturgy of Jerusalem; cf. John Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of the Stational Liturgy* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987), 143–153.

[42] Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani*, 266 dates the text to the eighth century (perhaps the first half).

description is traditionally seen as one of the so-called *Ordines Romani*, a type of writing highly popular in the Carolingian period, describing the Roman liturgy in the early Middle Ages. Scholars have long considered the *Ordines Romani* as a treasure trove about the earliest forms and history of the Roman rite.[43] Arthur Westwell questions this approach, arguing that the writings, even if they may contain authentic material collected by people attending the Roman rituals, are essentially Carolingian productions: 'Every ninth-century manuscript is the product of a Frankish pen, for a Frankish audience'.[44] As Westwell argues, the many *Ordines Romani* that have survived from the Carolingian period testify to the attempts by individual clerics to find the correct liturgical form in a diversity of traditions.[45] Indicative of their wider interest in *renovatio*—now of liturgical forms—Carolingians considered the Roman rite as the most authoritative source for the correction of earlier ritual forms and formation of new ones.[46] The Roman link of the rites granted them authority as the 'correct' form of liturgy. Although clear indications about its function and use are lacking, the Einsiedeln *Ordo Romanus* may have had a similar function as other Carolingian *Ordines Romani*, providing an authoritative resource on the Roman rite and model for liturgical renewal for readers in places far away from the city.

As I argue elsewhere in more detail, there are reasons to believe that also the *Itinerarium* functions as a resource on the Roman rite.[47]

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[43] Andrieu's multi-volume edition *Les Ordines Romani* is an important example, aiming at distilling the origins of the Roman liturgical rites and most authentic early-Christian form.

[44] Arthur Westwell, *The Dissemination and Reception of the Ordines Romani in the Carolingian Church, c.750–900* (PhD diss., Cambridge University, 2017), 3. Consulted online on September 9, 2022. https://www.repository.cam.ac.uk. See also on pp. 1–12 and 281–290 and, by the same author, 'The Ordines Romani and the Carolingian Choreography of a Liturgical Route to Rome', *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 31 (2019): 63–79, consulted online on September 9, 2022. https://doi.org/10.5617/acta.7800.

[45] Michel Andrieu lists more than fifty different texts from the Carolingian period in his multi-volume edition *Les Ordines Romani*.

[46] Westwell, *The Dissemination*, 254–256 and 284–290; Westwell, 'The Ordines Romani', 65–74.

[47] Klazina Staat, 'Between Reading and Viewing: Mapping and Experiencing Rome and Other Spaces', *Journal of Latin Cosmopolitanism and European Literatures* 8 (2023): 7–42, here 17–21. https://doi.org/10.21825/jolcel.84800.

As the Italian archaeologist Rodolfo Lanciani already noted in the late-nineteenth century, the *Itinerarium* conveys interesting parallels with descriptions of stational processions through Rome in the twelfth-century *Liber Politicus* by Benedict the Canon.[48] The second half of route 1 and part of route 7 in the *Itinerarium* correspond with Benedict's description of the processions on the day of the purification of the virgin (February 2), running from the San Adriano to the Santa Lucia in Orthea, in the direction of the Santa Maria Maggiore.[49] Route 12 follows the same track as the stational procession on Christmas morning, but in the opposite direction: from the San Lorenzo in Damaso and the area around the Theatre of Pompey to the church of Sta. Anastasia. As I explain elsewhere in more detail, route 4 can be related to the stational procession on the day of the Great Litany (April 25). The processional route is not recorded in the *Liber Politicus,* but known from the Gregorian Sacramentary, a representation of the Roman liturgy from possibly the first third of

[48] Rodolfo Lanciani, 'L'Itinerario di Einsiedeln e l'Ordine di Benedetto Canonico', *Monumenti Antichi* 1 (1891): 3, 6–120, here 88–90, 96, and 108; Dale Kinney, 'Fact and Fiction in the *Mirabilia urbis Romae*', in *Roma Felix—Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Carol Neuman de Vegvar (London: Ashgate, 2007), 230–252 also analyses similarities between route 12 in the *Itinerarium Einsidlense* (ed. Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 205–211) and the *Liber Politicus*. An edition of the routes in the *Liber Politicus* can be found in Jordan, *Topographie*, 664–667. The *Liber Politicus* itself should also be understood within the context of the Roman liturgy and stational processions; for more discussion, see: Wim Verbaal, 'Resurrecting Rome: Liturgy and Rome's Second Revival', *Acta ad archaeologiam et artium historiam pertinentia* 31, no. 17 (2019): 101–112. https://doi.org/10.5617/acta.7802; and Wim Verbaal, 'Making the Stones Speak: Pre-Constructing Rome', in *Topoi, Topographies and Travellers: Papers of a Conference at the Swedish Institute for Classical Studies in Rome, 10–12 November 2016*, ed. Stefano Fogelberg Rota and Anna Blennow (Rome: The Swedish Institute in Rome, 2019), 216–233.

[49] Lanciani, 'L'Itinerario', 96. See: Route 1, l. 7–12 and route 7, l. 9–12 in the edition of Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 162 and 182. Benedict's description is edited in Jordan, *Topographie*, 664.

the seventh century.[50] It starts at the San Lorenzo in Lucina in the direction of the Column of Antoninus Pius (originally standing next to the Column of Marcus Aurelius on the present Piazza Colonna[51]) and the San Marcello on the Via Lata (the present Via del Corso), turning after a detour to the Santi Apostoli via the area of the Pantheon (*Rotunda* in the *Itinerarium*) towards the Via Flaminia, ending at the San Valentino, close to the Milvian bridge.

These similarities suggest that the itineraries (or at least some of them) may in fact be the schematic overviews of processional routes in Rome. This would imply that the *Itinerarium* is closely connected to the *Ordo Romanus* text in the Pfäfers manuscript. If so, they likely shared the functions of other Carolingian *Ordines Romani*, informing the monastic reader about the processions taking place on certain feast days in Rome. The various monuments mentioned in the two texts render authority to the liturgical descriptions, anchoring them in Rome's physical topography. As I argue in the next section, Rome is also important as a repository of knowledge and symbol of imperial power in the Pfäfers manuscript.

5   ROME AS A REPOSITORY OF KNOWLEDGE AND SYMBOL OF IMPERIAL POWER: *THE SYLLOGE AND ANTHOLOGY*

This is evident from the writings at the beginning and end of the Pfäfers manuscript, the *Sylloge* and *Anthology*. Both can be defined as an anthology: a type of writing that experienced a clear revival in Carolingian

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[50] For a more detailed discussion of the similarities between route 4 in the *Itinerarium* and the procession on the day of the Great Litany, see: Staat, 'Between Reading and Viewing', 17–22. Route 4 is edited in Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 175–178. For descriptions of the procession on the day of the Great Litany, see the editions of Henry Wilson, *The Gregorian Sacramentary Under Charles the Great. Edited from Three Manuscripts of the Ninth Century* (London: Harrison, 1915), 70–71; D. Hans Lietzmann, *Das Sacramentarium Gregorianum nach dem Aachener Urexemplar* (Münster: Asschendorff, 1967 [1921]), 175. For discussion of the procession on the day of the Great Litany, see: Joseph Dyer, 'Roman Processions of the Major Litany (*litaniae maiores*) from the Sixth to the Twelfth Century', in *Roma Felix—Formation and Reflections of Medieval Rome*, ed. Éamonn Ó Carragáin and Carol Neuman de Vegvar (London: Ashgate, 2007), 112–137, here 119.

[51] Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 171.

book production from the ninth and tenth centuries. Anthologies occur in a variety of types, such as collections of inscriptions, sermons, religious writings, and liturgical texts (e.g. anthologies of *Ordines Romani*). The *Sylloge Einsidlensis* is an example of the widespread type of the epigraphic anthology.[52] At least nine other anthologies of inscriptions from Rome have been transmitted from the Carolingian time (Table 1). Some contain only a handful of inscriptions; others are much more elaborate. The *Sylloge Einsidlensis* consists of ca. 75 inscriptions, all in Latin except for two Greek ones. Circa 40 inscriptions are ancient; the remainder originate from Late Antiquity.[53] The *Einsiedeln Anthology* belongs to the subgenre of the poetic anthology, which was also widespread in the Carolingian time. Till Hennings identifies several dozens of manuscripts with ninth-century poetry collections from monasteries in the Eastern Frankish empire, which suggests that several more could be detected from other parts of the Carolingian world.[54]

The anthologies of inscriptions and poetry had a particular function in the court context, providing models for writings in praise of the Carolingian rulers. This practice had roots in the Lombard world, in which scholars and poets used ancient inscriptions—which were still visible in large quantities in the physical environment of Italy—as models for poems in praise of the Lombard kings.[55] The Lombard background of the practice is evident from the fact that some *Sylloge*s contain epigrams from

[52] For overviews, see: Florian Hartmann, 'Karolingische Gelehrte als Dichter und der Wissenstransfer am Beispiel der Epigraphik', in *Karolingische Klöster: Wissenstransfer und kulturelle Innovation*, ed. Julia Becker, Tino Licht, and Stefan Weinfurter (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2015), 255–274, here 263–265; Blennow, *Wanderers and Wonders*, 54–55; Ethel Ross Barker, *Rome of the Pilgrims and Martyrs: A Study in the Martyrologies, Itineraries, Sylloque, and other Contemporary Documents* (London: Methuen, 1913), 230–239.

[53] Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung* lists 80 inscriptions, but some consist of more than one text.

[54] Till Hennings, *Ostfränkische Sammlungen von Dichtung im 9. Jahrhundert*. Nova Mediaevalia. Quellen und Studien zum europäischen Mittelalter, vol. 19 (Göttingen, V&R unipress, 2021), 410–418 (consulted online on October 17, 2022. https://doi.org/10.14220/9783737012317).

[55] Nicholas Everett, *Literacy in Lombard Italy, c. 568–774* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 235–276; Hartmann, 'Karolingische Gelehrte', 255–257.

Table 1 Overview of Carolingian epigraphic anthologies

Name of Sylloge with inscriptions from Rome[a]	Manuscript	Link with the Sylloge Einsidlensis (the epigram numbers are taken from the edition of Walser, Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung)
Sylloge with inscriptions from the St. Peter's basilica (seventh c.)	Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Vat. Pal. 591, ff. 137v–139r (fifteenth c.)	
Sylloge Turonensis (seventh. c.)	Preserved in two manuscripts of the eleventh or twelfth c: Klosterneuburg, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 723, ff. 264v–269r and Göttweig, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 64 (78), ff. 163v–169v	
Corporis Laureshamensis Sylloge Secunda (seventh c.)	Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 833, ff. 36r–41r) (ninth c.)[b]	
Corporis Laureshamensis Sylloge Quarta (seventh c.)	Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 833, ff. 55v–82r (ninth c.)	Epigram no. 87 (f. 77v) = Syll. Eins. no. 2[c]
Sylloge Centulensis (eighth c.)	Preserved in a copy from Corbie (eighth–ninth c.): St. Petersburg, Russian National Library, Codex Petropolitanus F XIV 1, ff. 123r–133v and Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Latin 7701, ff. 129r–140v	Epigram no. 41 (St. Petersburg, Codex Petropolitanus F XIV 1, ff. 128v–129r) = Syll. Eins. No. 2[d]
Sylloge Virdunensis (eighth c.)	Verdun, Bibliothèque de Verdun, Ms. 45, ff. 212–214 (tenth c.)	
Corporis Laureshamensis Sylloge Prima (ninth c.)	Rome, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Pal. lat. 833, ff. 27r–35r) (ninth c.)	

Table 1 (continued)

Name of Sylloge *with inscriptions from Rome*[a]	*Manuscript*	*Link with the* Sylloge Einsidlensis *(the epigram numbers are taken from the edition of Walser,* Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*)*
Sylloge with four epigrams on Rome (ninth c.)	St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 271, ff. 231–234 (ninth c.)[e]	Epigram no. 1 (f. 231) = Syll. Eins. no. 6 Epigram no. 4 (f. 234) = Syll. Eins. no. 2[f]
Syll. Wirceburgensis (ninth c.)	Würzburg, Universitätsbibliothek, M. p. misc. f. 2, ff. 75v–76r (ninth c.)	Epigram no. 1 (f. 75v) = Syll. Eins. no. 49 Epigram no. 2 (f. 75v) = Syll. Eins. no. 25 Epigram no. 4 (f. 75v) = Syll. Eins. no. 10 Epigram no. 5 (f. 75v) = Syll. Eins. no. 26[g]

[a]Unless stated otherwise, the dates of the *Sylloges* and manuscripts are borrowed from Giovanni Battista de Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae. Septimo Saeculo Antiquiores*, vol. II, Pars I (Rome: Ex Officina Libraria Pontificia, 1888), 50, 58, 72, 95, 123, 124, 131, 142, and 154

[b]For the dating of the manuscript, see: Michael Kautz, 'Vatikan, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana Pal. lat. 833', Website Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg (2014), https://www.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/digi-pdf-katalogisate/sammlung51/werk/pdf/bav_pal_lat_833.pdf (consulted online on 16 September 2022)

[c]Cf. De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, 115

[d]Cf. De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, 75

[e]For the dating of the manuscript, see: Gustav Scherrer, *Verzeichnis der Handschriften der Stiftsbibliothek von St. Gallen* (Halle: Waisenhaus, 1875), 102, on e-codices, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/searchresult/list/one/csg/0271 (consulted online on 16 September 2022)

[f]For both epigrams, see: De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, 123

[g]For these epigrams, see: De Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, 155–156

centres of the Lombard kingdom, such as Pavia in the *Sylloge Einsidlensis*.[56] After Charlemagne's victory against the Lombards under king Desiderius (774), Lombard scholars such as Paul the Deacon, Peter of Pisa, and Paulinus of Aquileia entered the Frankish court, where they

[56] The Pavian inscriptions are nos. 76–80 in Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 133–141. No. 80, a Greek epigram, originated from the gold mosaic of the S. Pietro in Ciel d'Oro in Pavia, which the Lombard king Liutprand (r. 712–744) assigned as his burial place.

continued the tradition of collecting and writing inscriptions at the ruler's service.[57]

For the understanding of the anthologies in the Pfäfers manuscript it is important to emphasise that anthologies were also used in monastic schools, providing materials for the teaching of grammar and models for literary imitation and emulation in writing.[58] Anthologies also allowed exchange of writings among students and scholars. This may explain why some poems in the *Sylloge Einsidlensis* and *Anthology* also appear in other collections (see Table 1 for the inscriptions).[59] Two poems in the *Einsiedeln Anthology*—the *Monasticha de Aerumnis Herculis* and the funerary epitaph on Gerold, the prefect of Bavaria—appear in a large poetic anthology from St. Gall, still kept in the Stiftsbibliothek (Cod. Sang. 899).[60] Poems from the *Einsiedeln Sylloge* also appear in four other Carolingian anthologies (Table 1). The fourth *Sylloge Laureshamensis* and the *Sylloge Centulensis* each share one poem with the *Einsiedeln Sylloge*. Two inscriptions from the same *Sylloge* occur in a ninth-century *Sylloge* with inscriptions from the St. Peter's now preserved in St. Gall (Cod. Sang. 271); four inscriptions appear in the so-called *Sylloge Wirceburgensis*, an inscription collection that may even be partly based on the *Sylloge Einsidlensis*.[61] The Sylloges do not just share the same materials, but also convey the tendency to anchor the inscriptions in the physical landscape of Rome, often by means of rubrics denoting their locations. Like in the case of the *Itinerarium*, the inscriptions' Roman origin may

[57] Hartmann, 'Karolingische Gelehrte', 259–269.

[58] For the function of the poetic anthologies, see: Hennings, *Ostfränkische Sammlungen*, 29–30, 339 and 346. For the *Sylloges*, see: Hartmann, 'Karolingische Gelehrte'. See also the discussion of the functions of medieval anthologies in Jacqueline Hamesse, 'The Scholastic Model of Reading', in *A History of Reading in the West*, ed. Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999), 103–119, here 111–115; Jacqueline Hamesse, 'Florilegia', in *The Oxford Handbook of Palaeography*, ed. Frank Coulson and Robert Babcock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 885–905, here 887–888.

[59] Cf. Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 55.

[60] Stiftsbibliothek St. Gall, Cod. Sang. 899 can be consulted online via e-codices, https://www.e-codices.unifr.ch/en/csg/0899/bindingA (consulted on December 15, 2022). The poems appear on respectively f. 89r and 97v of the Pfäfers manuscript and f. 45–46 and 57 of the St. Gall codex.

[61] Giovanni Battista de Rossi, *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae. Septimo Saeculo Antiquiores*, vol. II, Pars I (Rome: Ex Officina Libraria Pontificia, 1888), 154–155.

add to their authoritative value as objects of literary exchange and models for imitation.

The *Sylloge* ties in with the wider tendency of Carolingians to see the Frankish rule as the successor of the Roman empire. Scholars have observed the close connection between the *Sylloge* and *Itinerarium*: several inscriptions were located close to the routes or placed on monuments recorded in the *Itinerarium*.[62] As I already said, the *Itinerarium* mentions various monuments restored by the popes Hadrian I and Leo III with Frankish help. In this respect, it is interesting to note that various inscriptions in the *Sylloge* record the building and renovation activities of emperors in Rome: both pre-Christian and Christian ones. Some of the Christian inscriptions celebrate the foundation of various early Christian basilicas, such as the St. Peter's basilica (nos. 6 and 11), the Sa. Sabina (nos. 23 and 25) and the San Paolo fuori le Mura (no. 48). If read together with the *Itinerarium*, a well-informed reader could construct a narrative in which the renovation of Rome by ancient emperors prefigured the restoration works undertaken by the popes with Carolingian help.

In the *Anthology*, the Carolingian interest in *renovatio* is reflected on the level of the literary construction. As suggested by Maskarinec, the Carolingian poems in the *Anthology* employ earlier, ancient models to endorse a Christian message.[63] Spring announces the coming of Christianity after paganism in a style reminiscent of Virgil's eclogues in the *Conflictus* poem (no. 3 in the collection), while the Tityrus-poem (no. 5) alludes to the first line of Virgil's first eclogue to introduce a Christian believer: 'You Tityrus, lying back under the faithful cover of Christ, you sing melodiously the divine words in sacred speech'.[64] The funerary epitaph on Charlemagne's brother-in-law Gerold (d. 799) at the end of the *Anthology* is also inspired by earlier models. Gerold, who fell in battle with the Avars over the rule of Bavaria, is praised as a martyr: he 'was killed in Pannonia [fighting] for the true peace of the Church; he met the wild sword at the calends of September [September 1], and delivered

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[62] Blennow, 'Wanderers and Wonders', 39–40; Bauer, 'Das Bild', 222–223.

[63] Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 142–143.

[64] Ed. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinische Anthologie', 299 (my translation). *Titire tu fido recubans sub tegmine Christi / divinos apices sacro modularis in ore* (…). For a discussion of the poems, see: Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 142–143.

his soul to the stars' (*sideribusque animam dedit*).[65] The poem recalls the language of Damasus' epigram on Peter and Paul recorded in the *Sylloge*, who 'followed Christ through the stars' (*Christumque per astra secuti*) and are praised as 'new stars' (*nova sidera*).[66] As Maskarinec notes, 'we see a slippage from Rome to Romanness—classical and Christian culture more broadly conceived; this heritage, as the poems demonstrate, has not ceased, but actively continues'. Thus, Rome 'emerges as a flexible resource that is more than a physical landscape', being 'both the living present and the past of a city from which empire and Christianity emanated'.[67]

This idea is also visible from the set-up of both anthologies, in which ancient and post-classical Christian and non-Christian writings follow one another without further distinction. In the *Einsiedeln Anthology*, Ausonius' poem on the works of Hercules is followed by the Virgilian-styled *Conflictus veris et hiemis*—most likely a Carolingian creation—and the lines of Martial precede the *Dittochaeum* of the late antique Christian author Prudentius. As is immediately clear from the inscriptions recorded in the beginning of the *Sylloge* (Table 2), building inscriptions of ancient emperors and epitaphs from churches such as the St. Peter's basilica follow one another without any chronological order. The distinguishing criterion is topographical; inscriptions that share the same location (e.g. a bridge or the Mausoleum of Hadrian) are grouped together. The guiding idea seems to be that Rome is a repository of knowledge that could be used to new aims, for instance, the writing of new poetry. The Roman link of the writings collected in the anthologies is what makes them valuable models for imitation and emulation.

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[65] Ed. Mommsen, 'Zur lateinischen Anthologie', 299 (my translation). *Pannoniis vera ecclesiae pro pace peremptus / oppetiit sevo septembribus ense kalendis, / sideribusque animam dedit.*

[66] No. 75 in Walser, *Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung*, 132–133; I use the edition and translation of Dennis Trout, *Damasus of Rome: The Epigraphic Poetry* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 121, lines 4 and 7. See also: Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 143.

[67] Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 142–143.

Table 2 Overview of the first seven inscriptions of the *Sylloge Einsidlensis*

No. in the edition of Walser, Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung	*Inscriptions in the* Sylloge Einsidlensis
1 and 2	Two renovation inscriptions on the Pons Salarius, commemorating restoration of the bridge by the general Narses in 565, after the emperor Justinian's victory over the Goths. The rubric locates them incorrectly 'on the Tiburtine bridge' (*in ponte Tiburtino*, f. 67r)[a]
3	Building inscription on the Pons Aelius (no. 3 in Walser), commemorating its building by the emperor Hadrian
4–5b/56–58	Inscriptions on the Mausoleum of Hadrian, commemorating the emperor Commodus, the emperor Lucius Verus and the emperor Hadrian's adoptive son L. Aelius Caesar
6	Mosaic inscription on the triumphal arch of the Old St. Peter's (now lost), commemorating Constantine's building of the basilica
7	Inscription on the triumphal arch of emperor Arcadius, Honorius, and Theodosius, commemorating their victory over the Goths in 406[b]

[a]Walser, 'Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung', 64–65
[b]The arch is lost, and it is unknown where it was located; cf. Walser, 'Die Einsiedler Inschriftensammlung', 67–68

6 EXPERIENCING ROME: FROM THE OUTSIDE TO THE INSIDE

As my reading of the Pfäfers manuscript suggests, it was most likely intended for and read by someone in a Carolingian monastery, who might never go to Rome in person. In other words, the audience was an outsider, who may never see Rome with the own eyes. Interestingly, the manuscript allows such a reader to make a movement, as it were, entering the city after having approached it from the outside. The *Wall Description* most clearly evokes the outsider's perspective with which such a reader may approach the city. It provides a description of the Aurelian wall, starting from the Porta S. Petri and then turning in clockwise direction,

including a summary of the amounts of towers, battlements, windows, and latrines between the various towers. The references to the battlements (*propugnacula*) and latrines (*necessariae*) betray an outsider's perspective. They were usually located on the landward side of the wall, the battlements facing the possible enemy, and the latrines so that they could be released outside the city. This implies an outsider view: the battlements and latrines could only be seen when standing outside the city wall.

Despite the outsiders' perspective in the *Wall Description*, however, Rome is not presented as an object beyond reach in the Pfäfers manuscript. This is particularly evident in the *Itinerarium*. Its remarkable three-column layout is an instrument for the reader to go on an imaginary journey through Rome. Reading the names of the monuments in the various columns, the reader imagines the location of the monuments in the physical reality.[68] In this way, the *Itinerarium* allows the reader to adopt the insider's perspective and to experience the city from within. The effect is strengthened by the cross-connections between the *Itinerarium* and other writings in the manuscript: several places recorded in the itineraries recur in the *Sylloge* and the *Ordo Romanus* as the site of inscriptions or rituals. The headings preceding various inscriptions in the *Sylloge* make it possible to find a particular monument more quickly and make cross-references with the *Itinerarium*.[69] Reading the *Sylloge* and *Ordo Romanus*, the reader gets insight in the *couleur locale* of the landscape traversed in the *Itinerarium*, without actually going there in person.

This interpretation fits the monastic context for which the Pfäfers manuscript was most likely intended. In her book *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200*, Mary Carruthers makes a connection between imagination and monastic meditation, highlighting the importance of 'pictures' (*picturae*) as instruments for reflection in medieval monastic traditions of the West and East. Aligning with ancient rhetorical theory about the act of remembering (*memoria*), monks used pictures to reflect on the order of the world, history, and, as the ultimate goal, God and his role in creation and history. *Picturae* could be real, material images, such as the famous *Plan of St. Gall*, a Carolingian production from the first decades of the ninth

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[68] Cf. Maskarinec, *City of Saints*, 144–145.

[69] Staat, 'Between Reading and Viewing'.

century (Fig. 5). It may have been used by monks as an aid to learn about the spaces of a monastery and meditate on their internal order.[70] *Picturae* could also be imaginary: images in the mind that someone could conjure up, for instance, during study or prayer.[71] Both types of *picturae* had mnemotechnic power. By going through the different parts of the picture one by one, the monk could recall the knowledge stored there and contemplate on it.[72]

Originating from a similar monastic context, the *Itinerarium Einsidlense* and Pfäfers manuscript as a whole may have had a similar meditational function. Although it is not a real 'image' (*pictura*), the *Itinerarium* has image-like qualities, conveying the position of the monuments in the real space by means of the textual layout. The peculiar three-column way of presentation allows the reader to become a spectator and to see at once where the monuments are located in real space. Reading the inscriptions, the reader is invited to reflect on Rome, its rituals and the urban landscape in which they take place. As in the case of the *Sylloge*, no distinction is made between classical and Christian monuments in the *Itinerarium*: references to the Roman Forum, arches, and aqueducts are intermingled with mentions of churches and deaconries. All get an aura of sanctity, functioning as landmarks or stations in the processions. The reader may make cross-connections between the various Roman-centred writings and reflect on the image of Rome presented in the manuscript: a resource of knowledge and learning, which can be used for various purposes, both secular and spiritual.

7 Rome Brought Home: Concluding Remarks

The image of Rome evoked in the Pfäfers manuscript is both traditional and contextually determined. Like the examples discussed at the beginning of the article, Rome is conceived in an abstract manner, as a repository of learning encompassing the whole of knowledge that the city has produced in classical and post-classical times. 'Rome' becomes a

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[70] Carruthers, 'The Craft of Thought', 230. See also: Samuel Collins, *The Carolingian Debate over Sacred Space* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 70–81, for the order of the depicted spaces on the Plan.

[71] Carruthers, 'The Craft of Thought', 196–203.

[72] Carruthers, 'The Craft of Thought', 77–81 and 196–203.
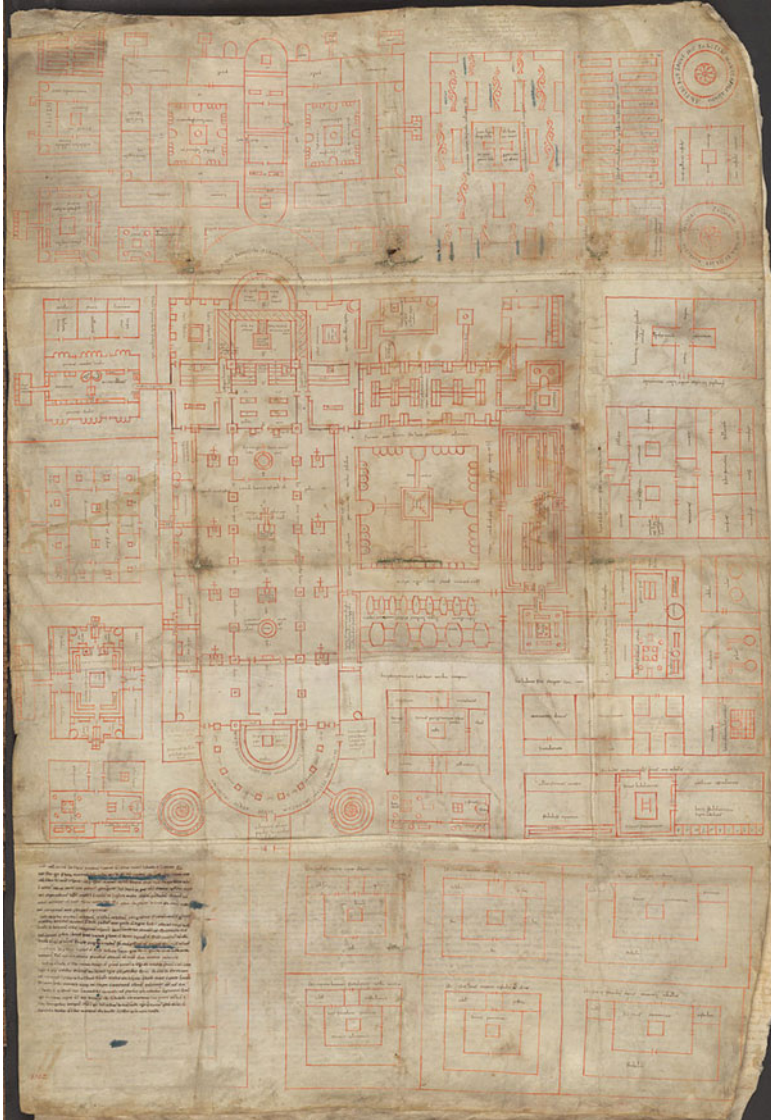
Fig. 5 Plan of St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. Sang. 1092 (Photograph from Wikimedia Commons, consulted online on September 9, 2022, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plan_of_Saint_Gall#/media/File:Codex_Sangallensis_1092_recto.jpg. Licence CC-PD-1.0)

concept or 'idea' that carries symbolic meaning, expressing imperial power and authority.

At the same time, the image of Rome depicted cannot be fully understood without considering the context of origin and use of the Pfäfers manuscript: the Carolingian world and its monasteries. The image of Rome evoked in the manuscript is impacted by the interests and needs of the monastic community in which the Pfäfers manuscript was created and initially read. In keeping with the Carolingians' broader interest in *renovatio*, Rome is used as a model of imitation and emulation that can be used at several levels: that of imperial ideology, in which the Carolingian empire was seen as the successor to the Roman empire; schooling, in which classical and post-classical literature set the standard of good literature; and liturgy, in which the Roman rite was considered as the most authoritative model for liturgical renewal. Besides providing an image of Rome with pertinent meanings for a Carolingian audience, the manuscript takes on a meditational function which was particularly relevant for the monastic reader. It allowed him to enter Rome as it were and to experience it from the inside without ever going there. The manuscript was a means to bring Rome home.

Thus, while it is unlikely that the manuscript was ever intended as a travel guidebook for a pilgrimage in the real city of Rome, it did have a practical function, as a handbook in the teaching of grammar and reading (for which the *Sylloge* and *Einsiedeln Anthology* would have been particularly useful), as an overview of Roman rites, and as a meditative tool, guiding the readers' thoughts about God, history, and the order of creation. After all, the *Itinerarium* did have guidebook functions, but differently from what often is supposed. These functions, and the broader significance of the image of Rome outlined in the manuscript, can only be fully determined by reading the book against the context for which it was most likely created: that of a monastery in the Carolingian world.

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The Way to Rome in the Medieval Welsh Imagination

Natalia I. Petrovskaia

1 Introduction

Increasing attention has been paid in recent years to the subject of the role of landscape and representation of space in medieval Welsh texts and in particular its contribution to the formulation of ideas of identity and in political discourse more generally.[1] The purpose of the present discussion is to contribute to this field by examining the representation of Rome, and

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[1] See, for instance: Euryn Rhys Roberts, 'Mental Geographies and Literary Convention: The Poets of the Welsh Princes and the Polities and Provinces of Medieval Wales', *Studia Celtica* 46 (2012): 85–110; Helen Fulton (ed.), *Urban Culture in Medieval Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2012); Euryn Rhys Roberts, 'A Surfeit of Identity? Regional Solidarities, Welsh Identity and the Idea of Britain', in *Imagined Communities: Constructing Collective Identities in Medieval Europe*, ed. Andrzej Pleszczynski, Joanna Aleksandra Sobiesiak, Michał Tomaszek, and Przemysław Tyszka, (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 247–278, here 254–262; Natalia I. Petrovskaia, 'Real and Imaginary Towns in Medieval Wales', in *Les villes au Moyen Âge en Europe occidentale (ou comment demain peut apprendre d'hier)*, ed. Marie-Françoise Alamichel (Paris: LISAA Editeur, 2018), 355–370, https://lisaa.u-pem.fr/fileadmin/Fichiers/LISAA/LISAA_editeur/Mem oire_et_territoire/Ville_au_Moyen_Age/16_Petrovskaia.pdf [accessed 22 August 2022].

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in particular, the way thereto, in a small but not insignificant corner of the medieval Welsh literary tradition. The focus here is on the descriptions of (the journey to) Rome in a set of roughly contemporary accounts.

The first of these is the fictional vernacular prose narrative *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic* 'Dream of Maxen Wledic' (ca. 1215–1217).[2] Maxen Wledic represents a fictionalisation of the historical character of Magnus Maximus (383–388), a figure prominent in British origin legends and genealogies, highlighting connections with the imperial Roman past.[3] The narrative commences with Maxen's dream of a journey, at the end of which he encounters the woman he falls in love with. Embassies far and wide are subsequently sent in search for her in real life, and she is finally located in Britain, where Maxen ultimately journeys to marry her. This is followed by a brief section which constitutes an antiquarian type of tale recounting the building of Roman roads and fortifications as a wedding gift by Maxen to his wife.[4] After this, news of the usurpation of Maxen's throne reach the emperor, upon which his brothers-in-law help him in his campaign to retake the city of Rome. The tale ends with the foundation legend of Brittany, as on their way back to Britain the armies of Maxen's brothers-in-law settle on that peninsula. While the work is entirely fictional, the world described therein, even in Maxen's dream, is

[2] For the text, see: Brynley F. Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic*, Medieval and Modern Welsh Series XI (Dublin: Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, 2005); the translation used in the present discussion is S. Davies (trans.), 'The Dream of the Emperor Maxen', in *The Mabinogion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 103–110. For the date, see Roberts, '*Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*: Why? When?', in *Heroic Poets and Poetic Heroes in Celtic Traditions: A Festschrift for Patrick K. Ford*, CSANA Yearbook 3–4, ed. Joseph Falaky Nagy and Leslie Ellen Jones (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2004), 303–314, here 310–312; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, lxxxv.

[3] A recent discussion is Ben Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus: On the Appropriation of Roman History in Medieval Wales, c. 800–1250', *Journal of Medieval History* 44 (2018): 381–405. For role of Magnus Maximus in British origin legends with links to Rome, see: Thomas M. Charles-Edwards, 'Origin Legends in Ireland and Celtic Britain', in *Origin Legends in Early Medieval Europe*, ed. Lindy Brady and Patrick Wadden (Leiden: Brill, 2022), 46–74, here 65–66. For a brief biography of Magnus Maximus, see: John F. Matthews, 'Magnus Maximus, Roman emperor, 383–388 CE', *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 2016). https://oxfordre.com/classics/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780199381135.001.0001/acrefore-9780199381135-e-3883?rskey=5JKPde [accessed 7 June 2021].

[4] For a discussion, see: Joseph A. McMullen, 'Three Major Forts to Be Built for Her: Rewriting History Through the Landscape in *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*', *Proceedings of the Harvard Celtic Colloquium* 31 (2011): 225–241.

not, and both the Rome-Britain trajectory and the mode of description correspond to those in the group of accounts of his real-life journeys to Rome by the colourful and vocal cleric Gerald of Wales (Giraldus Cambrensis, 1146–1223), written in Latin in the beginning of the thirteenth century.[5] These thus form the second focal point of the present discussion. Descriptions of the journeys to Rome survive in Gerald's autobiography, *De rebus a se gestis* 'On the Things He Has Achieved' (ca. 1210–1215) as well as in *De iure et statu Meneuensis Ecclesiae* 'On the Rights and Status of the Church of St Davids' (ca. 1218), which deals with the claim of St Davids' to the status of an archbishopric, and Gerald's pleas for it.[6] Indeed, Gerald's multiple visits to Rome were part of his attempts to ensure his appointment to the see of St David's and to secure archbishopric status for the see itself, a cause he pleaded in person with the pope on several occasions.[7]

[5] For biographies of Gerald, see: Robert Bartlett, *Gerald of Wales: 1146–1223* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982); Michael Richter, *Giraldus Cambrensis: The Growth of a Welsh Nation* (Aberystwyth: National Library of Wales, 1976); Brynley F. Roberts, *Gerald of Wales*. Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1982). For a recent discussion of Gerald's work with an up-to-date bibliography, see the essays in Georgia Henley and A. Joseph McMullen (ed.), *Gerald of Wales: New Perspectives on a Medieval Writer and Critic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2018). For a brief discussion of Gerald's journey to Rome, see: Debra Julie Birch, *Pilgrimage to Rome in the Middle Ages: Continuity and Change* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2000), 51–52, 107.

[6] For editions, see: J. S. Brewer (ed.), *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera* I (London: Longman et al., 1861) and III (London: Longman et al., 1963). For a translation, primarily of the former but also containing relevant extracts of the latter text, see: *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. H. E. Butler (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005; 1st edn, London, 1937). Michael Richter dates *De rebus* ca. 1205 in 'Gerald of Wales: A Reassessment on the 750th Anniversary of His Death', *Traditio* 29 (1973): 379–390, here 388. For discussions, see: Huw Pryce, 'Gerald of Wales and the Welsh Past', in *Gerald of Wales*, ed. Henley and McMullen, 19–45; Eileen A. Williams, 'A Bibliography of Giraldus Cambrensis, *c.* 1147–*c.* 1223', *National Library of Wales Journal* 12 (1961–1962): 97–140, here 111; Paul Lehmann, 'Autobiographies of the Middle Ages', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 3 (1953): 41–52, here 49–51. A five-year project for the publication of new authoritative editions of Gerald's works is currently underway, funded by the Leverhulme Trust. Originally awarded to the late Richard Sharpe, the project is being continued by Thomas Charles-Edwards and Paul Russell; https://www.history.ox.ac.uk/article/the-writings-of-gerald-of-wales [accessed 19 July 2022].

[7] For a discussion of Gerald's descriptions of his stays in Rome, see: Iben Fonnesberg-Schmidt and William Kynan-Wilson, 'Smiling, Laughing and Joking in Papal Rome: Thomas of Marlborough and Gerald of Wales at the Court of Innocent III (1198–1216)', *Papers of the British School at Rome* 86 (2018): 153–181, here 158.

Two brief contextual observations are required at this juncture before proceeding to the examination of the texts themselves: one regarding the validity of regarding the vernacular legend (or fiction) alongside the Latin autobiographical text as representatives of the same culture; and one regarding the practicalities of the Wales-Rome trajectory in the Middle Ages. Whilst both observations relate to points that might be regarded by some as by now established in the field, it is worth re-emphasising them, particularly within the context of an interdisciplinary volume, as they are important for our understanding of the potentialities of the texts' relationship to each other, and to real-world geography.

In the first place, as pointed out most recently by Georgia Henley, literary culture in medieval Wales should not be seen in terms of a 'binary opposition of "Welsh vs Latin"', but rather in terms of a culture that was fluent in both and where the two interacted.[8] Gerald and the author of the vernacular narrative text appear to belong to the same culture of Welsh (or Wales-based) literati that Henley so dexterously outlines in her article on Welsh Galfredian translations. It will be shown in the discussion below that they also appear to have belonged to the same culture in terms of real-world routes of travel and that they both demonstrate the same attitude towards the use of space and place in narrative.

Regarding the practicalities of travel—and thus the journeys described and their potential familiarity to and impact on the audience—it is worth keeping in mind throughout the following discussion that Rome was not as distant from the authors and audiences of these early-thirteenth-century Welsh texts as might at first glance appear. Welsh travel to Rome in the Middle Ages was not a particularly unusual phenomenon, although as Kathryn Hurlock points out, it is Gerald who 'provided the only surviving narrative account produced by a Welshman describing an overseas pilgrimage to Rome'.[9] Thus, the texts under discussion here should be seen as representative of a culture well exposed to information about the route to Rome, in first-person experience and third-hand accounts, rather than being unique witnesses to a particularly exotic

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[8] Henley, 'From "the Matter of Britain"', here 4, and 8, 23, 27.

[9] Kathryn Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage, c. 1100–1500* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 8 and 151.

journey. This point will be significant to understanding both authors' oblique descriptions.[10]

Both Gerald's account and the story of Maxen engage with the idea of Rome as a centre of power, albeit in different ways: as the seat of the papal curia in one instance and as seat of empire in the other. Thus, although the thirteenth-century texts featuring Rome under consideration here deal with the same city, they are concerned with matters ecclesiastical and papal Rome on the one hand, and with matters secular and imperial Rome on the other. Despite this difference in focus, the point of interest here is that these texts illustrate the idea that medieval journeys to Rome can be seen as a category of medieval travel in and of itself, alongside trade-related travel, military campaign, or pilgrimage taken in general terms.[11] It will be seen in the discussion below that regardless of the type of Rome under discussion, and regardless of whether the text is vernacular fiction or Latin autobiographical account, the approaches to space and its description in these texts are similar. What characterises the depiction of Rome in both Gerald's accounts and in *Breudwyt Maxen* is that description is virtually absent, whereas interaction with human inhabitants is central.

The following section of the article sets out some general parameters within which the two representations of Rome will be read, based on the double foundations of Edward Soja's theories of spatial power and Paul Zumthor's reading of medieval descriptions of cities, both ultimately harking back to Henri Lefebvre's influential concept of the 'production of space'. I then turn to the fictional description of the route to Rome in *Breudwyt Maxen*, arguing that key to its function within the narrative, and to the text's own political message, is the connection between the legendary and in appearance fictional spaces described in the text to the audience's own reality. Against this background, I move to read Gerald's descriptions of his very real journeys, before concluding with a joint

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[10] I follow Brynley Roberts and Ben Guy in seeing *Breudwyt Maxen*, at least in its present surviving form, as a work displaying authorial intent; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt*, lxi–lxxvi; Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus', 385 with reference to the former.

[11] See discussion in Romedio Schmitz-Esser, 'Travel and Exploration in the Middle Ages', in *Handbook of Medieval Culture. Fundamental Aspects and Conditions of the European Middle Ages*, vol. 3, ed. Albrecht Classen (Berlin and Boston: De Gruyter, 2015), 1680–1704, here 1685.

reading of the descriptions (or rather the significance of the obliqueness thereof) of the city of Rome itself in both sources.

2   NEGOTIATING POWER IN SPATIAL DESCRIPTIONS

The obliqueness of spatial description of locations referred to, which shall be shown below to be a major feature of spatial description in the texts under consideration, in which it counterbalances what will be shown to be a striking precision in the provision of geographical and orientational information—corresponds to a broader phenomenon observed for other medieval texts by Paul Zumthor. In his discussion of the medieval perceptions of space, Paul Zumthor has observed of the medieval European literary invocations of cities and towns that 'Parfois, les mots seuls de *cité* ou de *ville* tiennent lieu de description; tant apparement ils sont suggestifs!'[12] This observation at first glance appears to hold true of medieval Welsh references to Rome. While Rome and the Britain-Rome connection were significant to Welsh ideas of history and identity, and Rome as a city had special significance to the medieval mind and was the subject of much description and wonder, as will be shown in the final section of this article, neither *Breudwyt Maxen* nor Gerald actually describe the city.[13] Indeed, it also appears that in Gerald's account of his journey towards

[12] Paul Zumthor, *La mesure du monde. Représentation de l'espace au Moyen Âge* (Paris: Seuil, 1993), 113.

[13] A full bibliography of the subject would be so vast as to be impracticable here. For a recent discussion of the importance of Rome to the medieval English imagination, see: C. David Benson, *Imagined Romes: The Ancient City and its Stories in Middle English Poetry* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019), here 4, for the importance of Rome. For a brief discussion in a spatial context, see: Zumthor, *La mesure du monde*, 120–121. For Rome in British and Welsh identity-formation, see, for instance: Georgia Henley, 'From "the Matter of Britain" to "the Matter of Rome": Latin Literary Culture and the Reception of Geoffrey of Monmouth in Wales', *Arthurian Literature* XXXIII (Cambridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2016), 1–28, here 4, 25, 26; Karen Jankulak, *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Writers of Wales (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2010), 38–53; and Guy, 'Constantine, Helena, Maximus'. For a discussion of connections made in a religious context, see: Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 94, 101.

Rome place-names appear to be deemed sufficient to evoke the topography of the route. In other words, the spatial information he gives may be oblique, but not miserly.[14]

   The topographical descriptions in the texts, the fictional on the one hand and the autobiographical on the other, provide a setting for the action. I would like to argue here that the particulars of the route in question are not merely a setting for the action, but interact with the action and, to an extent, serve to form it. In this I extend the observation Peter Jackson has made regarding historical readings of real-life geography to apply also to fiction: 'geography is conceived of not as a featureless landscape on which events simply unfold, but as a series of spatial structures which provide a dynamic context for the processes and practices that give shape and form to culture'.[15] These words are used as a guide in the following discussion. Ultimately, this builds on the fundamental concept introduced in the 1970s by Henri Lefebvre: the 'production of space'.[16] The idea is that space is to some degree conditioned by its uses and the human presence in it—as an existing entity it only has meaning that humans read into it, meaning caused by human interaction.[17]

   The label of 'Rome', and the entity it refers to, in these texts is used to negotiate power. Whilst it is always precarious to draw parallels between medieval and postmodernist phenomena, in this case the words written

[14] Gerald does, in his *Speculum Ecclesiae*, present an account of the principal churches and relics in Rome, but this is also largely presented in the same vein as the account of his journey to Rome—primarily as a list and itinerary—enough to guide a reader, but not enough to paint a picture; Gerald of Wales, *Speculum Ecclesiae* IV.2–6, 8, 10 in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera* IV, ed. J. S. Brewer (London: Longman et al., 1873), 269–280, 281, 283–284. For discussions, see: Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 151–152; Fonnesberg-Schmidt and Kynan-Wilson, 'Smiling, Laughing and Joking in Papal Rome', 161–162. As Birch points out in some cases it is unclear from Gerald's descriptions which churches he had visited and which he had not; *Pilgrimage to Rome*, 107, 111. Gerald mentions this pilgrimage to Rome in his *De Invectionibus* V.12, but there is no description of the journey or city there; W. S. Davies (ed.), *Y Cymmrodor* 30 (London, 1920), 192. I return to the issue of Gerald's papal Rome and contrast it with Maxen's siege of imperial Rome further below, sect. 5 of this article.

[15] Peter Jackson, *Maps of Meaning* (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 48.

[16] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); originally publ. in French in 1974.

[17] Edward W. Soja, *Thirdspace. Journeys to Los Angeles and Other Real-and-Imagined Places* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 66–68.

by Edward Soja in relation to the latter might be usefully applied to understand the former:

> The outcomes of [...] socio-spatial differentiation, division, containment, and struggle are cumulatively concretized and conceptualized in spatial practices, in representations of space, and in the spaces of representation, for all three are always being profoundly shaped by the workings of power.[18]

The socio-spatial differentiation in our case is not one of social, racial, gender, or economic inequalities in urban societies, but of postcolonial medieval reality—the medieval European margin of Wales, in the process of subjugation by the colonial power of the Anglo-Normans, looking back to a colonial Roman past.[19] The representation of this past inverts the power struggle by postulating a British conquest of Rome, and a Roman emperor put on the throne by his British brothers-in-law.[20]

Reading medieval travel narratives, fictional or autobiographical, explicitly in light of this theoretical framework of spatiality is not in and of itself particularly revolutionary. The importance of the representation of Welsh geography and topography in *Breudwyt Maxen* has long been acknowledged. It fits within the general pattern of geographic interest and accuracy in detail which is a well-known feature of both medieval Welsh and Irish literary material.[21] However, the route of Maxen's messengers, and eventually Maxen himself, from Rome to Wales has not received the attention that has been given to the topographical descriptions of Britain

[18] Soja, *Thirdspace*, 87.

[19] McMullen, 'Three Major Forts', 238. The study of medieval Wales from the perspective of postcolonialism has flourished in recent years and bibliography is extensive. See, for instance: Michael A. Faletra, *Wales and the Medieval Colonial Imagination: The Matters of Britain in the Twelfth Century*, The New Middle Ages (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014); Susan Aronstein, 'Becoming Welsh: Counter-Colonialism and the Negotiation of Native Identity in *Peredur Vab Efrawc*', *Exemplaria* 17 (2005): 135–168; Keith Lilley, 'Imagined Geographies of the 'Celtic Fringe'—The Cultural Construction of the Other in Medieval Wales and Ireland', in *Celtic Geographies—Old Culture, New Times*, ed. David Harvey, Rhys Jones, Neil McInroy, and Christine Milligan (London: Routledge, 2001), 21–36.

[20] Cf. McMullen, 'Three Major Forts', 240–241.

[21] For discussions, see, for instance essays in Matthias Egeler (ed.), *Landscape and Myth in North-Western Europe* (Turnhout, Brepols, 2019); Patrick Sims-Williams, 'The Irish Geography of *Culhwch ac Olwen*', in *Sages, Saints and Storytellers: Celtic Studies in*

and Wales in the text.[22] Yet the journey from Rome to Wales, 'narrated in detail within the dream sequence and later repeated twice in reality, gives the extant tale its structure and form', to quote Brewer and Jones, one of the few comments on this geographical section of the text.[23] The following section of the article, therefore, is dedicated to showing that the description of the journey from Rome in *Breudwyt Maxen* is—despite, or perhaps even because of its oblique nature—rather closely tied to real-world geographical reality. This should not come as a surprise given the political intentions of the text itself, and the high degree of geographical detail and accuracy in its Welsh section.

3 FROM ROME AND BACK AGAIN: THE SPACE OF REALITY IN MAXEN'S DREAM

As Brynley Roberts observes, 'The author has a firm sense of geography. The route from Rome along the Tiber, across the Alps and the central plain of France along a broad river to the coast is clear in his mind'.[24] The description itself is worth revisiting. It runs as follows:

> This was his dream, that he was travelling along the river valley to its source until he came to the highest mountain he had ever seen, and he was sure that the mountain was as high as the sky. As he came over the mountain he could see that he was travelling along level plains, the fairest that anyone had ever seen, on the other side of the mountain. And he could see great, wide rivers flowing from the mountain to the sea, and he was travelling to the sea-fords and the rivers. After travelling in this way for a long time, he

Honour of James Carney, ed. D.Ó Corráin, et al. (Maynooth: An Sagart, 1989), 412–426; A. Joseph McMullen, '*Enwau ac Anryfeddodau Ynys Prydain* and a Tradition of Topographical Wonders in Medieval Britain', *Studia Celtica Fennica* 9 (2012): 36–53.

[22] See, for instance: McMullen, 'Three Major Forts'. The journey from Rome is discussed briefly in Brynley F. Roberts, '*Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig:* Why? When?', 306. The only extensive discussion of the Rome-Britain trajectory of *Breuddwyd Maxen* is in Francesco Benozzo, 'Landscape as a "Symbolic Form": The Perspectival Space in *Breuddwyd Maxen*', in *Landscape Perception in Early Celtic Literature*, ed. Francesco Benozzo (Aberystwyth: Celtic Studies Publications, 2004), 123–139. I engage with Benozzo's reading further below.

[23] George W. Brewer and Bedwyr Lewis Jones, 'Popular Tale Motifs and Historical Tradition in *Breudwyt Maxen*', *Medium Aevum* 44 (1975): 23–30, here 24.

[24] Roberts, *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*, 306.

came to the mouth of a great river, the widest that anyone had seen, and he could see a great city at the mouth of the river, and a great wall around the city with many great towers of different colours. At the mouth of the river he saw a fleet, and that was the largest fleet he had ever seen.[25]

Whilst this description is at first glance one of an imagined dream-world and has indeed been analysed as such by Francesco Benozzo, it continues with Maxen taking the ship across the sea and arriving in Britain where he meets the lady he falls in love with.[26] The journey is subsequently repeated in real life by messengers whom the emperor sends to find this lady of his dream, and this time place-names corresponding to the real world are provided.[27] Although we only find the place-names in the British part of the description, this indicates that all of the topography is supposed to correspond to the real world. Indeed, as Benozzo points out, the role of the detailed description in Maxen's initial dream is to make sure that it permits that 'the dreamt landscape becomes a real place'.[28] While in Benozzo's reading this description, particularly in its use of superlatives constitutes 'narration that is not interested in describing the real characteristics of a place, and which clearly avoids variants and details of "absolute" forms, in the attempt to create an *Ur-landscape*', I would like to suggest that in fact the 'directionality' and emphasis on 'distances and connections between different elements' Benozzo notes, are in fact an indication that the description functions not as an abstract fictional landscape but as an equivalent of a real-world itinerary-type text, capable

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[25] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 103; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 1–2. *Sef breuduyt a welei e vot en kerdet dyffrynt er avon hyt e blaen en e menyd uchaf o'r a welsei eryoet ac ef a debygei bot e menyd en gyuwch a'r awyr. A phan deuei dros e menyd ef a welei e vot en kerdet gwladoed gwastad tecaf o'r a welsei den eryoet o'r parth arall e'r menyd. A phrif avonyd mawr a welei o'r menyd hyt e mor ac y'r mor rydeu ac y'r avonyd e kerdei enteu.*

A pha hyt bennac y kerdei y velly ef a deuei y aber prif Avon vuyhaf a welsei nep a phrif dinas a welei en aber er avon a phrifgaer yng kylch e dinas a phrif dyroed amyl amliwyauc a welei ar e gaer. Ac en aber er avon llynges a welei a mwyhaf llynges oed honno o'r a welsei ef eryoet.

[26] Benozzo, 'Landscape as a "Symbolic Form"', 124, 127.

[27] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 106–107; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 6.

[28] Benozzo, 'Landscape as a "Symbolic Form"', 124.

of mapping onto not only Maxen's fictionalised 'real' world geography, but on the audience's (and our) real-world one.[29]

If we consider the salient features of the description: following a river valley from Rome, going over a high mountain, and crossing wide open fields with many rivers until one arrives at a port, do seem to be shorthand references to the salient features of a real-life route from Rome to the Channel. This similarity between the fictional route and the real-world way to Rome has been noted by the text's editor Brynley Roberts. To quote Roberts once more, 'Even if the author had not made the journey to Rome himself, he would have had ample opportunity to know those – pilgrims, churchmen, diplomats – who had done so, or at least to have become acquainted with well-established pilgrim maps'.[30] Whilst one could argue about the exact nature of the 'river valley', it is worth pointing out that Rome's river, the Tiber, starts in the Apennines which were then also referred to as the Alps (and seen as an extension of the Alps).[31] The Alps in turn seem to be a rather obvious reference point for the *menyd uchaf o'r a welsei eryoet* 'highest mountain he had ever seen' (even though *menyd* 'mountain' here is in the singular).[32] Once the Alps are crossed, the route North, whether following the Rhine, or going through Burgundy or France, would be primarily through open country. It is particularly instructive to read this description side-by-side with the real-life itinerary described by Gerald of Wales in his autobiography, *De rebus a se gestis*, composed ca. 1210–1215, similarities with

[29] Benozzo, 'Landscape as a "Symbolic Form"', 127, 128–130. I therefore disagree with Benozzo's view that 'You could in fact substitute the mountain with a lake, the island with a hill, and the dreamt landscape would remain almost the same, its function would not change' (ibid., 134) and that the text departs 'from an idea of literature as something rooted in reality' (137). As it stands, Maxen's itinerary can be followed, on a rudimentary schematic map of Europe (such as a medieval tripartite *mappa mundi*) by a contemporary reader; if the topographical ingredients of the description were to change, the itinerary would cease to correspond to the real world.

[30] Roberts, *Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*, 306.

[31] See, for example, Gerald's *De iure et statu Menevensis Ecclesiae dialogus* (henceforth *De iure*), ed. Brewer, Giraldi Cambrensis Opera III, 241, where he refers to the Apennines as the *Alpibus illis* 'Alps of those parts'; cf. Gerald of Wales, *Autobiography*, trans. Butler, 266 and comment in n. 2.

[32] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 103; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 1.

which were originally pointed out by Brynley Roberts.[33] Not only do the itineraries appear to closely correspond, but, as pointed out above, the texts are roughly contemporary.[34] Gerald's descriptions of his multiple real-life journeys to Rome—journeys undertaken specifically within the context of power negotiations as he fought for archiepiscopal status for St David's—are the subject of the following section.

4   Gerald's Real Journeys to Rome

Gerald provides a detailed description of the journey taken, including a detour forced by political circumstances, and referring to himself in the third person, as follows:[35]

> But proceeding from Strathflur and hastening through the mountains of Elenydd towards Cwmhir and thence, entering England at Kerry, he sped upon his way and crossed the Flemish sea from Sandwich. For fifteen days and more he waited at St. Omer for his messengers who were to come to him from the market of Winchester...
>
> [...]
>
> Since therefore on account of the great war which had broken out between King Philip of France and Baldwin, Count of Flanders, who had taken sides with John, King of England, he could not go by the direct way through France, he followed a long circuit to the left through the lowlands of Flanders and Hainault; and thence through the great wood of Arden (Ardennes), which are both rough and horrible, he came at last after skirting Champagne and passing through Burgundy to the public causeway, whereon he travelled with pilgrims and merchants.[36]

[33] Roberts, '*Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*': Why? When?, 306; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, 118; *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, ed. and trans. H. E. Butler, 163.

[34] For the date of *Breuddwyd Maxen*, see above and Roberts, '*Breuddwyd Maxen Wledig*: Why? When?', 310–312; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, lxxxv.

[35] For a discussion, see: Birch, 'Pilgrimage to Rome', 51.

[36] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. Butler, 163; Gerald of Wales, *De rebus a se gestis*, ed. J.S. Brewer, 117–118. *Procedens autem de Strata Florida, et per montana de Elenit versus Cumhir accelerans, et inde apud Keri Angliam intrans, properans apud Sandwich mare Flandricum transfretavit; et nuncios suos de nundinis Wintoniæ venturos per xv. dies et plures apud S. Audomarum expectavit...*[...] *Cum itaque propter werram grandem, quae inter regem Franciae Philippum et comitem Flandriae Baldewinum, qui*

[…]

And so crossing the Alps and passing hastily through Italy and Tuscany, he
came to Rome about the Feast of St. Andrew…[37]

A subsequent journey is recounted in detail in Gerald's *De iure*.[38]
This journey was troubled further by war, which made it 'impossible
for Englishmen to land on the sea-coast of Boulogne', involved crossing
the Channel from Dover to Gravelines, thence travelling to Saint Omer,
Douai, and Cambrai.[39] He was captured, taken to Paris, then going back
to resume his route via Troyes, Clairvaux, and Citeaux, 'and so by long
stages, passing through Burgundy, and crossing the Alps, he entered
Italy', where he 'avoiding Parma' travelled via Bologna, Faenza, Bagno
di S. Maria (presumably referring to the Basilica Santa Maria Assunta in
Bagno di Romana), Spoleto, and finally Rome (Fig. 1).[40]

The trajectory in itself presents an interesting itinerary for the study of
medieval travel logistics, but is made more colourful by the events and
individuals that are encountered at every step of the way. The cities and
roads are not described, but the events bring the landscape to life. For
example, the Italian leg of the journey which I briefly outlined above,
runs as follows:

> …and so by long stages, passing through Burgundy, and crossing the Alps,
> he entered Italy, and, being forewarned, escaped the snares laid for him by
> his enemy by avoiding Parma and unexpectedly going straight to Bologna,
> were he lost the two Canons of Llandaff whom he had brought with him

*regi Angliae Johanni tunc adhaeserat, orta fuit, recta via per Franciam ire non poterat;
longo circuitu per Flandriam profundam a sinistris et Henoniam per Ardeniae grandis
silvas hispidas et horrendas, Campaniam laterans et Burgundiam penetrans, ad publicam
demum stratam cum peregrinis et mercatoribus itinerando pervenit.*

[37] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, ed. and trans. Butler, 164. *Alpes itaque
transcendens, et Italiam ac Tuscaniam transcurrens, circa festum Sti. Andreae Romam
pervenit…*; Brewer et al. (ed.), *De rebus a se gestis*, 119.

[38] Brewer (ed.), *De iure*, 239–241.

[39] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. Butler, 263, 264; Brewer (ed.), *De iure*,
240. See also: Birch, 'Pilgrimage to Rome', 51–52.

[40] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. Butler, 265; Brewer (ed.), *De iure*,
240–241.
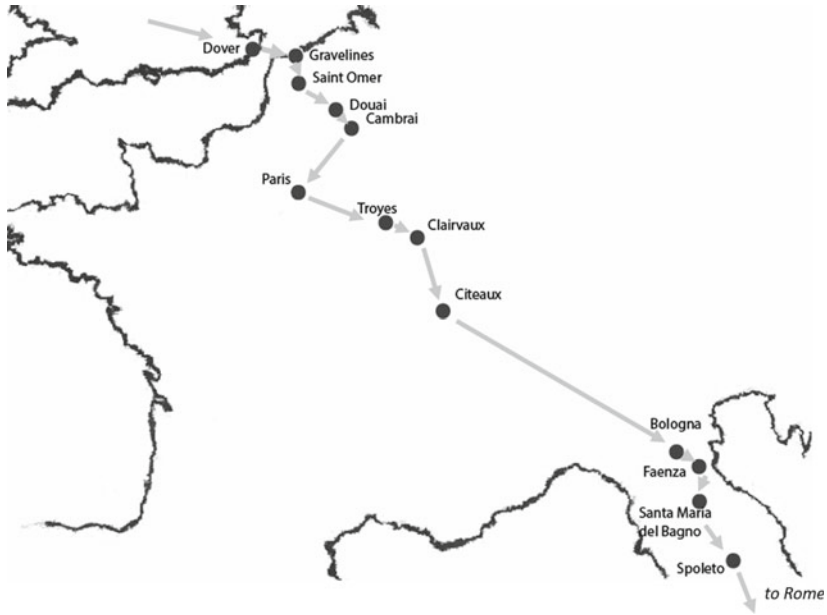
Fig. 1 Gerald's route to Rome (*Source* Natalia I. Petrovskaia)

(for secretly and by guile they clove to his enemies); and how coming to Faenza on the third day before Christmas, he hardly and with much difficulty recovered the twenty gold marks which he bought in obols of Modena from citizens of Bologna at the market of Troyes...[41]

The purchase of Modena currency from the Bolognese (presumably merchants) at Troyes is not discussed in the preceding narrative, but it paints a vivid picture of the international bustle and trade, and one that,

[41] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. Butler, 265; Brewer (ed.), *De iure*, 240. *…sicque Burgundiam longis diætis transmetiens, et Alpes transcendens, Italiam intravit; item qualiter insidias adversariorum, tam Parmam vitando quam Bononiam subito transpenetrando, præmunitus evasit; et qualiter ibi duos canonicos Landavenses, quos secum adduxerat, adversariis furtim adhærentes et fraudulenter, Giraldus amisit; item qualiter Faentiam tertio ante Natale die perveniens, xx. marcatas auri, quod in obolis Mutinis a civibus Bononiensibus in nundinis Trecensibus emerat, vix et cum difficultate recuperavit…*

significantly, appears to have required no comment.[42] Rome, once Gerald arrives there, is not described either, an important point which shall be explored further in the next, and final section of this article. Whilst it is possible to argue that in this case description is simply not the point— Gerald is telling the story of his heroic efforts to secure the bishopric of St David's—I would like to propose that in this instance it is rather that the setting is supposed to be provided by the reader. For the impact of the narrative of the journey, discussed above, such knowledge is a prerequisite. This does not mean that Gerald's intended audience had travelled far and wide across Europe and had actually been to the places he mentions. Nor do I wish to suggest that Gerald necessarily expected his audience to be as well-travelled as he was. I do suggest, however, that Gerald is writing these passages as though he did have such an expectation. Some understanding of the context of the difficulties involved in traversing the Alps, why the stages were long (and what makes a 'long' stage of the journey), as well as some image of the cities invoked by name, would be helpful to an audience to appreciate the full extent of Gerald's travails—the whole point of the narrative. At least Gerald seems to imply knowledge. Whether this was a method for creating a feeling of complicity between author and audience or of brow-beating the less well-travelled audience and establishing the author's sense of superiority, we are unlikely to ever know. The correspondence between Gerald's real and Maxen's fictional itineraries, nearly contemporary as they are, indicates that they represent late-twelfth-/early-thirteenth-century realities of travel and reflect knowledge thereof on the part of intended audiences.[43]

The imprecise dating of the former text and the existence of a single Latin-vernacular culture in medieval Wales, might open up the possibility that the author of the vernacular text had read Gerald. This might be seen as the most obvious explanation in particular for the similarities between the routes described. However, I would also venture to suggest that this supposition is in essence unnecessary. Gerald's route was dictated by the political circumstances of the time. Thus, it is possible that the route

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[42] In the thirteenth century, Troyes was one of the major centres (alongside other cities in the Champagne region) to which travelling merchants would converge, including Italian merchants making five-week journeys. See: Jacques Le Goff, *Marchands et banquiers du Moyen-Âge* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2006), first published in 1956, 16–17.

[43] Cf. the itinerary routes represented on the map in Birch, 'Pilgrimage to Rome', 42.

described in *Breudwyt Maxen* was based on factual knowledge of real-life travel. In this case, our earlier supposition that Gerald seems to have expected his audience to have some idea of the places he is describing in his texts, is supported by the fact that the author of *Breudwyt Maxen*, at least, apparently did. As pointed out by Kathryn Hurlock, 'Gerald of Wales' accounts of Rome were probably not that well known' and therefore not necessarily available to pilgrims wishing to undertake a journey or armchair journey.[44] Thus, although given the current dating of the texts it is remotely possible that the close similarity between the routes to Rome in Gerald's account and in *Breudwyt Maxen* is due to the author of the latter, ca. 1215 having access to the former, composed some ten years previously, it is more likely that both independently reflect real-life logistics of travel to Rome.

Gerald, we can tentatively suggest, would have expected his audience to recognise what he was describing without need for excessive detail. Interestingly, this is not only the situation we find in Gerald's account of his travels, but is also precisely the situation in the fictional representation of Rome in both Gerald's own texts, and in *Breudwyt Maxen*. Indeed, I would like to argue that the effect in descriptions of Rome, both Gerald's and in *Breudwyt Maxen*, lies in their reliance on the audience's ability to fill in the picture, outlines of which are provided in only the most general guiding strokes. Both appear to rely, therefore, on external knowledge and experience. Rome is not described, it is hinted at, and the city's power, as I will argue below, is one of invocation.

5   What's in a Name? Maxen and Gerald in the City of Rome

As in the first journey recounted in *De rebus a se gestis*, once in Rome, both the narrator and the narrative head directly for the Pope. There is no distracting description. A glimpse is provided of the city's topography only in the context of the reference to Gerald's lodgings:

> When, therefore, the Archdeacon had found a lodging in the Lateran not far from the Court, the Elect of Bangor, who had plenty of money, would not any longer lodge with him as had been his wont, but dwelt by himself.

[44] Hurlock, *Medieval Welsh Pilgrimage*, 152.

For he knew that the Archdeacon had been robbed in Flanders and that the money left him would soon be exhausted, and he feared that, if he lived with him, he might have to lend him money.[45]

The assumption here, and in the rest of Gerald's account, seems to be that the spatial context of the action is sufficiently provided with the sparse sprinkling of place-names. Whilst one can argue about the importance of having a visual image of the area around the Lateran for the appreciation of the passage, the effect would be much more striking if the reader had first-hand (or at least second-hand) knowledge of the topography of Papal Rome, and possibly an idea of what kind of lodgings could have been gotten on the Lateran by one pressed for cash as Gerald apparently was.[46]

    In this reliance on experiential context Gerald's representation of the city echoes Zumthor's conclusions of medieval representations of cities generally, through representations of their citizens: 'Le discours que tiennent les poètes sur cette humanité urbaine fait partie de l'hyperbole globale – il enseigne que ce fragment d'espace, la ville, se définit en termes impliquant de façon essentielle la présence active de l'homme'.[47] Ultimately, according to Zumthor, city structures such as doors, walls, and towers are only present in the accounts insofar as people interact with them. We are ultimately back to Lefebvre's created spaces. It is also worth keeping in mind—although time and space do not permit a full exploration of all the potential implications here—Edward Soja's emphasis on the interrelation between the development of city, state, and politics.[48] Soja's study relates specifically to the real-world city, and its

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[45] *The Autobiography of Gerald of Wales*, trans. Butler, 267; Brewer (ed.), *De iure*, 241–242. *Cum igitur apud Lateranum archidiaconus hospitium non procul a curia cepisset, Bangoriensis, qui pecuniosus erat, non iam cum ipso, ut solet, sed per se hospitium cepit – nouerat enim archidiaconum in Flandria spoliatum, residuamque pecuniam suam sibi in proximo defecturam – ne mutuum ei faceret a cohabitando.*

[46] There appears to have been some shortage of lodgings for pilgrims in twelfth-century Rome, and one wonders whether Gerald's comment is not also a reflection on the fact that paying for his lodgings staying alone was not also more expensive for him. One assumes he would not have been eligible for the charity accommodation for poor pilgrims: Birch, 'Pilgrimage to Rome', 144.

[47] Zumthor, 'La mesure du monde', 115.

[48] Edward W. Soja, 'Cities and States in Geohistory', in *Contention and Trust in Cities and States*, ed. M. Hanagan and C. Tilly (Dordrecht, New York, Heidelberg and London: Springer, 2011), 211–226, here 219.

symbiotic relationship with real-world political formations, but his observation that much of this relationship is visible in urban-related vocabulary, opens up a way of reading the Rome of Gerald and Maxen.[49] Whilst it is not described in detail, as I have pointed out above, the selection of terminology used for the city itself and the components which come into focus in the selective descriptions, intersects with the action that the city is the subject to within the narratives, creating what one might describe as vincula of meaning.

During Maxen's siege of Rome, the city is referred to multiple times either as the extent of his activities, or as the object of the siege: 'Then Maxen travelled with his host to Rome, and conquered France and Burgundy and all the countries as far as Rome. And he laid siege to the city [*caer*] of Rome'.[50] The use of the term *caer* 'fortress/stronghold/castle' for the fortified city, appears enough to invoke the notions of fortification and impregnability.[51] No description of the city is given at this point, however. The city's means of withstanding the siege—its walls—are only referred to once Maxen's brothers-in-law had devised a plan to capture the city for which the walls play a crucial role: 'Then by night they measured the height of the walls [*caer*], and they sent their carpenters into the forest, and a ladder was made for every four of their men'.[52] The fact that this fictionalised representation of Rome has walls is no surprise, but these walls only emerge in the text once their presence becomes relevant. Until that point, they, as every other feature of the city, are assumed, and left to the audience's imagination.

The city is taken by the Britons the next day, when they climb over the walls while Maxen (and the besieged emperor) are busy eating their

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[49] Soja, 'Cities and States in Geohistory', 219.

[50] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 108; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 9: *Ac yna y kerdwys Maxen yn y luyd parth a Rufein ac y gwerescynnwys Ffreinc a Bwrgwin a'r holl wladoed hyt yn Rufein, ac yd eistedawd wrth y gaer Rufein.*

[51] *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru / A Dictionary of the Welsh Language* (University of Wales, 2022), https://www.geiriadur.ac.uk/gpc/gpc.html, s.v. *caer* [accessed 15 October 2022].

[52] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 109; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 9: *Ac yna y messurassant wynteu hyt nos vchet y gaer, ac yd ellygyssant eu seiri y'r coet, ac y gwnaethpwyt yscawl y pob petwargwyr onadunt.*

lunch at noon.[53] Again, the walls are referred to in the context of inter-action with the humans who climb over them. This is followed by further detail of the city, again in the context of human interaction: 'They spent three nights and three days overthrowing the men who were in the city and overcoming the castle, while another group of them guarded the city [*caer*] in case any of Maxen's host should enter before they had brought everyone under their control'.[54] The extra information of the city's having a 'castle' [*kastell*] is provided at this point. Finally, the 'gates of the city of Rome' are referred to only when they are opened to welcome Maxen the emperor. Again, it is almost as if the features of the city come into focus only at the point at which they are needed for the action.

It is also worthwhile pointing out that the term used in the Welsh for the 'city' of Rome is *caer*, which has the primary meaning of 'fort, fortress, enclosed stronghold, castle, citadel, fortified town or city', and a secondary meaning of 'wall, rampart, bulwark'.[55] The text's translator, Sioned Davies, chooses to translate the word referring to the 'city of Rome' as 'city' but the object measured for the ladders as walls. However, it is worth noting that the term used in the Welsh is the same for both. I do not mean to suggest by this that the translation is erroneous, but rather to point out that the city in this instance is identified with its walls. Rome is a walled stronghold, in this text, and it is taken when its height measured and is tamed by means of wooden ladders. This is a very different Rome from that of Gerald, upon whose arrival its 'description' is limited to the author's interaction with the Pope, cardinals, lodging near the Lateran, and visits to churches. Gerald's Rome has no walls (except metaphorical ones separating him from the achievement of his dream) because there is no physical siege. Whilst Maxen's Rome is a centre of political and military power—in tune with the political statement being made by the text itself—Gerald's is a religious stronghold, in line with his main theme of ecclesiastical hierarchy and ecclesiastical power.

[53] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 109; Roberts (ed.), *Breudwyt Maxen*, 10.

[54] Davies (trans.), *Mabinogion*, 109; Roberts (ed), *Breudwyt Maxen Wledic*, 10: *A their nos a thri dieu y buant yn gwastatau y nifer a oed yn y gaer ac yn gwerascyn y kastell, a rann arall onadunt yn kadw y gaer rac dyuot neb o lu Maxen idi, yny darfei udunt wy gwastatau pawb wrth eu kyghor.*

[55] *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, s.v. *caer*.

The fact that the object description of the city seems to be rendered—to borrow a metaphor from the digital world—only once the human players interact with that particular aspect of it, not only echoes the observations of Paul Zumthor, quoted above, of the 'city defined in the active presence of man' (I paraphrase slightly in translating), but also very distinctly invokes Lefebvre's fundamental concept of the 'production of space'.[56] Space acquires meaning and significance, as time does, only through the actions of humans. In the case of *Breudwyt Maxen*, it also acquires existence within the texts only in the interaction with the characters. The *caer* of Rome is present only when it is besieged.

6   CONCLUSION

Both sources examined here use the real world as starting point and as reference point to elaborate their individual messages to achieve most impact. In the case of *Breudwyt Maxen*, the emperor's dream journey from Rome to Britain, though equipped with the generalities and trappings of a fantasy landscape is in fact a close approximation to the itinerary traced in Gerald's account of his very real journey. The contrast between the two lies primarily in Gerald's elaboration of his account through addition of mundane elements of human interaction (e.g. references to dangers he runs, to exchanging money, encountering individuals).

Although neither describe Rome itself in detail, both show the same techniques when their texts feature the city: its main features are shown through the action and interaction within the narrative. In both cases, this definition of the city through action forms the audience's impression of the nature of the city's power. The road to Rome is made visible when it is travelled, and the city made visible when it is interacted with. In *Breudwyt Maxen* Rome itself in this case is a *caer*, or stronghold, rather than an urban, civilian centre, with a *kastell* 'castle' at its heart, wherein the *nifer* (lit. 'number' but also meaning 'host', 'retinue', 'troop' and 'crowd') offer resistance to the British arms. Vocabulary use is one crucial part of this—and important part, as Edward Soja reminds us—and one we have seen in particular illustrated in the use of terminology related to

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[56] Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); originally publ. in French in 1974; not cited by Zumthor. Cf., however, H. Lefebvre, *Le Droit à la ville* (Paris: Seuil, 1974), which Zumthor does refer to elsewhere in the book.

military architecture in *Breudwyt Maxen*.[57] It should not be forgotten, however (and here Soja's emphasis on the real-world cities' active role in the political and social processes relating to creation and transfer power is relevant), that these texts reflect back at the audience the real-world associations of the landscapes they describe.

The imperial Rome of *Breudwyt Maxen* is political and military because it reflects the political and military associations with imperial Rome, used in discourses of power in Britain (most famously by Geoffrey of Monmouth), and crucial to the central theme of the text. The papal Rome of Gerald's accounts, by contrast, is ecclesiastical—the Rome of the papal court, a landscape of churches populated by pilgrims and the papal curia. This reflects Gerald's main interests, political but not military. The authors, and thus their audiences, construct the spaces of Rome according to their needs. Thus, paradoxically, while the routes to Rome described in the texts under discussion here appear to reflect the same rough itinerary, Emperor Maxen and Archdeacon Gerald seem to have arrived at two quite different Romes.

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[57] Soja, 'Cities and States in Geohistory', 219.

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Epilogue

Citizenship as Performance

Els Rose

1 The Language of Citizenship

The language of *civitas* is 'a language with mythic resonance, a vocabulary of death and resurrection'.[1] Thus Peter Hawkins in his introduction to a volume on civic language in the medieval West. The volume resulted from a lecture series delivered by theologians of Yale Divinity School, which explains the metaphysical perspective on 'the city' in Hawkins' introductory words. Yet Hawkins' further observation that the city is a place where 'humankind experienced the mystery of its own part in the cosmic drama'[2] can help explain why the city is such an imaginative key to past and present societies. It indicates why the notions of membership of that city and participation in its civic life challenge a purely legal and institutional understanding of 'the city' and what it means to be part of it.

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[1] Peter S. Hawkins (ed.), *Civitas. Religious Interpretations of the City* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1986), xi. This chapter was written as part of the project NWO VICI-Rose 277-30-002 *Citizenship Discourses in the Early Middle Ages, 400–1100*, funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research NWO, carried out at Utrecht University 2017–2023.

[2] Hawkins (ed.), *Civitas*, xi.

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The preceding volume, to which the present chapter forms an epilogue, takes its origin in a shared endeavour to focus on the Latin language of city, citizen, and citizenship in and its impact on medieval culture—as outlined in the introduction. The Utrecht Citizenship Discourses project aimed to uncover how and in which contexts ancient Latin discourses of city, citizen, and citizenship remained relevant and meaningful in the post-Roman world, while studying the semantic developments of this discourse as both reflection and cause of change and transformation in the medieval world in which it was performed. From discourse to performance, from 'using language to organise' to 'using language to realise',[3] seems a small step. It is, however, vital to move beyond language and text towards lived practice and context. The final pages of this collaborative volume will focus on citizenship as performance in early medieval Christian culture, focusing on the relation between cultic and civic ritual, Baptism, and the saints as 'special citizens'.

The tendency to approach citizenship not only as a legal or political institution but to foreground the perspective of performance has recently become dominant in ancient as well as modern and present-day citizenship studies. A performative approach enables scholars to break up the demarcations of citizenship as defined institutionally and 'top-down', while allowing for a more inclusive, 'bottom-up' approach.[4] Characteristic of this approach is the focus not only on citizens, but emphatically also on non-citizens claiming their right to have rights. Among these non-citizens are undocumented persons, refugees, in-between citizens finding death when crossing the seas between nations,[5] who act *as citizens* in their appeal to participate in the privileges and duties of citizenship. In the most concise definition of citizenship, derived from Hannah Arendt's

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[3] On words as performative acts, see classically: J.L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1962). On the Christian liturgical cult as 'Wortgeschehen', see: Karl-Heinrich Bieritz, 'Anthropologische Grundlegung', in *Handbuch der Liturgik*, 3rd ed., ed. Hans-Christoph Schmidt-Lauber, Michael Meyer-Blanck, and Karl-Heinrich Bieritz (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 95–128, here 114.

[4] Engin F. Isin, 'Performative Citizenship', in *The Oxford Handbook of Citizenship*, ed. Ayelet Shachar et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 500–523, here 511.

[5] Kim Rygiel, 'In Life through Death: Transgressive Citizenship at the Border', in *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Peter Nyers (London: Routledge, 2014), 62–72.

'aware[ness] of the existence of a right to have rights',[6] non-citizens participate in citizenship by negotiating rights and duties that they have no share in but to which they claim to be entitled.[7] One step further, the focus on citizenship as performance allows us to study a number of social and cultural interventions in civic life as 'acts of citizenship'. Engin Isin, as one of the leading scholars in present-day citizenship studies and theory, presents ancient practices of urban munificence—referred to as *euergetism* in the Greek tradition, *waqf* in the Islamic world, and *caritas* in the Latin cities of the post-Roman West—as an example of such performative acts of citizenship.[8] While citizenship and religious practice were intertwined in the ancient world, the development of new religions in the first millennium CE, in particular Christianity and Islam, gave new dimensions to the performativity of civic belonging and participation, and by doing so redefined the *loci* in which citizenship was performed.

A performative approach also permits an exploration of 'citizenship' as a symbolic language. The vocabulary of the legal and political institution of citizenship and its affiliated rights and duties can take on new or supplementary meanings when applied to *loci* of performance beyond the purely legal and political, such as the discourse of civic virtue,[9] of

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[6] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Meridian Books, second enlarged ed., 1958), 295–296; see also Engin F. Isin and Bryan S. Turner, 'Investigating Citizenship: An Agenda for Citizenship Studies', *Citizenship Studies* 11 (2007): 1–17, here 12–13.

[7] Engin F. Isin and Peter Nyers, 'Introduction: Globalizing Citizenship Studies', in *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies*, ed. Engin F. Isin and Peter Nyers (London: Routledge, 2014), 1–11, here 3.

[8] Engin F. Isin and Alexandre Lefebvre, 'The Gift of Law: Greek Euergetism and Ottoman *Waqf*", *European Journal of Social Theory* 8 (2005): 5–23; Engin F. Isin, 'Ottoman Waqfs as Acts of Citizenship', in *Held in Trust: Waqf in the Muslim World*, ed. Pascale Ghazaleh (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2011), 209–229. See also the contributions on urban benefaction by Javier Martínez Jiménez and by Josephine van den Bent and Angela Isoldi in this volume.

[9] E.g., Megan Welton's contribution to the present volume. On civic virtue in the Latin Middle Ages, see also: Megan Welton, 'The City Speaks: Cities, Citizens, and Civic Discourse in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages', *Traditio* 75 (2020): 1–37; Robert Flierman and Megan Welton, '*De excidio Patriae*: Civic Discourses in Gildas' Britain', *Early Medieval Europe* 29 (2021): 137–160. On John Chrysostom's qualification of the monastery as 'the city of virtue', see: Rowan Greer, 'Alien Citizens: A Marvelous Paradox', in *Civitas. Religious Interpretations of the City*, ed. Peter S. Hawkins (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1986), 39–56, here 52–53.

urban play and festival culture,[10] and of the ritual ecclesiastical congregation on their way to their *patria*, the heavenly homeland expressed *in terms of* citizenship.[11] While these variant *loci* do not always represent a 'polity'—in Engin Isin's definition 'any organised society with a political arrangement'[12]—the history of the semantics of *civitas* and *civis* and their correlates shows that the ancient language of citizenship was and remained, throughout the period of late Antiquity and the Middle Ages, a useful and even authoritative instrument to characterise and (re)form 'organised societies', even those without a political character *stricto sensu*.[13] The performative approach applied to citizenship from a present-day perspective thus offers a theoretical embedding to re-examine historical manifestations of citizenship beyond and before the nation state.[14] The preceding volume includes many chapters in which the focus is not so much on historical citizenship as an institution but, rather, on a symbolic use of the language of citizenship[15] and on the practical participation of citizens (and non-citizens) in civic life in the premodern period.[16] Moreover, many contributions focus on the

[10] E.g., Rozanne Versendaal's contribution to the present volume.

[11] E.g., Merel de Bruin-van de Beek's contribution to the present volume. On the ancient layers of the eschatological dimensions of citizenship, see: Clifford Ando, 'Postscript: Cities, Citizenship, and the Work of Empire', in *The City in the Classical and Post–Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*, ed. Claudia Rapp and Hall Drake (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 240–256.

[12] Isin, 'Performative Citizenship', 500. For a slightly more elaborate definition of citizenship as 'an "institution" mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong', see: Isin and Nyers, 'Introduction', 2.

[13] On the continuities and discontinuities of political participation in the late and post-Roman city, see: Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose (ed.), *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 37 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021).

[14] Maarten Prak, *Citizenship without Nations: Urban Citizenship in Europe and the World c.1000–1789* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018), 298.

[15] E.g., the chapters by Sam Ottewill-Soulsby, Merlijn Hurx and Robert Flierman in this volume.

[16] E.g., the contributions by Claire Weeda and Peter Brown and Maaike van Berkel to this volume.

relationship between urban inhabitants and their social and cultural environment,[17] rather than their participation in the polity to which they belonged as subjects.

A broadening of present-day citizenship studies from institution to performative practice, introduced by contemporary theoreticians such as Isin and others, gives room to study the ways in which citizenship language functioned as a performative discourse of belonging and exclusion in the premodern period, and to uncover the 'binary divides' between those who belonged and those who were excluded.[18] This focus on performance allows us to study citizenship language as the verbal expression of 'mediating rights',[19] also in the long Middle Ages as a period in which political participation and legal status were not or much less institutionally defined. The Yale volume of 1986 is an example of a performative approach to the language of citizenship, even if the notion of performance is not explicitly conceptualised. Hawkins and his co-authors study 'religious interpretations of the city' through the lexicon of *civitas* ('the spiritual matrix of life together'). Their access to such interpretations are the performative acts of 'words, gestures, images, and dreams'.[20] Hawkins and his contributors show that the idea of *civitas* did not die with the fall of Rome, just as the language of citizenship did not fall silent. To the contrary, as Hawkins observes: 'Civic spirit long outlasted actual urban significance'.[21] This longevity of 'civic spirit' is not only a verbal exercise or mere 'discourse' but, rather, the conviction that the civic community does not owe its resilience to its walls and bulwarks,

[17] E.g., the contributions by Marco Mostert and Rob Meens to this volume, as well as the chapters by Klazina Staat and Natalia Petrovskaia.

[18] These binaries are theorised, e.g., by Kate Hepworth, 'Topologies of Citizenship', in the *Routledge Handbook of Global Citizenship Studies* (London: Routledge, 2014), 110–118.

[19] See fn. 12.

[20] Hawkins (ed.), *Civitas*, xii–xiii.

[21] Hawkins (ed.), *Civitas*, xiii. See also: Claudia Rapp, '[T]he *polis* retained some of its allure as an idealized way to think about the church as an institution, even as its political and social role was diminishing'. Claudia Rapp, 'City and Citizenship as Christian Concepts of Community', in *The City in the Classical and Post–Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*, ed. Claudia Rapp and Hall Drake (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 153–166, here 155; John Van Engen, 'Christening the Romans', *Traditio* 52 (1997): 1–45, here 45.

but to the cement of the 'values and ideals that constitute its spiritual identity'.[22]

The focus on the city as defined by its 'values and ideals' is not unique to the city's afterlife in medieval culture, in which the 'religions of the book', particularly Christianity and Islam, determined civic life to the greater extent. The idea of 'citizenship' as expressed in 'value terms' also guides recent scholarship on citizenship in the ancient world. Citizenship in classical Athens, according to the eponymous monograph published by Josine Blok in 2014, depended on a cult of values, creating a mutual and reciprocal relationship between a *polis*' gods and its terrestrial inhabitants.[23] This relationship, provocatively qualified by Blok as 'a covenant between gods and men', included all citizens, i.e., all descendants of a citizen, male and female. Unlike the covenant between God and the Jewish people, verbalised and codified in the legal books of the Hebrew Bible (Torah), the Athenian bond between the gods and citizens of the *polis* was implicit, circumscribed by a vocabulary referring to the citizens' participation in normative behaviour that pleases the gods.[24] Blok's study of ancient Athenian citizenship through the lens of participation in the civic cult sheds new light on the measure and quality of inclusiveness of citizenship in this seminal period, conceding women a considerable role in the *polis*, which was hitherto considered to be less inclusive.

Blok's study focuses on the terminology that expresses citizenship as required behaviour of citizens in relationship to the gods to safeguard the stability of the *polis*. Lucia Prauscello's monograph *Performing Citizenship in Plato's Laws* also adopts a linguistic perspective but focuses on the rhetoric of citizenship and its performance in ritualised forms of public discourse. The choral performances in Plato's *Laws* that Prauscello analyses for their semantics of citizenship play a role in several phases of the

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[22] Hawkins (ed.), *Civitas*, xiii.

[23] Josine Blok, *Citizenship in Classical Athens* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017). On the values expressed in citizenship, see also: Josine Blok, 'A "Covenant" between Gods and Men', in *The City in the Classical and Post–Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*, ed. Claudia Rapp and Hall Drake (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 14–37.

[24] This vocabulary is built around the key terms *hiera*, *hosia*, *meteinai*, *metechein*. Blok, 'A "Covenant"'.

citizen's life, that of youth, adulthood, and old age.[25] Prauscello presents these choral performances as a 'ritual space', where humans shared with the gods the joy incited by the rhythms of dancing and singing: *choreia*.[26] The performative act of *choreia* provided the context for a trajectory of life-long learning (*paideia*) of what it meant to be a citizen.[27] At the core of this pedagogic programme is the language of erotic desire, which expresses and incurs the wish to belong as a citizen and to bring citizenship to perfection.[28] Specific to this choral performance is the way performers and audience coincided, being one and the same group of 'citizens performing how to be a group of citizens'.[29] Citizenship is thus, in Prauscello's reading of Plato's utopian work, a cultic and performative practice. The intrinsic will to be a perfect citizen[30] shapes a condition that serves the common good, requiring and promoting virtue in all citizens.[31] This focus on virtue, developed and trained in the performance of *choreia*, opens citizenship to all.[32]

2   CITIZENSHIP AND RITUAL PERFORMANCE

In studying interactions between civic language and performance in ancient Athens, Blok and Prauscello hint at the importance of cultic ritual, or worship, for communal belonging and exclusion. This has not been specifically addressed in the preceding chapters of the present volume. Yet the power of ritual celebrated in the city is one of the most tangible instruments of citizenship as performance in the late antique and medieval contexts.[33] The awareness of the city itself as the stage of participation in citizenship through participation in its cult is due to the seminal work by liturgist John Baldovin. Baldovin's 1987 monograph is a comparative

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[25] Lucia Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship in Plato's Laws* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 108.

[26] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 135, 140.

[27] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 6.

[28] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, esp. 105–151, 224.

[29] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 107–108.

[30] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 233.

[31] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 8.

[32] Prauscello, *Performing Citizenship*, 233.

[33] Hawkins, *Civitas*, xv.

study of how the Christian cult formed the late antique city in Byzantium and the post-Roman West and reformed its civic life and outlook. Baldovin's book, taking the phenomenon of 'stational liturgy' as its point of departure, is not limited to one Christian confession but features the cities of Jerusalem, Constantinople, and Rome with their different rites as protagonists.[34] The cities themselves, rather than churches or sanctuaries, set the stage for the performance of worship; Christian worship after Constantine became a public affair.[35] From the early Middle Ages onwards, cities in which the Christian cult was dominant are, in Baldovin's words, 'sanctified' by that cult.[36] As a consequence, participation in civic life in this period equalled, required, and was constituted by participation in the Christian cult.[37] Ultimately, the Christianisation of the city made the city itself a *locus* of incarnation, receiving Christ through its acceptance of the Gospel, just as Mary did when she conceived.[38]

The entwining of cultic and civic life also works the other way round, as the Byzantine calendar shows. The historical moments, in which Constantinople as a civic community was saved from disaster

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[34] John Baldovin, *The Urban Character of Christian Worship: The Origins, Development, and Meaning of Stational Liturgy* (Rome: Pontificium Institutum Studiorum Orientalium, 1987). For a definition of 'stational liturgy' and the role of the bishop in it, see there, 36–37. For a case study (Constantinople and the Byzantine rite) of the impact of stational liturgy and its processions on the life of the city, see: John Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life: The Example of Medieval Constantinople', in *Civitas. Religious Interpretations of the City*, ed. Peter S. Hawkins (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1986), 57–67, here 61*f*. On processions as a form of Christianisation in the early medieval West, see: Nathan J. Ristuccia, *Christianization and Commonwealth in Early Medieval Europe: A Ritual Interpretation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018). On the concept of Christianisation, see there, 5–15; Jacob A. Latham, 'Ritual and the Christianization of Urban Space', in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Ritual*, ed. Risto Uro, Juliette J. Day, Richard E. DeMaris, and Rikard Roitto (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 684–702, here 686–687.

[35] Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life', 64.

[36] Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life'.

[37] Els Rose, 'Christian Reconceptualizations of Citizenship and Freedom in the Latin West', in *Citizenship in Antiquity: Civic Communities in the Ancient Mediterranean*, ed. Jakub Filonik, Christine Plastow, and Rachel Zelnick–Abramovitz (New York–London: Routledge, 2023), 659–673, here 662.

[38] On the image of the city as conceiving, parallel to Mary, in the writings of the Syrian homilist Jacob of Serugh (451–521), see: Andrew Hochstedler, 'The Late Antique Syriac *Book of Mary* and a New Witness to the *Departure of Mary* in Six Books from Sinai Arabic 588', *Apocrypha* 33 (2022): 91–166, here 132 with footnote 127.

and attributed its deliverance to the intervention of God and his saints, permanently defined the liturgical calendar. Services of thanksgiving for redemption from sieges, earthquakes, and fires were not incidental but were commemorated year after year.[39] The liturgical calendar marked by the history of the city's life as well as the importance of the street as one of the liturgy's main stages show in an exemplary way the public character of Christian worship in the city of Constantinople,[40] and of its role as a performative act of citizenship.

The impact of processions (both religious and secular) on cities and urban space shows the close intertwining of *civitas* and *cultus*. This is not a uniquely medieval or Christian phenomenon, as is underlined by anthropological studies such as carried out by anthropologist Clifford Geertz and ritual studies scholar Roy Rappaport. Both point to the transformation of the city when a procession, explicitly or tacitly, claims its space by processing through it.[41] The urban procession does more than 'sanctifying' the city: it rewrites the civic character of the urban community by its claim to dominate its public space. This is confirmed by the experiences of the newly invented tradition of a modern-day parade to celebrate the urban patron saint in the city of Utrecht. The Utrecht Saint Martin's Parade is a light procession with music and mime taking place around 11 November (Saint Martin's day) and bringing together thousands of Utrecht citizens. Highlighting the act of sharing—in commemoration of St Martin's iconic act of charity when he shared his cloak with the naked beggar of Autun[42]—it is described by its artistic director Paul

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[39] Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life', 60. For a medieval example of a civic calendar defined by divine deliverance, see: Yossi Maurey, *Medieval Music, Legend, and the Cult of St. Martin: The Local Foundations of a Universal Saint* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014).

[40] Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life', 65.

[41] Clifford Geertz, *Local Knowledge. Further Essays in Interpretative Anthropology* (New York: Basic Books, 1983), 125; Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 124–126. Both quoted in Latham, 'Ritual and the Christianization of Urban Space', 694. For a perspective on (urban) processions in the Islamic world, see: Leslie Brubaker and Chris Wickham, 'Processions, Power, and Community Identity: East and West', in *Empires and Communities in the Post-Roman and Islamic World, c. 400–1000 CE*, ed. Walter Pohl and Rutger Kramer (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), 121–187 as discussed by Javier Martínez Jiménez in his contribution to this volume.

[42] Sulpicius Severus, *Vita sancti Martini* c. 3, ed. and transl. by Philip Burton, *Sulpicius Severus' Vita Martini* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 96–99.

Feld as 'a statement against the divergent forces in society'. Referring to the role processions had in the medieval past, Feld defines the role of urban processions as 'an affirmation of the community'.[43] In the political tensions of a present-day city populated by many cultures and confronted with a variety of responses to diversity, the parade is, in Feld's evaluation, a political statement, an inescapable urban event that, 'pushing all counterforces aside, runs the show'.[44]

While the stational liturgy and, more generally, urban processions in past and present bring forward the city as the stage of the performance and focus on the sanctification of the city through its worship ('the entire city became something like a church'[45]), more recent scholarship turns to the citizen as the object of such sanctification.[46] According to Claudia Rapp, the awareness among Christians that they belonged to an organised entity awakened in the course of the fourth century, when the reign of Constantine the Great (306–337), the first emperor with an 'active interest in Christianity', essentially decreased the distance between the Roman civic and the Christian religious realms.[47] The realisation, after centuries of informal existence, that a public (self-)representation mattered was the beginning of a Christian appropriation of the *polis* as a

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[43] 'Een statement tegen divergerende krachten in de samenleving'; 'zich bekennen tot de gemeenschap'. Both quotations from an interview with Paul Feld in the documentary 'Roderick zoekt licht: Sint Maarten in coronatijd', broadcasted on Dutch public television 7 November 2020; https://www.npostart.nl/roderick-zoekt-licht/07-11-2020/KN_171 6083, last accessed online 14 February 2023.

[44] '[A]lle tegenkrachten trekken zich terug in een steeg en je deelt als parade even de lakens uit'. Paul Feld in an interview on the Utrecht Saint Martin's Parade, held by Kees de Groot and Els Rose on 3 March 2021. For an analysis of this twenty-first century urban festival in commemoration of the medieval patron saint, see Els Rose, 'Sint-Maartenstradities in de eenentwintigste eeuw', in *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten. Utrecht een gelukkige stad*, ed. Els Rose (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 174–195; Kees de Groot, 'Op stap met een heilige in een seculiere stad: Godsdienstsociologische reflecties', in *Het wonder van Sint-Maarten. Utrecht een gelukkige stad*, ed. Els Rose (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2022), 196–221.

[45] Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life', 67.

[46] Also: Greer, 'Alien Citizens'. That both processes (Christianisation of the citizen and of the city) are closely entwined is emphasised by Susanna Elm, 'Church—Festival—Temple: Reimagining Civic Topography in Late Antiquity', in *The City in the Classical and Post–Classical World: Changing Contexts of Power and Identity*, ed. Claudia Rapp and Hall Drake (Cambridge University Press, 2014), 167–182.

[47] Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 153–154.

model of community, thus Rapp. The *polis* as a model reflects the Christian congregation as a community. The ancient term to qualify the shared values of this congregation is *politeuma*, referring to the ancient Greek notion of, in Rapp's definition, 'a group of people who observe a shared set of rules'.[48] Fourth-century Greek bishops such as John Chrysostom (345–407) and Basil of Caesarea (330–379) borrowed the term and its Christian reconceptualisation from St Paul, who in his letter to the Philippians referred to the Christian's *politeuma* 'which is in heaven' (Phil. 3:20).[49] While the concept as such verbalises the communal aspect of a 'redefined civic identity', as Rapp rightly states,[50] the application of *polis* language in the baptismal catechesis of Basil addresses each prospective member of that community as an individual person: in his call to Baptism, he consciously addresses his audience in the second person singular.[51]

Rather than a 'punctual act',[52] which seems to suggest a 'once in a lifetime' rather than a life-changing event, Baptism is presented in early medieval Latin catechetical handbooks as an initiation through which the baptised Christian will henceforth participate in the iterative ritual performance of the Christian congregation: its liturgy.[53] Among the core 'rights and duties' of the Christian congregants was the active participation in the

[48] Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 160.

[49] See on this passage and the history of its interpretation Cédric Brélaz, *Philippes, colonie romaine d'Orient: Recherches d'histoire institutionnelle et sociale* (Athens: École française d'Athènes, 2018), 243–244; Hervé Inglebert, 'How to Define the Citizenship of the City of God: An Augustinian Problem', in *In the Crucible of Empire. The Impact of Roman Citizenship on Greeks, Jews and Christians*, ed. Katell Berthelot and Jonathan Price (Leuven: Peeters, 2019), 293–300, here 285; on Latin equivalents of the Greek *politeuma* and *politeia*, see: Els Rose, 'Reconfiguring Civic Identity and Civic Participation in a Christianizing World: The Case of Sixth-Century Arles', *Civic Identity and Civic Participation in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages*, ed. Cédric Brélaz and Els Rose, Cultural Encounters in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages 37 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2021), 271–294, here 282–283.

[50] Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 160.

[51] Quoted in translation in Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 161; for the Greek text (καταγράφητι, in Latin *ascribere*), see Basil of Caesarea, *Homilia exhortatoria ad sanctum baptisma*, ed. J.-P. Migne, Patrologia Graeca (Paris, 1857), col. 440. On Baptism as a mark of transition for 'each individual', see: Van Engen, 'Christening', 1 and 38.

[52] As Rapp qualifies Baptism as opposed to the life-long commitment of monks: Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 164. See also: Claudia Rapp, 'Monastic Jargon and Citizenship Language in Late Antiquity', *Al-Masāq* 32 (2020): 54–63.

[53] Rose, 'Reconfiguring Civic Identity and Civic Participation', 285–287.

cult through the recitation of fixed elements during the performance of Mass.[54] Among these, the *Pater noster* and the *Creed* were texts each Christian was supposed to know by heart; baptismal candidates (or their sponsors) had to recite these texts in full before undergoing the rite itself. Whether newly converted Christians experienced the rite of Baptism as a 'once in a lifetime' or a life-changing event, bishops in the early Christian period were in any case eager to point to the life-long rights and duties it brought along. Thus, Gregory of Nazianze, in a sermon held in Constantinople in 380, claims that the initiation rite of Baptism 'straightened out the way of life',[55] pre-supposing a life-long commitment.[56] Indeed, the ritual demands made on baptismal candidates *before* their Baptism became life-long reiterative rights and duties once they took upon them their role in the ritual performance of the Christian congregation *after* their initiation.[57] The performance of the Lord's Prayer during Mass was a central part of this role. Caesarius, bishop of Arles (501–542), refers to the division of roles between priest and congregation in his admonition addressed to the baptised faithful[58] to attend Church faithfully and to celebrate Mass with the clergy. For if there are no faithful, Caesarius claims, no one will be able to take their specific role in the ritual. If the congregants choose to be absent during Mass or to leave right after the sermon and before the Eucharist the prayers accompanying Mass will remain incomplete. When there are no congregants to participate in

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[54] Els Rose, '*Plebs sancta ideo meminere debet.* The Role of the People in the Early Medieval Liturgy of Mass', in *Das Christentum im frühen Europa. Diskurse – Tendenzen – Entscheidungen / Christianity in Early Europe: Discourses, Tendencies, and Decisions*, ed. Uta Heil, Millennium Studies (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2019), 459–476.

[55] Van Engen, 'Christening', 3, referring to Gregorius of Nazianze, *Oratio* 40.1.

[56] For Latin examples on Baptism as commitment to 'a new society', see Van Engen, 'Christening', 25. Van Engen refers a.o. to Leo the Great who described Baptism as *societas* and *dignitas*. The practice to postpone Baptism to avoid this life-long commitment, common in late Antiquity (Van Engen, 'Christening', 37), diminished drastically with the rise of infant Baptism in the early Middle Ages.

[57] Cf. Van Engen, 'Christening', 26–27. The concrete examples of prayers in which the congregants participate are taken from Paul De Clerck, *La 'prière universelle' dans les liturgies latines anciennes: témoignages patristiques et textes liturgiques* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1977), a study of the role of the people in the intercession during Mass.

[58] According to Van Engen, 'Caesarius [wrote] sermons largely for a population of the baptised, worried that people had not grasped the import of their christening': Van Engen, 'Christening', 24–25.

the Lord's Prayer during Mass, 'who will shout humbly and truthfully: "Forgive us our debts, as we have also forgiven our debtors"?'[59]

Baptism does not only provide ritual duties and a new way of life, it also provides late antique and early medieval Christians with rights and privileges very close to classic civic rights.[60] The fifth-century Latin bishop Chromatius of Aquileia (c. 400) phrases the Lord's Prayer, given to all Christians to recite communally and individually, as an expression of freedom of speech. According to Chromatius, who discusses this in his baptismal catechesis, freedom of speech is granted *and* assigned to each baptised Christian as one of the core 'rights and duties' coming along with their membership of the Christian congregation. Free speech becomes a privilege of all members of the Christian congregation,[61] which they receive through Baptism and perform collectively through their participation in the cultic ritual throughout their lives.[62]

3   Saints as Very Special Citizens

Among late antique Christian congregants, now redefined as citizens, the saints took the position of 'very special citizens', both in the metaphors of civic language and in the actual topography of the city.[63] Saints were metaphorically imagined as the walls and bulwarks that fortified the community of faithful, in its turn imagined as a city. The urban patron saints, during their lifetime and, especially, through their relics once they had died, offered protection in both a physical (protection from bodily

[59] Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo* 73, ed. Germain Morin, CCSL 103, 306; see Rose, '*Plebs sancta*', 462.

[60] On free speech as a privilege of citizens, see Isin, 'Performative Citizenship', 518.

[61] On the inclusive aim of Baptism to embrace 'all without regard to age or sex, family or education', see Van Engen, 'Christening', 25. Inclusion of those baptised inevitably created 'out-groups' consisting of those not Baptised, see: Van Engen, 'Christening', 41–44. On the exclusive power of civic language Christianised in Leo's fifth-century Rome, see Robert Flierman and Els Rose, 'Banished from the Company of the Good. Christians and Aliens in Fifth-Century Rome', *Al-Masāq* 32 (2020): 64–86.

[62] Rose, 'Christian Reconceptualizations', 667–668.

[63] See the excellent case study of Rome by Maya Maskarinec, *City of Saints: Rebuilding Rome in the Early Middle Ages* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2018).

harm) and a spiritual sense (protection of the soul against evil).[64] The saints were able to offer this protection only, evidently, because they themselves were seen as the embodiment of virtue. These virtues were a mix of classical and Christian (biblical) virtues and included emphatically civic virtues. We have already seen how Chromatius of Aquileia Christianised the civic virtue of free speech through the liturgical performance of prayer, in which each baptised Christian participated. Freedom (*libertas*) is a key civic virtue also in the example of St Martin of Tours, whose *vita* counts as the blueprint of Latin hagiography. During his wanderings through fourth-century Gallia—the narrative device which enables his hagiographer Sulpicius Severus to describe him as an imitator of Christ's miracle working performance in Galilee—Martin of Tours applied his miraculous power (*virtus*) to defending the *libertas* of cities and individuals. Bringing freedom from oppression to the city (*Life of Martin* XVIII.2) by urging an outcast (non-citizen) to speak out freely and publicly to unmask external threats, Martin as a Christian saint embodied the civic virtue of *libertas* which was classically a prerogative of the Roman citizen.[65]

Beyond metaphor, saints also changed the actual topography of the urban space, turning the ancient city 'inside out'.[66] As early Christian basilicas, built on saints' tombs, attracted more and more faithful visitors—citizens from the place where the saint rested as well as pilgrims from elsewhere—new settlements developed *extra muros* where the graveyards were located in Antiquity. Cities themselves were relocated as they were shaped anew around these shrines of the saints. The premises of the saint's basilica replaced the ancient city centre as the heart of the city. As Jerome remarks: *Movetur urbs sedibus suis*.[67] European cities still show this shift of urban centre. In the French city of Tours, to mention one example, the cathedral, originally built in the ancient centre of the Roman metropole, is peripheral in comparison with the basilica of St Martin, the heart of what later became the medieval town.[68] While for certain festivals

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[64] For examples from late Antiquity, see: Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 158–159; from the medieval period, see: Els Rose, 'Remembered, Blessed, and Praised: Immaterial Relics in Radbod of Utrecht's *Miracle Story of St Martin*', in *Connecting People*, ed. Albrecht Diem, Mayke de Jong, and Irene van Renswoude (forthcoming).

[65] TLL s.v. *libertas*; Rose, 'Christian Conceptualizations', 694–697.

[66] Latham, 'Ritual and the Christianization of Urban Space', 694.

[67] Jerome, *Epistula* 107, as referred to by Baldovin, 'Worship in Urban Life', 66.

[68] Rapp, 'City and Citizenship', 159; Rose, 'Christian Reconceptualizations', 659.

the congregation still gathered in the fourth-century cathedral located in Tours' ancient centre, the commemorative festivals of the saint were celebrated in St Martin's late fifth-century basilica.[69] Due to the liturgical activity that became the heart of such new city centres, the saint became a physical *locus* of citizenship as performance.

4   The *Civitas* Transformed

The transformation of city and citizen through the performance of cultic rituals contributed to a transfiguration of citizenship as well as to a rewriting of the *civitas* and of all those participating in the civic community and its civic life. The power inherent in this merge of *civitas* and Church when it was translated to a context of public prayer and worship is evident from the frequent exhortations of late antique bishops to celebrate worship in Church, rather than praying in the private circle of the household. John Chrysostom, again, offers a most poignant example when he presents the Church and its cultic practice *in terms* of *civitas*:

> Here in church you have something more [than when you pray at home]. Here you have the oneness of mind, the unison of voices, the common bond of love, and the prayers of the priests.[70]

The common bond of love, so eloquently identified by Sam Ottewil-Soulsby as the *locus* where *civitas* happened, is recognised by Chrysostom in the ecclesiastical congregation and in the ritual of its communal prayer. This performative and participative community of the Christian congregation is now the bond of love, which for ancient authors up until Augustine

[69] For a late antique list of the division of liturgical feasts over the cathedral of Tours and the basilica of St Martin, see: Gregory of Tours, *Historiae*, X.31, ed. by Bruno Krusch and Wilhelm Levison, MGH SRM 1.1 (Hannover: Hahn, 1951), 529–530. On the mutual influence of cathedral liturgical customs within the city and the traditions developing within monasteries outside the city in the early Christian period, see Gerard Rouwhorst, 'The Formation of Christian Liturgical Prayer Tradition in the Fourth and Fifth Centuries in a Predominantly Urban Environment', in *Prayer and the Ancient City. Influences of Urban Space*, ed. Maik Patzelt, Jörg Rüpke, and Annette Weissenrieder (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2021), 77–94, here 84–86.

[70] John Chrysostom, *De incomprehensibili natura dei* 3.34, ed. by Jean Daniélou and Robert Flacelière, *Sur l'incompréhensibilité de Dieu*, SChr 28 and 28a (Paris: Cerf, 1951), 194–197. Quoted by Latham, 'Ritual and the Christianization of Urban Space', 691.

was one of the core elements of what made a community a *civitas*.[71] By transferring *civitas* qualities to the Christian cult-place and its visitors, Chrysostom defines the Christian ritual and its participants *in terms of* citizenship.

The Latin liturgy of the medieval Church continued this expression of citizenship in performative and participatory terms. In medieval liturgical rites and texts, the perspective is not only on the Christian *peregrini* finding their way to the heavenly city through their participation in communal prayer and sacrifice. In twelfth-century rites of Palm Sunday, commemorating Christ's Entry in Jerusalem, and in texts such as the famous hymn *Urbs beata Jerusalem*, central in the celebration of Church Dedication, the movement is not so much of the Christians heading for the heavenly city, but of Jerusalem *descending from heaven* (cf. Revelations 21:2): *nova veniens e caelo*.[72] The ritual performance of the Christian liturgy presents itself as a possible avenue for further research into the impact of the language of *civitas* on medieval culture.[73] As the example of *Urbs beata Jerusalem* indicates, the daily, weekly, and annual cycles through which Christian congregants celebrated their feasts, fasts, and commemorations transformed the faithful into a community of citizens. This community celebrated not only, eschatologically, the celestial city yet to come, but a transformed *civitas* in which they here and now, individually and communally, performed their citizenship.

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[71] See Ottewil-Soulsby's contribution to this volume.

[72] Carolyn Marino Malone, 'Architecture as Evidence for Liturgical Performance', in *Understanding Medieval Liturgy: Essays in Interpretation*, ed. Hellen Gittos and Sarah Hamilton (Burlington: Ashgate, 2016), 207–237, here 225–237; on *Urbs beata Jerusalem* 235–236. See also Megan Welton's remarks on Ambrose's *De apologia prophetae David* in her contribution to this volume.

[73] See above, fn. 53. I aim to continue this avenue in my monograph-in-preparation Els Rose, *Ritual Performance and the Discourse of Citizenship in Medieval Latin Liturgy* (New York: Routledge, forthcoming).

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