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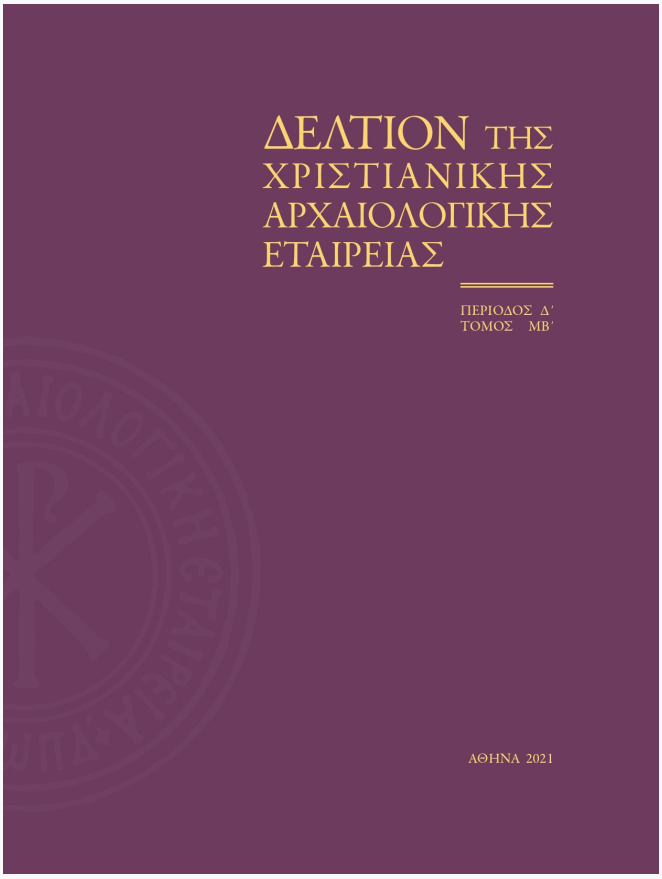

«Ελληνικές αναφορές» στη δημώδη παρωδία Το ταξίδι του Καρλομάγνου στην Ιερουσαλήμ και την Κωνσταντινούπολη

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A "GREEK WHISPERS" PARODY IN THE VERNACULAR *VOYAGE OF CHARLEMAGNE TO JERUSALEM AND CONSTANTINOPLE*

Ξεκινώντας από την ανάλυση μιας περίεργης περιγραφής της μεσαίας και της ανώτερης ζώνης μιας βυζαντινής εκκλησίας, στην οποία συμπεριλαμβάνονται σκηνές του Δωδεκαόρτου, στο παλαιογαλλικό ποίημα του 12ου αιώνα Ταξίδι του Καρλομάγνου στην Ιερουσαλήμ και την Κωνσταντινούπολη, *διερευνώνται οι δεσμοί του με τις μεσαιωνικές λατινικές πηγές έμπνευσής του και με το «Descriptio qualiter» που γράφτηκε στο αββαείο του Saint-Denis, εστιάζοντας στη χρήση της κληρονομιάς της Ύστερης Αρχαιότητας σε αφηγήσεις του 11ου και του 12ου αιώνα, γεγονότα της καρολίγγειας περιόδου. Η σύγχυση ανάμεσα στο Βυζάντιο και την Αρχαιότητα είναι η πολιτιστική αντανάκλαση μιας ευρύτερης πνευματικής στάσης συνδεδεμένης με τις ιδέες της «translatio imperii» και της «translatio studii».*

Starting with an analysis of a curious description of a Byzantine church's middle and upper registers, including the Dodekaorton painted scenes, in the 12th-century Old French poem Voyage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople, *the present study explores this parody's links with its Medieval Latin sources of inspiration –and with the "Descriptio qualiter" written in the abbey of Saint-Denis in particular–, focusing on the use of late antique heritage in 11th and 12th century narratives about events happening during Carolingian times. The confusion between Byzantium and Antiquity is a cultural reflection of a wider mindset, linked with the ideas of "translatio imperii" and "translatio studii".*

Λέξεις κλειδιά

12ος αιώνας, αυτοκράτορας Καρλομάγνος, Κωνσταντινούπολη, Ιερουσαλήμ, εικονογραφικό πρόγραμμα, παλαιά γαλλική λογοτεχνία, μεσαιωνικά λατινικά χρονικά, ιστορία της τέχνης, αναχρονισμός, Αρχαιότητα.

Keywords

12th century; Emperor Charlemagne; Constantinople; Jerusalem; iconographic programme; Old French literature; Medieval Latin chronicles; art history; anachronisms; Antiquity.

The Old French *Voyage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople*, sometimes referred to as *Pilgrimage of Charlemagne*...[1], dates back to the second half of the 12th century and includes a short description of the painted decoration of an imaginary Byzantine church in Jerusalem. In this parody poem written in Anglo-Norman dialect, Charlemagne enters a marble church where God Himself had celebrated mass before the Apostles. He sits on their chairs accompanied by the Twelve Peers of France and contemplates the church's splendour:

VIII *Entrat en un muster de marbre peint a volte:*
La ens ad un alter de saincte Paternostre
Deus i chantat [*la*] *messe, si firent les apostle,*
E les .xii. chaëres i sunt tutes uncore;
La treezime est en mi ben seëlee e close.

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Karlemaine i entrat, ben out al queor grant joie.
Cum il vit la chaëre, icele part s'i aprocet;
Li emperere s'asist, un petit se reposet,
Li .xii. pers as altres envirunt e en coste.
Ainz n'i sist hume ne unkes pus uncore.

IX *Mult fu let Karlemaine de cele grant bealté:*
Vit de cleres colurs li muster (de)peinturez,
De martirs e de virg(in)es et de grant maiestez,
E les curs de la lune et les festes anuels,
E les lavacres curre et les peisons par mer. [...][1].

In a one-page note published at the end of the 19th century, L. Clédat argued that the two images from the last verse of the quotation (the *lavacres* who *corre* and the *peissons par mer*) should be read in reference to the zodiac[2]. If so, they may in turn relate to the iconography of a mosaic floor. It is therefore surprising that the Anglo-Norman text describes in four verses the entire decoration of a Byzantine church. Since among the paintings were "martyrs and virgins and great majestic figures" (*de martirs et de virgines et de grant majestez*), this explains well the decoration of lower and middle registers. But there are also "the annual feasts" (*les festes annuels*). This surprising mention of the annual feasts among the paintings of this make-believe church refers to the Dodekaorton in the upper registers of Orthodox churches. Consequently, the Anglo-Norman anonymous author was familiar with Byzantine iconography.

This detail should be compared with other cases where the Byzantine influence left its mark in the West. The odd iconography of the Saint John the Baptist Chapel of the Chartusian monastery of Liget (Indre-et-Loire, France, turn of the 13th century) also implies a certain degree of familiarity with Byzantine art. The two key aspects that need to be addressed are the emphasis on the same Great Feasts and the presence of an inaccurately rendered Dormition of the Theotokos in the Liget paintings. There are many examples of this type. A partial inventory was made by A. Courtillé, who dealt with the murals from Le Puy, Lavaudieu, Brioude, Berzé-la-ville, as well as with the Deesis from Saint-Sernin of Toulouse[3]. Nevertheless, reanalysing these paintings would not get the present study very far. The Dodekaorton reference already implies that the anonymous author was familiar with Byzantine art, therefore making a list of paintings to revalidate the same familiarity would be redundant. What is more interesting is that these influences never form a coherent programme similar to the Byzantine one. They are isolated features, removed from their contexts and presented autonomously.

The same thing happened to the Greek words quoted in Old French literary texts. They are fragmentary, approximated, and misunderstood. The early 12th century story of *Floire and Blancheflor*, for instance, is set in the East, so the author uses made-up Greek words. At one point he writes *casimera vasileo*, perhaps a salutation, followed by the answer *sertis calo*. At another time he says *o zeos offendam calo / salva tuto vassilio*[4]. All these words sound like Greek, but present themselves as a sort of Chinese whispers. Westerners did not know much about Greek language and culture[5], but then the same may be said about the transcription of a French Creed and a Latin Pater Noster in a Byzantine manuscript after 1204[6], or about the lists of Latin errors circulating in the Greek monastic milieu[7]. However, the Western

[1] A. Corbellari (ed.), *L'Épopée pour rire: "Le Voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople" et "Audigier"*, Paris 2017, 136 (v. 113-127).

[2] L. Clédat, "Le vers 127 du Pèlerinage de Charlemagne", *Revue de philologie française et provençale* 4 (1890), 177. Previously, E. Koschwitz, one of the first editors of the text (*Sechs Bearbeitungen des altfranzösischen Gedichts von Karls des Grossen Reise nach Jerusalem und Constantinopel*, herausgegeben von Dr Eduard Koschwitz, Heilbronn, Henninger, 1879) (one of the first editors of the text) imagined that there was a lacuna in between *lavacres* and *peissons*.

[3] A. Courtillé, "Influences byzantines dans quelques décors peints de la France romane", *Hortus artium medievalium* 4 (1998), 85-97.

[4] For a linguistic analysis of these phrases and several others, see J. Psichari, "Le *Roman de Florimont*. Contribution à l'histoire littéraire. Étude des mots grecs dans ce roman", *Études romanes dédiées à Gaston Paris, le 29 décembre 1890*, Paris 1891, 507-550.

[5] P. Boulhol, *Grec langaige n'est pas doulz au françois: Étude et enseignement du grec dans la France ancienne*, Aix-en-Provence 2014. Cf. P. Boulhol, *La connaissance de la langue grecque dans la France médiévale VI^e-XV^e s.*, Aix-en-Provence 2008.

[6] W. J. Aerts, "The 'Symbolon' and the 'Pater Noster' in Greek, Latin and Old French", *East and West in the Crusader States. Context – Contacts – Confrontations*, eds K. Cigaar – A. Davids – H. Teule, Leuven – Paris 1996, 153-168. R. Distilo, "Fra latino e romaico. Per un Credo 'francese' del Duecento", *Kata Latinon. Prove di filologia greco-romanza*, ed. R. Distilo, Rome 1990, 13-41.

[7] J. Darrouzès, "Le mémoire de Constantin Stilbès contre les Latins",

game of "Greek whispers" had a point. There was a certain logic behind it. And this is where the isolated Greek features in the art and literature of the French-speaking lands become stimulating, as similar features appear in the Anglo-Norman poem. I believe that they are much more interesting to present.

Even though matters were never clear, it was long believed that the vernacular parody relates to a Latin text written in the Parisian abbey of Saint-Denis, the *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquisgrani detulerit*, but the latter does not have any comical undertones and simply tells the story of a transfer of relics from Constantinople to Aachen and later to Saint-Denis[8]. In this (serious) story, Charlemagne receives Hebrew and Greek letters from the patriarch of Jerusalem and the emperor of Constantinople (who had a vision of Charlemagne in a dream). The Orientals ask for help. Charlemagne gathers his armies, has an encounter with a speaking bird in an enchanted forest, and fights the Saracens in Jerusalem, where he reinstates the Patriarch. He then proceeds to Constantinople, where the emperor wishes to reward him. Charlemagne does not accept any gifts; instead he wishes to take to France some relics of the Passion discovered by Saint Helena, apparently buried in secret. Charlemagne brings the relics to Aachen. In an appendix to the text, Charles the Bald translates some of the relics to Saint-Denis[9].

I have already analysed the Greek and Hebrew letters of the *Descriptio qualiter*[10]. The transliteration of *voces magicae* and rudiments of spoken Greek is coupled with the possible misreading of a real 9th-century Byzantine imperial letter on papyrus. This means that the Saint-Denis monks used the same artifices as the already mentioned "Greek whispers" typical of the Old French literary tradition, in which misunderstood Greek words were used as an effect of reality. I believe that the Anglo-Norman parody mocks the fake Greek features of the *Descriptio qualiter*, with the use of new "Greek whispers", carefully selected. Research has tried to explain the Byzantine descriptions of this text in connection with the Latin sources telling the story of the Third Crusade, but I believe that a better explanation may be provided by a series of comparisons with the iconography of the stainless windows of the abbey church of Saint Denis (Paris), which reinterpret ancient themes much in the same manner in which the Anglo-Norman text used ancient objects and images in its descriptions, probably inspired by a synthronon and a votive depiction of a plough-chariot. Yet, first of all one should be familiarized with the Anglo-Norman poem's storyline.

The Anglo-Norman poem, a parodic take on the French

As the story goes, Charlemagne returns from Saint-Denis, proud of his crown and sword, and asks his wife if she knows a better man to wear such implements. She implies that such a man is *Hugun le fort* of Constantinople. Charlemagne summons his barons and the Twelve Peers of France, leaving for the Holy Land. No explanation is given as to why the Holy Land and not Constantinople, but it is safe to assume that the public was already familiar with the Saint-Denis Latin legend of Charlemagne's voyage to the East, where Charlemagne first stays in Jerusalem.

Nothing is mentioned about the events happening during the trip. Instead, when in Jerusalem, Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers enter the church of *Paternostre* (Our Father), with whose iconography we are already familiar. They sit on the chairs whereupon the Lord and the Apostles sat themselves. For a comical effect, a Jew sees

REB 21 (1963), 50-100. Cf. T. M. Kolbaba, *The Byzantine Lists. Errors of the Latins*, Chicago 2000.

[8] For the wider context leading to the fabrication of these legends, see e.g. M. Gabriele, *An Empire of Memory. The Legend of Charlemagne, the Franks, and Jerusalem before the First Crusade*, Oxford 2011. Cf. A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World. Charlemagne and the Construction of Imperial Authority, 800-1229*, Ithaca 2013 (chapter 6 in particular, as it deals with the *Descriptio* and with the Anglo-Norman poem).

[9] For the links of the actual Charlemagne with Constantinople and Jerusalem, see D. Bahat, "The Physical Infrastructure", *The History of Jerusalem: The Early Muslim Period (638-1099)*, eds J. Prawer – H. Ben-Shammai, Jerusalem 1996, 38-100. M. Gil, "The Political History of Jerusalem", *ibid.*, 1-37. M. F. Auzépy, "State of Emergency (700-850)", *The Cambridge History of the Byzantine Empire c. 500-1492*, ed. J. Shepard, Cambridge 2009, 249-291. M. McCormick, *Charlemagne's Survey of the Holy Land: Wealth, Personnel, and Buildings of a Mediterranean Church between Antiquity and the Middle Age*, Washington, D. C. 2011.

[10] V. Agrigoroaei, "Magic and Papyri in the Latin Voyage of Charlemagne to the East", *Transylvanian Review* 29/1 (2020), 9-39.

them, mistakes their identities, and runs in awe to the patriarch demanding to be baptized. The Jerusalem clergy, headed by the patriarch, tells Charlemagne that nobody was allowed to be seated therein without permission, but they instantly concede to Charlemagne's demand for relics: the French king is given the arm of Saint Simeon, the head of Saint Lazarus, the blood of Saint Stephen, one of the nails of the Cross, the chalice from which the Lord drank and the knife that He used during the Last Supper, the beard and the hair of Saint Peter, as well as the milk and gown of Virgin Mary. In return Charlemagne offers a reliquary and stays four months, building a church in the honour of the Virgin.

Next, the French arrive before the walls of the Byzantine capital. Unable to identify the Greek monarch, they ask a local knight, who points towards a tent in the fields. They find the emperor passing his time ploughing the land with a golden chariot drawn by oxen. He drives them with a golden stick, all the while sitting on a golden throne, with cushions, keeping his feet on a silver footstool, protected from the sun by a hat and gloves, as well as by four golden pillars supporting a canopy. Hugh invites the French to stay in his lands for a year if they wish to. They dine in a revolving palace, moved by the winds. Olivier falls in love with the Greek monarch's daughter, and at night Hugh invites them to a room where thirteen beds are already prepared. The French hang out joking and making bets. Charlemagne himself encourages the Peers to make a contest of sorts. Each of them makes a *gab*, that is, a joking bet[11], and the *gabs* are outrageously directed at the Greek monarch. Olivier says for instance that if he held in his arms the daughter of Hugh, only one night, the adventure of Hercules with the fifty daughters of Thestius would no longer seem prodigious to anyone. He would surpass the mythological hero in making love at least a hundred times in a row.

This *gab* and all the other ones are faithfully reported to Hugh, who is terribly offended. Under these circumstances, Charlemagne relies on the power of their Jerusalem relics. The knights prostrate themselves and pray fervently to God to save them from Hugh's wrath. An angel descends with the promise that the Lord will protect them, and the Peers confidently accomplish their *gabs*. Olivier is the first one to accomplish his bet, making love to Hugh's daughter. William son of Aimery hurls a huge metal ball and breaks down forty yards of the palace walls. Bertrand brings out the river of floods to the whole country. Finally, Charlemagne has pity on the Greek monarch and begs God to stop the disaster. The water returns to its river bed. Hugh wishes to become the vassal of Charlemagne and they celebrate peace with a feast.

The French are finally preparing to leave Constantinople. Hugh offers them treasures, but the French refuse. This constitutes proof that the Anglo-Norman *Voyage* is linked to the Latin *Descriptio qualiter*, because in both stories Charlemagne and his men do not wish to take anything from the Byzantine emperor. Moreover, Hugh's daughter wants to be with Olivier, but the ungrateful knight says bluntly that he must follow Charlemagne to France and cannot take her with him. This is of course a parody of the archetypal story of the Saracen princess in love with the Christian hero. Morality: it was thus that Charlemagne conquered a whole empire without fighting a single battle.

I am of the opinion that this text is a parody, even though much ink has been spilled concerning its ambiguous nature. The question of relics is central, as the second part of the Anglo-Norman text makes use of them in ambiguous contexts. As such, these relics fascinated most researchers and several theories concerning their use have been proposed, especially since they are not always the same in the Latin and Anglo-Norman texts[12]. It is safe to assume that a medieval writer would not dare make a mockery of the relics themselves, only of their use, so all the proposed hypotheses are valid at the

[11] Entire books have been written about this curious word. See for this e.g. M. Bonafin, *La tradizione del "Voyage de Charlemagne" e il "gabbo"*, Alessandria 1990. J. L. Grigsby, *The Gab as a Latent Genre in Medieval French Literature: Drinking and Boasting in the Middle Ages*, Cambridge 2000.

[12] Almost all studies of the Anglo-Norman poem deal with the question of relics. For studies where the analysis of relics is central, see e.g. A. Latowsky, "Charlemagne as pilgrim? Requests for relics in the *Descriptio qualiter* and the Voyage of Charlemagne", *The Legend of Charlemagne in the Middle Ages: Power, Faith and Crusade*, eds M. Gabriele – J. Stuckey, New York 2008, 151-167. M. Le Person, "Le pouvoir merveilleux, surnaturel et sacré des reliques de la Passion dans le 'Petit cycle des reliques'" (M. Possamaï-Pérez – J.-R. Valette (eds), *Le voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople*, *La destruction de Rome* et *Fierabras*)", *Chanter de geste. L'art épique et son rayonnement. Hommage à Jean-Claude Vallecalle*, Paris 2013, 221-240.

same time, as it is impossible to disprove any of them. Nevertheless, this ambiguous nature was also translated into the meaning ascribed to the poem as a whole, with two main interpretations: less parodic, therefore continental; or plainly parodic, and therefore originating in England[13]. Yet, a parody is not necessarily a parody of a given text. It could be a parody of an entire tradition, as it was well remarked that some aspects of the mockery relate to the *Chanson de Roland*[14]. And it has been duly noted that the story of the Jew mistaking Charlemagne and the Twelve Peers for Christ and the Twelve Apostles ridicules an actual legend from the abbey of Saint-Denis, first recorded by abbot Suger, who told the tale of a leper witnessing the consecration of the church by Christ, saints Peter, Paul, Denys and the latter's two companions in the times of king Dagobert (636 AD)[15].

This means that there is no need to look for political implications as key aspects in the creation of the parody, as the text itself does not contain evident political references. Also, it would be a gross exaggeration to imply that Charlemagne was perceived in a negative way in England on account of his preeminent status in Capetian propaganda[16]. When we leave aside the Plantagenet-Capetian rivalry, what we are left with is a sort of plain mockery and nothing else. This type of mockery is not unusual among the wider spectrum of Anglo-Norman literary creations (or that of the other dialects of French language)[17]. Why not imagine the poem as it is –Anglo-Norman and a parody– and as such a by-product of the Norman mockery of the pure-bred French, since French literature circulated well on both sides of the Channel and the Charlemagne legends were of course well known in England[18]? I do not dismiss the political uses of this

[13] For the first point of view, see Th. Heinermann, "Zeit und Sinn der Karlsreise", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 56 (1936), 497-562, for whom the poem also had to be of continental origin, because he found hidden references and meaning, therefore the poem could not be a basic parody. Cf. M. Gosman, "La propagande politique dans *Le voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople*", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 102/1-2 (1986), 53-66. Others tried to date the poem after the canonization of Charlemagne in 1166: J. Horrent, "La chanson du *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* et la réalité historique contemporaine", *Mélanges de langue et de littérature du Moyen Âge et de la Renaissance offerts à Jean Frappier, professeur à la Sorbonne, par ses collègues, ses élèves et ses amis*, eds J. Ch. Payen – C. Régnier, 1, Geneva 1970, 411-417. J.-L. Picherit regarded the poem's humour as Parisian and consequently believed that it did not ridicule the "emblems of belief"; *The Journey of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople / Le voyage de Charlemagne à Jerusalem et à Constantinople*, ed., transl. J.-L. Picherit, Birmingham 1984, iv. Cf. an answer to this observation in M. Burrell, "The Voyage of Charlemagne: cultural transmission or cultural transgression?", *Parergon* 7 (1989), 47-53. Cf. S. Sturm, "The stature of Charlemagne in the Pèlerinage", *Studies in Philology* 71/1 (1974), 1-18, who believed that the poem was a parody.

[14] D. D. R. Owen, "Voyage de Charlemagne and Chanson de Roland", *Studi francesi* 33/3 (1967), 168-172.

[15] A. Adler, "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* in New Light on Saint-Denis", *Speculum* 22/4 (1947), 550-561, esp. 555-556, who uses the analysis of Ch. J. Liebmann, "La consécration légendaire de la Basilique de Saint-Denis", *Le Moyen Âge* 45 (1935), 252-264 for the Saint-Denis legend. Cf. A. Lombard-Jourdan, "La légende de la consécration par le Christ de la basilique mérovingienne de Saint-Denis et de la guérison du lépreux", *Bulletin Monumental* 143/3 (1985), 237-269 for a more recent point of view for the same legend. For a serious interpretation of the Anglo-Norman parody scene, willing to accept a non-humorous attitude of the anonymous poet, see A. Corbellari, "Un problème de 'littérature française générale'. La lecture de la Bible en clé nationale", *Poétique* 155 (2008), 283-294, esp. 289-290.

[16] There are Anglo-Norman versions of the *Pseudo-Turpin* text, abundantly mentioning the story of Charlemagne's voyage in the Orient, as well as a Middle English translation of it, so there was no political battle around this *Voyage*.

[17] There are two 12th-century romances written by Hue de Rotelande which ridicule the early chivalric or Antiquity romances. There were also heroic-comic stories, such as *Audigier*, a text often compared with the Anglo-Norman *Voyage of Charlemagne*.

[18] Cf. e.g. U. T. Holmes, Jr., "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne* and William of Malmesbury", *Symposium* 1 (1946-1947), 75-81. Further proof that the poem is a mockery of some sorts lay in its folkloric structure and typology; M. Bonafin, "Fiaba e chanson de geste. Note in margine a una lettura del Voyage de Charlemagne", *Medioevo romanzo* 9 (1984), 3-16. Cf. J. D. Niles, "On the logic of *Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*", *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen* 81/2 (1980), 208-216. In its often noted ironic undertones; J. H. Caulkins, "Narrative interventions: the key to the jest of the Pelerinage de Charlemagne", *Études de philologie romane et d'histoire littéraire offertes à Jules Horrent à l'occasion de son soixantième anniversaire*, eds J.-M. D'Heur – N. Cherubini, Liège 1980, 47-55. Cf. C. Gänssle-Pfeuffer, "Majestez und vertut in der Karlsreise. Zur Problematik der Deutung der Dichtung", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 83/3-4 (1967), 257-267. H.-J. Neuschäfer, "Le voyage de Charlemagne en Orient als Parodie der Chanson de geste. Untersuchungen zur Epenparodie im Mittelalter (I)", *Romanistiches Jahrbuch* 10 (1959), 78-102. Or in the more than one comic levels;

poem, but this value could be added to the text by its readers, especially if these readers were members of the Plantagenet household or their vassals.

In the mockery, the author used actual knowledge of the Byzantine lands, just as the monks of Saint-Denis abbey used actual old texts in their *Descriptio qualiter* mystification[19], but this knowledge must have been either poor or inconsequential, so the vernacular *Voyage of Charlemagne* directed its attention elsewhere, to other details. The plot led toward the *chanson de geste* tradition, where actual historical features were welcome but non necessary. This is why I am not tempted to follow previous research, which tried to identify real historical facts. Many books about the literary or historical image of Constantinople have been written already, but it is unsafe to compare the image of Constantinople as a city or Byzantine culture in general with their odd reflections in this parody[20].

My interest does not lie in the comparison between the vernacular parody and contemporary literary texts. Since it stands aside from the tradition of (serious) descriptions of the Byzantine Empire and the city of Constantinople, the Anglo-Norman *Voyage* needs to be compared to the historical sources proper, and not to their distortions. There is therefore something of interest to be found in historical texts containing descriptions of Constantinople, even though I will not try to identify real historical events or buildings.

The French king in Constantinople seen by John Kinnamos and Odo of Deuil

Several early researchers into the Anglo-Norman poem argued that it was written shortly after the Second Crusade, one of the key arguments in this interpretation being its links with Saint-Denis, which lead either to the belief that a Parisian clerk could have written it[21], or that an Englishman could have mocked the French of Saint-Denis. The poem has been compared to all sorts of historical texts, both Greek and Latin. I will choose two of them, as they seem to be the most interesting ones, starting with a quotation from the account of John Kinnamos (second half of the 12th century), as it constitutes an exact opposite of the Anglo-Norman poem's plot:

> *ἐπειδή τε εἴσω τῶν ἀνακτόρων ἦδη ἐγένετο ἔνθα βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τοῦ μετεώρου καθῆστο, χθαμαλή τις αὐτῷ ἐκομίζετο ἕδρα ἣν σελλίον ῥωμαΐζοντες ὀνομάζουσιν ἄνθρωποι, ἐφ' ἧς καθιζήσας τὰ εἰκότα τε εἰπὼν καὶ ἀκούσας τότε μὲν ἐς τὸ πρὸ τοῦ περιβόλου ἀπηλλάττετο προάστειον, ὃ Φιλοπάτιον καθάπερ ἤδη ἔφην ὠνόμασται τοῖς πολλοῖς, ἐνταῦθα καταχθησόμενος ὀλίγῳ δὲ ὕστερον καὶ ἐς τὰ πρὸς νότον τῆς πόλεως σὺν τῷ βασιλεῖ ἦλθεν ἀνάκτορα,*

S. Céron, "Un 'gap' épique: Le pèlerinage de Charlemagne", *Medioevo romanzo* 11 (1986), 175-191.

[19] Agrigoroaei, "Magic and Papyrit", op.cit. (n. 10), 9-39.

[20] K. N. Ciggaar's monograph on the image of Constantinople cannot help us here, as it deals with actual travellers; K. N. Ciggaar, *Western Travellers to Constantinople. The West and Byzantium. 962-1204: Cultural and Political Relations*, Leiden 1996. The image of Constantinople in Old French 12th-13th century literature has also been dealt with extensively by R. Devereaux, but her study cannot explain the precise situation of the Anglo-Norman *Voyage*, because this text stands aside from tradition; R. Devereaux, *Constantinople and the West in Medieval French Literature: Renewal and Utopia*, Cambridge – Rochester, NY 2012. The same image in the 12th-14th century epic poems has been analysed by others, sometimes in connection with Latin accounts; F. Suard, "Constantinople dans la littérature épique française jusqu'au XIVe siècle", *Sauver Byzance de la barbarie du monde. Gargnano del Garda (14-17 maggio 2003)*, eds L. Nissim – S. Riva, Milan 2004, 91-112. Cf. E. Boeck, "Fantasy, Supremacy, Domes, and Dames: Charlemagne Goes to Constantinople", *Byzantium in Dialogue with the Mediterranean. History and Heritage*, eds D. Slootjes – M. Verhoeven, Leiden 2019, 142-161. J.-M. Sansterre, "Percevoir ou imaginer un espace urbain et suburbain extraordinaire aux XIe-XIIe siècles: Constantinople d'après quelques textes occidentaux", *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 89/2 (2011), 701-709. H. Legros, "Constantinople: la *mirable* cité", *Plaist vos oïr boneançon vallant? Mélanges offerts à François Suard*, eds D. Boutet – M.-M. Castellani – F. Ferrand – A. Petit, 1, Villeneuve d'Ascq 1999, 527-536. J.-H. Grisward, "Paris, Jérusalem, Constantinople dans le *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*: trois villes, trois fonctions", *Jérusalem, Rome, Constantinople, l'image et le mythe de la ville*, ed. D. Poirion, Paris 1986, 75-82. There are also studies about Byzantium in general, but all of them may lead to dangerous assumptions based on a distorted reality, as literary texts never present a uniform perspective. Cf. e.g. F. Wolfzettel, "Byzanz im lateinisch-französischen Mittelalter oder Literaturgeschichte der Bemächtigung", *Das Mittelalter* 6 (2001), 83-108.

[21] R. C. Bates, "*Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*: A Baroque Epic", *Yale Romanic Studies* 18 (1941), 1-47, esp. 21.

ἱστορήσων ὅσα τε ἐνταῦθα θαύματος ἄξια καὶ τοῖς ἐπὶ τὸν τῆδε νεὼν ἐντευξόμενος ἱεροῖς φημὶ δὴ ὅσα τῷ σωτηρίῳ Χριστοῦ πελάσαντα σώματι Χριστιανοῖς ἐστι φυλακτήρια. τοσαῦτα ἐν Βυζαντίῳ τελέσας ὅρκοις τε τὰ πιστὰ δοὺς ἥ μὴν φίλος διὰ βίου καὶ σύμμαχος βασιλεῖ ἔσεσθαι, ἐπὶ τὴν Ἀσίαν διέβη καὶ αὐτός[22].

The French king arrives in Constantinople but he has to sit on a lower chair during his meeting with the Byzantine emperor in the imperial palace, he is given the same quarters as those given to Conrad of Germany before him, the Byzantine emperor takes him on a visit to the southern part of the city in order to worship the relics of the Passion, and he swears fealty to Manuel Komnenos before finally crossing into Asia.

The encounter is differently described by the Hellenophobe chronicler and monk Odo of Deuil. There is no mention of a "flat seat" (*χθαμαλή ἕδρα*) called *sella* or *sollium* (*σελλίον*) by "those who speak the Roman language" (*ῥωμαΐζοντες*), in comparison with the higher and more important imperial throne of Manuel. In this Latin account, the emperor and the French king are equals in everything during the encounter in the imperial palace (stature, age, and size or height of their seats), except for their clothes and habits[23]. But there are other interesting details that need to be compared as well. We know from Kinnamos that when the meeting was over, Louis retired (*ἀπηλλάττετο*) to the Philopation (*ὃ Φιλοπάτιον*) suburb (*τὸ προάστειον*), in front of the wall (*πρὸ τοῦ περιβόλου*), where he lingered on for some time until the emperor took him on an official visit in the city. The area is well described by Odo of Deuil. It appears in his description of the Germans approaching Constantinople, when they saw the emperor's summer palaces: a hunting park full of game, encircled by walls, with streams and ponds, with caves and ditches where the animals could take shelter:

Erat ante urbem murorum ambitus spatiosus et speciosus, multimodam venationem includens, conductus etiam aquarum et stanna continens. Inerant etiam quaedam fossa et concava, quae loco nemorum animalibus praebebant latibula. In amenitate illa quedam palatia nimia ambitione fulgebant, que imperatores ad iocunditatem vernorum temporum sibi fundaverant. In hunc, ut verum fatear, deliciarum locum Alemmanus imperator irrupit et, undique pene omnia destruens, Grecorum delicias ipsis intuentibus suis usibus rapuit[24].

Odo therefore implies that the German emperor destroyed this place of extreme beauty and leisure for the Greeks. Unfortunately, no ruin of the palace, park, and gardens remains after the Ottoman conquest and occupation of the city, but its splendour is well accounted for in many Byzantine sources. One could imagine that this may easily be the source of the Palace of the Winds in the Anglo-Norman parody, as the Twelve Peers of Charlemagne provoke a destruction there similar to the one made by the Germans in Odo's account. But it could also be any other Byzantine palace, for the Crusaders saw so many of these buildings that Odo felt compelled to describe Constantinopolitan palaces in general, being equally impressed by their aesthetical and material lushness[25], or any other imaginary palace, for that matter[26],

[22] Ioannis Cinnami, *Epitome rerum ab Ioanne et Alexio Comnenis gestarum*, ed. A. Meineke, Bonn 1836, 83.

[23] *Erant fere coevi et coequales, solis moribus et vestitu dissimiles. Tandem, post amplexus et oscula mutua habita, interius processerunt, ubi positis duobus sedilibus pariter subsederunt. Circumstante autem corona suorum, loquuntur per interpretem*; Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade de Louis VII roi de France*, ed. H. Waquet, Paris 1949, 44.

[24] Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 39.

[25] *Auro depingitur undique variisque coloribus et marmore studioso artificio sternitur area, et nescio quid ei plus conferat pretii vel pulchritudinis, ars subtilis vel pretiosa material*; Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 45. And the French monk speaks also of the imperial palace, located on higher ground, from whence the Greeks could see the destructions made by the Germans: *Imperiale namque palatium et singulare quod muris supereminet urbis, istum sub se habet locum, et inhabitantium in eo fovet aspectum. Tamen, si tale spectaculum Graeco imperatori stuporem attulit vel dolorem, repressit et per suos Alemanni colloquium postulavit*; Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 39.

[26] Early researchers agreed that there was not much point in identifying the Constantinopolitan Revolving Castle with any real building, as it probably owed a lot to Celtic and medieval lore about the sun. Cf. Adler, "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*", op.cit. (n. 15), 558-559. For a different perspective see M. Schlauch, "The palace of Hugon de Constantinople", *Speculum* 7/4 (1932), 500-514, who tried to identify it with a real Constantinopolitan palace (the *Bucoleon*) but had to agree that certain features were evidently Celtic (her study is especially interesting as it compares the Anglo-Norman

maybe symbolical[27], even a Mediterranean one, as recently implied[28]. And the French could see many of these palaces on other occasions. For instance, the French envoys preceding the arrival in the capital of King Louis suffered a lot according to the narrative of Odo of Deuil. Some of them lost their lives and were constantly harassed by the Greeks and Pechenegs, but they went before the emperor and were hosted close to the imperial palace (*iubet nostros accedere propius et subtus se ad pedem palacii hospitari*)[29]. Odo then tried to exonerate their violent actions on account of the Greeks' fault[30].

Moreover, there are precise descriptions that explain curious scenes from the Anglo-Norman parody. Odo also speaks of gardens inside the city walls, where people cultivate all sorts of vegetables with ploughs and mattocks (*infra muros terra vacua est, que aratra patitur et ligones, habens hortos omne genus holerum civibus exhibentes*)[31], thus explaining the story of the Byzantine emperor ploughing his fields. If we follow this interpretation, the Anglo-Norman poem may be a direct parody of Odo of Deuil's narrative, as the story of count Bertrand flooding the city could be linked with the description of the subterranean canals bringing fresh water for the imperial city (*a foris subterranei conductus influunt, qui aquas dulces civitati largiter tribunal*). Next, the French king indeed visited churches and relics guided by the Byzantine emperor, as mentioned by Kinnamos (*rex quoque duce imperatore loca sancta visitavit*), probably the palace of Constantine from Kinnamos' description, where the relics of the Passion where kept (*palatium Constantini, in quo cappella est que sacrosanctis reliquiis honoratur*), and was insistently invited by the emperor to take part in an impressive feast (*et, revertens, cum eo victus precum instantia comedit. Convivium illud sicut gloriosos convivas habuit, sic apparatu mirifico, dapum deliciis, voluptuosis iocorum plausibus, aures et os et oculos satiavit*) echoing the feast from the Anglo-Norman parody. Many French feared this could be a trick of the Byzantine emperor, like in the story from the Anglo-Norman poem, but Louis was fearless (*timebant ibi regi suorum multi. Ipse vero, qui Deo commiserate curam sui, fide et animositate penitus nihil timebat*) and nothing happened. Next happened the feast of St Denis, where the French were invited to participate in the celebration. Several voices also wished to launch an attack and conquer the Byzantine capital, prefiguring somehow the Fourth Crusade, but the French king did not follow suit. All of these

poem with Byzantine medieval romances). For Celtic connections in the Anglo-Norman poem, see the original research of L. Hibbard Loomis, "Observations on the Pèlerinage Charlemagne", *Modern Philology* 25/1 (1927-1928), 331-349. Cf. S. Cigada, "Il tema arturiano del 'Château Tournant', Chaucer e Christine de Pisan", *Studi medievali* 3/2 (1961), 576-606. Sometimes the Celtic links have been greatly exaggerated; see A. E. Lea, "Beyond Boasting: *Tain Bô Cuailnge* and *Le Voyage de Charlemagne*", *Ulidia* 1 (1994) (= *Proceedings of the First international Conference of the Ulster Cycle of Tales, Belfast and Emain Macha, 8-12 April 1994*, Belfast 1994), 107-113. For the Constantinopolitan palace as a 'historical illusion', see E. Walton, "The palace of Hugon: historical illusion and literary reality in the Pèlerinage de Charlemagne", *Les Bonnes Feuilles* (1972), 26-33.

[27] Cf. A. Labbé, "Le Pèlerinage de Charlemagne ou les trois souverainetés" , *L'architecture des palais et des jardins dans les chansons de geste. Essai sur le thème du roi en majesté*, Paris – Geneva 1987, 331-354; cf. A. Labbé, "Nature et artifice dans quelques jardins épiques", *Senefiance* 28 (1990) (= *Vergers et jardins dans l'univers médiéval*, Aix-en-Provence 1990), 177-195.

[28] Sh. Kinoshita, "Le voyage de Charlemagne: Mediterranean palaces in the medieval French imaginary", *Olifant* 25/1-2 (2006), 255-270, who believes that the *Voyage*'s palace represents an insatiable fascination for the other, and that the real opposition is not between the two monarchs, but between the French and the Byzantine Revolving Palace. Cf. L. Zarker Morgan, "La machine infernale: les merveilles mécaniques dans la chanson de geste", *Por s'onor croistre. Mélanges de langue et de littératures médiévales offerts à Pierre Kunstmann*, eds Y. G. Lepage – Ch. Milat, Ottawa 2008, 103-120, for the mechanical fascination in the *chansons de geste*, also dealing with the *Voyage*'s palace; cf. E. Baumgartner, "Le temps des automates", *Le nombre du temps, en hommage à Paul Zumthor*, eds E. Baumgartner – G. Di Stefano – F. Ferrand – S. Lusignan – Ch. Marchello-Nizia – M. Perret, Paris 1988, 15-21. Cf. C. Gaullier-Bougassas, *La Tentation de l'Orient dans le roman médiéval. Sur l'imaginaire de l'Autre*, Paris 2003, 27 for Constantinople and its palace as a projection of urban utopia.

[29] Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 41.

[30] Odo speaks of the Greeks purifying their altars after the Latins celebrated mass in those churches, about the re-baptizing of Latins in the case of a mixed marriage, about the *Filioque* etc. This serves to explain the violence committed by the Latins in the capital and elsewhere [*His enim de causis nostrorum incurrerant odium, exierat namque inter laicos etiam error eorum. Ob hoc iudicabantur non esse Christiani, caedesque illorum ducebant pro nihilo, et a praedis el rapinis difficilius poterant revocari*; Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 42].

[31] Eudes de Deuil, *La croisade*, op.cit. (n. 23), 44-46 (for all the quotations in this paragraph).

details correspond somehow to the Anglo-Norman text, even though direct comparisons should not be made.

We can therefore understand that when the connection between Odo of Deuil's narrative and the Anglo-Norman *Voyage of Charlemagne* was made, researchers started looking for precise identifications of monuments. The church of the *Pater noster* in Jerusalem had to be identified too. Th. Heinermann believed this to be the church on Mount Zion, a key element in the identification with this monument being the testimony of John of Würzburg, who saw there a mural representing Christ and the Apostles seated on couches[32], but in fact this interpretation relies on this church's fame as the church of the Cenacle (the Last Supper Room)[33]. The scene described by the German pilgrim was probably a representation of the Last Judgement, rather common in Eastern iconography, and A. Adler, who followed the interpretation of Th. Heinermann, also had to accept that "the arrangement with chairs complicates the situation by some actual recollection from Jerusalem"[34]. Others believed that they had found the actual church in other places of Jerusalem and drew absurd topographic conclusions from the parody[35], but it is evident from other 12th-century Old French literary descriptions of Constantinople, such as the one admired from a high tower by the protagonist of *Partonopeu de Blois*, that such descriptions are intentionally vague because they are not related to an actual site. In fact, it would be best to return to the old idea of J. Coulet, who believed that the *Pater noster* church was a synthesis of several real churches[36].

The problem is that earlier research read these texts in a political key and the vernacular parody was ascribed to a specific personage's political message, such as Suger or Odo of Deuil[37]. There was a hunger to identify real buildings, actual names of historical figures (such as Nicephorus I for Hugh), or even place-names which led to comical effects in the research proper[38]. This hunger was (and is) nevertheless irrelevant. The evident Gallo-Romance origin of the name Hugh is not unique, as other French names (sometimes names of real French monarchs) were ascribed to old emperors in similar contexts but in other texts[39]. This means that the *Descriptio qualiter* and the Anglo-Norman *Voyage* made use of as much Greek knowledge as their authors saw fit. Sometimes this knowledge was factual, based on actual memories of their fellow travellers from the times of the Crusades; in other cases it

[32] Heinermann, "Zeit und Sinn", op.cit. (n. 13), 529-530.

[33] Cf. M. Verhoeven, "Jerusalem as Palimpsest. The Architectural Footprint of the Crusaders in the Contemporary City", *The Imagined and Real Jerusalem in Art and Architecture*, eds J. Goudeau – M. Verhoeven – W. Weijers, Leiden 2014, 114-135, esp. 124 (for the Crusader aspect of this church).

[34] Adler, "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*", op.cit. (n. 15), 555 note 47. Cf. Heinermann, "Zeit und Sinn", op.cit. (n. 13), 530.

[35] J. Richard, "Sur un passage du Pèlerinage de Charlemagne: le marché de Jérusalem", *Revue belge de philologie et d'histoire* 43/2 (1965), 552-555.

[36] J. Coulet, *Étude sur l'ancien poème français du Voyage de Charlemagne en Orient*, Montpellier 1907, 285-287.

[37] For Adler, "The *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*", op.cit. (n. 15), 552 note 16, "Odon reflects the spirit of St-Denis, but he was protégé of St Bernard and not fully identified with Suger's point of view".

[38] Cf. G. A. Beckmann, "Hugue li forz – zur Genesis einer literarischen Gestalt", *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 81/4 (1971), 289-307, for whom the name "Hugue li forz" was an Old Occitan transformation through several evolutionary stages of the name of Nicephorus I, actual contemporary of Charlemagne ("*Νικηφόρος* > Nuci-/Nicoforus etc. > *N'Uc lo fors > Hugue li Forz"). For the place-names, see Ph. E. Bennett, "*La grant ewe del flum*: toponymy and text in *Le pèlerinage*", *The Editor and the Text*, eds Ph. E. Bennett – G. A. Runnalls, Edinburgh 1990, 125-136, for whom all the occurrences of the word *flum* refer to the Danube, and *la liee* should be read as *l'Alite* (the river Olt). The latter reading was even accepted into the recent edition of A. Corbellari; see *L'Épopée pour rire*, op.cit. (n. 1), 134, v. 103 and its translation on p. 135. The place-name *Laliee* should be read in connection with similar place-names used in texts of the same period, such as *Laliche* from certain versions of the *Roman de Thèbes*; cf. V. Agrigoroaei, "Vinul, grâul si ardelenii lui Faramund. O primă utopie transilvăneană în literatura occidentală: 'Roman de Thèbes', sec. XII", *Studii și materiale de istorie medie* 34 (2016), 363-385, esp. 379.

[39] The prose version of the *Berinus* romance (1350-1370) mentions for instance an emperor of Rome whose name is *Philippus Augustus* (cf. the French king Philippe Auguste), who governs the entire empire after the death of his father Constantine. The author claims that *au temps de cel empereur fu cueilliee la matiere pour quoy j'ay ce livre entrepris, et le mist en escript un cler qui avoit a nom Martiaux*. Linking the *topos* of the lost and found book to an ancient Latin author (Martial) was not something new either; it followed a fashion started by the use of Cornelius Nepos' name in the *Roman de Troie*. It is therefore clear that the curious reference to a French king as the fictitious *Philippus Augustus* (cf. L. H. Rouday, *Étude littéraire de Berinus, roman en prose du XIVe siècle*, MA dissertation, McGill University, Montreal 1970, 58-59) belongs to the same category as Hugh from the Anglo-Norman *Voyage*.

was based on imagination, and most of all drew its inspiration from the stories of the past.

The lost Crusader window of Saint-Denis

The same ambivalent approach to the story of Charlemagne's voyage to the East may be identified in its rather rare visual representations. The lower part of the famous 13th-century Charlemagne window at Chartres has six scenes drawn from the Latin *Descriptio qualiter*: a sanctified Charlemagne receiving the envoys from the East; the vision of Constantine who sees Charlemagne as a warrior of God; Charlemagne battling the Saracens in front of Jerusalem; Charlemagne welcomed by Constantine at the gates of Constantinople; Charlemagne meeting Constantine and receiving the relics; and finally Charlemagne offering the relics to the Aachen chapel[40]. The date of these scenes is rather late compared to the vernacular poem and to the Latin *Descriptio qualiter*, but they represent the evolution of a tradition whose initial stages can be detected in another stained glass window, much earlier (mid-12th century), in the Saint-Denis abbey church.

The Saint-Denis stained glass scenes are nowadays lost. The late 18th-century revolutionary zeal led to the destruction of many of the abbey's works of art, but some of the scenes from the Charlemagne sanctuary window(s)[41] were drawn in the first half of the 18th century and the drawings are kept in a dossier containing the images prepared for Bernard de Montfaucon's 1729 book about the early French kings[42]. Contrary to the Chartres window, where the rest of the stained glass scenes were related to the Rolandian corpus, the Saint-Denis window(s) scenes reinforced the crusader rhetoric of the Latin *Descriptio qualiter*, combining (or comparing) the story of Charlemagne with that of the First Crusade.

As for the scenes of the *Descriptio qualiter*, two of them have already been identified: the arrival of the Eastern envoys to the French court and the meeting of Charlemagne and the Byzantine monarch in Constantinople. Unaware of the precise significance of the scenes, de Montfaucon described them in reverse chronological order[43]. The images were published as *planches XXIV* and *XXV*, inserted between p. 278-279. The preparatory drawings of the fr. 15634 BnF manuscript dossier do not preserve the scene with the Constantinopolitan meeting between the two monarchs, but the arrival of the envoys in Paris appears twice, at f. 29r and f. 107r. Its inscription reads *NANCiI CoN[S]TANTINI AD CAROLV[M] PARISIVS*. As for the Constantinopolitan meeting of *planche XXIV*, its inscriptions reads *IMP[er]ATORES* and *CoNSTaNTiNoPoLiS*[44].

The two scenes were indeed important in the structure of the narrative, as attested by their presence in the Chartres stained glass window dated to the following century, but they alone could not represent the entire plot of the *Descriptio qualiter* narrative. When looking at the literary adaptations of the same story, it is worth noting that the text of the two letters received by Charlemagne is generally suppressed in most adaptations, while the vision is sometimes preserved, because it was a key element in the narrative, therefore explaining its appearance in the Chartres window[45]. In such a case,

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[40] C. Maines, "The Charlemagne Window at Chartres Cathedral: New Considerations on Text and Image", *Speculum* 52/4 (1977), 801-823, esp. 805-807.

[41] Cf. E. A. R. Brown – M. W. Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window of the Abbey of Saint-Denis: *Praeteritorum Enim Recordatio Futurorum est Exhibitio*", *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986), 1-40, esp. 6, who do not know where to place these scenes, but imagine that the window(s) must have been located in one of the axial chapels of the deambulatory.

[42] The drawings are currently preserved in the manuscript fr. 15634 of the BnF in Paris, dated before 1729 and known as *"Dessins", notes "et gravures pour les Monumens de la Monarchie françoise" de Bernard de Montfaucon.*

[43] *Dans la planche d'après se voit Charlemagne donnant la main à Constantin Empereur d'Orient, qui se tient à une porte de Constantinople.* [...] *La Planche qui suit represente Charlemagne assis, recevant trois Ambassadeurs de l'Empereur Constantin.* [...] *L'inscription en haut est,* Nancii Constantini ad Carolum Parisius. Les Ambassadeurs de Constantin à Charles qui étoit à Paris. *Charlemagne ne reçût jamais à Paris des Ambassadeurs de Constantin. NANCII pour* Nuncii*, est ainsi écrit dans l'original*; B. de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens de la Monarchie Françoise, qui comprennent l'histoire de France, avec les figures de chaque regne que l'injure des temps a épargnées*, I: *L'origine des François, et la suite des Rois jusqu'à Philippe I, inclusivement*, Paris 1729, 277.

[44] Cf. A. Latowsky, *Emperor of the World*, op.cit. (n. 8), 223-224, who also deals with these representations, but briefly.

[45] See for this a randomly selected example, the *Chronicle* of Helinand, monk of Froidmont (12th century), *PL*, 212, col. 844A: *In cuius*

it would be best to imagine that the Charlemagne and crusader scenes belonged to more than one window in the Saint-Denis sanctuary; one of them with Crusader themes, while the other could have been dedicated to Charlemagne (and maybe Roland too), such as the one in Chartres.

Regarding the crusader scenes of Saint-Denis, Bernard de Montfaucon interpreted the first scene of *planche L* as a fight between Soliman and the Crusaders before the city of Nicaea, and the second scene of the same figure as the conquest of the same city of Nicaea by the Crusaders, this time based on the inscriptions: *FRAnCi ViCTOREs / PARTi FUGiENTES / NICENA CIVITAS*[46]. In the next figure (*LI*), de Montfaucon identified the attack of Soliman on the Crusaders (inscription: *VINCVNTVR PARTI*), followed by the siege of Antioch (inscription: *ANTIOCHIA*)[47]. In figure *LII*, he spoke of the fight between Corbaram and the Franks (inscription: *BELLVM INTER CO*[?]*PARAM ET FRANCoS*) and the capture of Jerusalem by the Crusaders (inscription: *IeRusaLeM A FRANCIS* [*E*]*XPVGNAT*[*A*])[48]. Finally, for the rest of the figures (*LIII-LIV*), he spoke of the Arabs running toward Ascalon (inscription: *ARABES VICT*[*I*] [*I*]*N ASCALON FUGIVnT*), of Robert, Duke of Normandy, beating the Saracens (inscription: *R*[*OBERTVS*] [*D*]*UX NoRMANNoRVM PARTVM PRoSTERNIT*), how a Saracen fought Robert Duke of Flanders (inscription: *DVELLVM PARTI ET ROBERTi FLANDRENSIS COMiTIS*), and a *Bellum Amiravisi* that needs to be corrected, as the inscription speaks of something else, related to the city of Ascalon (inscription: *BELLVM AM*[?]*TE* [*A*]*SCALONIA IV*[?])[49].

epistolae ultima parte scriptum erat: "Quadam nocte in exstasi factus, vidi ante lectum meum quemdam iuvenem stantem, qui me blande vocans, paxillum tetigit, et ait: Constantine...".

[46] *Planche L*, first scene explanation: *Dans la Planche suivante, on voit premierement le combat de Soliman contre les Croisez mis sur la vitre à côté de celui qui represente la prise de Nicée qu'on voit au bas de la même Planche. Dans le premier tableau, le seul qui n'a point d'inscription, les Croisez sont representez combattans à cheval contre les Turcs.* [...] [de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 389]; cf. f. 158r of the BnF manuscript. Second scene explanation: *Le tableau suivant represente la prise de Nicée qui se rendit par capitulation. Les croisez entrent par une porte & les Turcs sortent par une autre.* [...] *L'inscription d'en-bas est* Nicena civitas, *la ville de Nicée. Celle d'en-haut est* Franci victores, Parthi fugientes. Les François vainqueurs, les Parthes qui fuyent. *Les Turcs & presque tous ces Infideles sont appellez Parthes sur ces vitres* (de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit., 389); cf. f. 159r of the BnF manuscript.

[47] *Planche LI*, first scene explanation: *La prise d'Antioche est representée dans la Planche suivante, où l'on voit dans le premier tableau la défaite de Soliman qui vint attaquer les Croisez dans leur route comme nous avons dit ci-devant.* [...] *L'inscription en haut est,* Vincuntur Parthi, *les Parthes sont vaincus* [de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 392]; cf. f. 160r of the BnF manuscript. Second scene explanation: *Dans le tableau suivant de la même Planche est representée la prise d'Antioche par escalade.* [...]; *au bas est écrit* Antiochia (de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit., 391-392); cf. f. 161r of the BnF manuscript.

[48] *Planche LII*, explanation of first scene: *La Planche suivante nous represente d'abord la bataille contre Corbaram, comme il est porté par l'inscription* Bellum inter Corbaram & Francos. Guerre ou bataille entre Corbaram & les François. *Ces derniers y sont vétus & armez à l'ordinaire.* [...] [de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 395]; cf. f. 162r of the BnF manuscript. Second scene explanation: *Au bas de la planche est le tableau de la prise de Jerusalem; on y voit le château de bois roulant, & le pont abbattu contre la muraille de la ville. Les Croisez dans ce château se battent contre la garnison.* [...] *L'inscription au bas porte, que la ville de Jerusalem est prise par les François. IREM A FRANCIS EXPUGNATA.* (de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit., 395); cf. f. 163r of the BnF manuscript.

[49] *Planches LIII-LIV*, shared explanation in the Bernard de Montfaucon book: *Il y a sur les vitres de saint Denis quatre tableaux pour cette derniere expedition. Le premier qui suit n'a pas toute sa rondeur parce qu'il est au haut de la fenêtre qui se retressit là. Il represente la fuite de ces Arabes qui se retirent à Ascalon, battus par les avant-coureurs de l'armée des Chrétiens. C'est ce que dit l'inscription* Arabes victi in Ascalon fugiunt. *Le tableau d'enbas montre Robert Duc de Normandie, qui d'un coup de lance met à bas un des Chefs des ennemis. L'inscription porte:* Robertus Duc Normannorum Parthum prosternit. *L'histoire dit ci-dessus, que Robert Comte de Flandres se jetta au milieu des escadrons. Le tableau & l'inscription ajoutent qu'il eut entre lui & un Parthe un combat singulier, qui est ici appellé duel.* Duellum Parti & Roberti Flandrensis Comitis. *Ils se battent, & on ne voit point l'issuë du combat. Le Parthe ou l'Arabe fut apparemment vaincu. Le dernier tableau parce qu'il est au plus haut de la fenêtre, n'a pas toute sa rondeur comme un des précedens. Il represente la derniere bataille des Croisez, qui fut contre le Soudan d'Egypte. Ce Soudan ne peut être que celui qui paroît sur le devant, & dont le casque a presque la forme d'une couronne radiale. Quelques-uns de la troupe des Infideles commencent à faire volte face & à prendre la fuite. L'inscription est si broüillée, qu'on n'en peut presque rien tirer. Le commencement se lit ainsi,* BELLVM AMI. *Il faut apparemment lire* Bellum Amiravisi: *le reste est si confus qu'on ne sauroit le lire.*

Little does it matter if these scenes were conceived by abbot Suger (to whose times and conception they have been attributed by the studies following L. Grodecki), by Odo of Deuil, the same person as the Second Crusade monk and chronicler (ca. 1158, an alternative proposal of E. A. R. Brown and M. W. Cothren)[50], or the by-product of repairs and interventions of the 12th- and 13th-century successors[51]. It is likewise of less importance if these stained glass scenes belonged to one or two windows. They were probably located close to each other and we need to imagine them as forming a one or two-part ensemble sometimes before the end of the 13th century. The present analysis should therefore try to avoid taking into consideration the original aspect of the scenes, a product of subsequent changes made by the restorers of the Saint-Denis windows until late during the time of Saint Louis, and deal with the panels as they appeared to be in this late configuration.

But there are two more fragments considered to have been part of the same ensemble, unknown to Bernard de Montfaucon, and they are of particular importance to my analysis. One of them (the "second Pitcairn panel" or the "Triple Coronation panel"), previously interpreted as nine martyred crusaders, looks very much like an early representation of the Nine Worthies, since Charlemagne was one of the nine. Even though previous hypotheses always looked towards a historical or historicising interpretation of the scene[52], or saw "palms" instead of swords or sceptres in the representation[53], I believe that the attributes separating the nine figures into three groups of three, further separating them into precise individuals, testify to a symbolical nature of the image[54].

Traditionally, the Nine Worthies are said to derive from an interpolation in Jean de Longuyon's *Voeux du Paon* (1310-1312), but nobody has asked what the poet's sources could have been. When reading the passages about Charlemagne and Godfrey of Bouillon in the *Voeux du Paon*, one cannot miss certain links with the Saint-Denis stained glass scenes:

Charlemmaine qui France ot toute en son conmant
Suspedita Espaingne dont morut Agoulant,
Desyër de Pavie toli son tenement
Et sourmonta les Saisnes si tres parfaitemant
Par maint cruel assaut, par maint tournoiemant,

Ces cornes rangées au bas qui se trouvent dans quatre tableaux, sont un enigme, que je n'ai pû encore deviner [de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 396-397]; cf. f. 150r, 151r, 160r, 164r, 166r of the BnF manuscript. Cf. Brown –Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 17, who correct the reading into *Bellum ante Ascaloniam* without explaining why the name of the city should be spelled differently and belong to two different declensions in two neighbouring panels (*Ascalon / Ascalonia*).

[50] Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 3.

[51] For a discussion of the stained glass made before the death of Suger (1151) or in connection with further interventions (such as 1165-1175, in 1231-1245 by abbot Odo Clément, or in 1281 by Matthew of Vendôme), see L. Grodecki, *Les vitraux de Saint-Denis. Étude sur le vitrail au XIIe siècle*, I, Paris 1976. For the 13th-century and even later interventions to these stained glass scenes, see Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), *passim*.

[52] See for this the image's description by E. A. R. Brown and M. W. Cothren: "The central group is receiving three crowns heavenly sanction from above, as their six companions, already crowned, signify their accord" [Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 4]. Cf. pages 9-10 note 44: "Two interpretations of the panel with nine seated figures that have been suggested deserve some consideration – the association of the scene, first, with the coronation of Pepin and his sons Charles and Carloman in 754 and, second, with the division of Charlemagne's empire among the sons of Louis the Pious. A basic weakness of both interpretations is their failure to explain the presence of the six flanking crowned rulers or the palms which some of these figures hold in their hands. [...] As to the second interpretation, a portrayal of the division of Charlemagne's empire among his grandsons hardly seems appropriate for a window focused on Charlemagne himself and linked with the theme of crusading". Cf. J. Hayward – W. Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection: Medieval Art from the Raymond Pitcairn Collection*, New York 1982, 93: "Accord of 842" (E. Panofsky, in a conversation with L. Grodecki) or the "papal sanction of 754" (coronation of Pepin with his sons Charlemagne and Carloman).

[53] Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 4: "nine figures seated in groups of three, four of them holding palms". Cf. ibid., 13, for a discussion of these "palms" which do not look at all like palms, but more like sticks (either sceptres or swords).

[54] Cf. Hayward – Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection*, op.cit. (n. 52), 93, speak only of the "youthfulness of the lateral figures, while at the same time, expressing the unity of Pepin's realm". However, it should be noted here that there is a careful choice of ornamentation for each of the nine crowns represented in the scene, while the beards and moustaches appear only as individual features, in order to individualize each of the nine characters.

Qu'il furent malgré euls a son conmandement.
El lieu ou Dieu morut pour nostre sauvement
Remist il le baptesme et le saint sacrement.

Bien redoit on noumer haut et apertement
Godefroi de Buillon qui par son hardement
Es plains de Ronmenie desconfist Solimant
Et devant Anthioce l'amiral Corbarant,
Le jour que on occist le filz au roy Soudant.
De Jherusalem ot puis le coronnement
Et en fu roys clamés .i. an tant seulement[55].

G. Cropp already linked the last two verses of the Charlemagne stanza with the voyage of Charlemagne to Jerusalem and Constantinople (the Anglo-Norman poem, unfortunately, and not the actual Latin text of Saint-Denis)[56], as well as to the prologue of the *Pseudo-Turpin* text. Furthermore, she noted that the fight with Agoulant originates in the *Pseudo-Turpin* text and is to be linked with crusader rhetoric[57], but nobody has dealt with the mention of *Corbarant* (see the *BELLVM INTER CO[?]PARAM ET FRANCoS* inscription in the pre-1729 drawings for the de Montfaucon book), nor with the fact that all exploits of the Longuyon First Crusade stanza have counterparts in the Saint-Denis stained glass scenes, even though they do not belong to Godfrey of Bouillon, but to other protagonists of the First Crusade (Raymond of Toulouse, Robert of Flanders, or Robert of Normandy).

This does not mean that the Nine Worthies of Jean de Longuyon should be accurately identified with the nine crowned figures of the Saint-Denis stained glass scene. The Lorrainian poet could have simply taken an earlier idea and developed it, since it was previously noted that Longuyon's list had precedents in 13th-century vernacular French or Flemish literature, being *in statu nascendi*, that is, in the early stages of an evolution[58]. It is easier to explain the symbolical nature of the Saint-Denis stained glass scene in this way, as it has been duly noted that the Nine Worthies idea could have originated in the world of medieval exegesis, as an interpretation of saint Augustine's concept of the spiritual progression of mankind in three stages followed by a fourth one (*ante legem*, *sub lege*, *sub gratia*, and *sub pace*)[59]. If the Saint-Denis scene was the product of Suger's or another abbot's great learning, the display of this image in the Parisian abbey church would be culturally strong enough to launch an idea which would subsequently grow and take its final shape in the Longuyon verses.

The other scene (the "first Pitcairn panel") presents a king leading a marching army and L. Grodecki suggested that this could be either the march of the "Lotharingian army" led by Godfrey of Bouillon, or a depiction of the Christian army crossing Asia Minor. Nevertheless, as the Pitcairn Collection catalogue duly warns, "neither of these incidents explains the presence in the panel of the heavily restored king, and the dragon in the sky above the army"[60]. There was also an inscription in the lower part of the scene (*I/VIP/IAN/VSIN* or only *IANVSIN*), nowadays impossible to decipher[61], which renders the scene's theme even more mysterious[62]. The catalogue correctly identifies Charlemagne in the scene, but does not interpret the latter as Charlemagne's army's march to the East, as one might expect. Perhaps the proximity of the First Crusade scenes led the authors of the catalogue to find

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[55] G. M. Cropp, "Les vers sur les Neuf Preux", *Romania* 120/479-480 (2002), 449-482, esp. 468, v. 7558-7572.

[56] Ibid., 478.

[57] Ibid., 477.

[58] K. Busby, *Codex and Context. Reading Old French Verse Narrative in Manuscript*, 2 vols, Amsterdam 2002, 297-299, and passim, who deals with the juxtaposition of Alexander the Great's story and that of Godfrey of Bouillon in the Paris, BnF, fr. 786 manuscript; or with Hector, Judas Maccabee, and Roland in the 1242 Philippe Mouskés verse chronicle. Cf. the description of nine identical characters in the *Van neghen den besten* attributed to Jacob van Maerlant (1289-1291); W. van Anrooij, *Helden van weleer: de Negen Besten in de Nederlanden (1300-1700)*, Amsterdam 1997, 55-56.

[59] A. Egorov, "Charismatic Rulers in Civic Guise: Images of the Nine Worthies in Northern European Town Halls of the 14th to 16th Centuries", *Faces of Charisma: Image, Text, Object in Byzantium and the Medieval West*, eds B. M. Bedos-Rezak – M. D. Rust, Leiden 2018, 205-240, esp. 211.

[60] Hayward – Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection*, op.cit. (n. 52), 92.

[61] Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 3: "An inscription may once have identified the scene, but the pieces with letters that now define the ground line are stopgaps with no verifiable the original panel". The Pitcairn Collection catalogue states that "the inscription, *I/VIP/IAN/VSIN*, in indecipherable", Hayward – Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection*, op.cit. (n. 52), 90.

[62] Cf. Hayward – Cahn, *Radiance and Reflection*, op.cit. (n. 52), 92: "its subject cannot be defined with certainty because of the loss of the inscription and because of the other restored parts".

a comparison in Ekkehard of Aura's story about Charlemagne risen from the dead in order to lead the First Crusade. As a result, this reading misses the importance of the "dragon", considered to be a late replacement for an original "golden banner of Saint Peter" (never proven), like the one mentioned by the Ekkehard legend[63].

This explanation is too convoluted to be acceptable, especially since the piece of glass representing the "dragon" was proven to be a part of the 12th-century original work of art[64], and I believe that the most logical interpretation of the scene, given the proximity of the two other stained glass scenes with subjects inspired by the *Descriptio qualiter,* is "Charlemagne and his army on their way to Jerusalem". This is further supported by the presence of a similar scene (the fight before Jerusalem) in the Chartres Charlemagne window, and by the need to ascribe a religious value to all these scenes, thanks to their relation to the relics[65].

The presence of the *draco* is essential to the analysis of the Anglo-Norman parody, as it testifies to an instrumentalization of ancient images, similar to the instrumentalization of the poem, which will be discussed straightaway. Originally a military standard of the Dacians (sometimes considered also of Scythian origin, as implied by Arrian,), the *draco* was immediately adopted by the Roman army. By the time Vegetius wrote his *Epitoma rei militaris* in the late 4th century AD, it was used as a military standard for each legionary cohort[66]. We see it in many Roman sculptures, such as the Arch of Galerius in Thessaloniki or the Arch of Constantine in Rome, but on smaller monuments as well (the Ludovisi sarcophagus). The function of *draconarius* (*draco*-bearer) survived into Byzantine times, despite the replacement

of the *draco* with Christian insignia. This type of military standard reappears in Carolingian times, but on rare occasions, such as in a miniature illustrating Ps 59 in the late 9th-century *Psalterium Aureum* or Golden Psalter of Saint Gall (manuscript of Saint Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, 22, f. 140r)[67]. Another appearance is in the late 11th-century Bayeux Tapestry, where the *draco* is carried by a standard-bearer of Harold at the moment of the latter's death. Even though this representation was often compared with 14th-century Arthurian mentions or depictions of dragon standards, the absence of any other comparanda links it to the Carolingian depiction, in turn an instrumentalization of military images of Antiquity, since it depicts Joab as a military commander. The Biblical past is therefore reimagined through the eyes of the Roman one and the 12th-century Saint-Denis scene probably reimagined another past (this time Carolingian) through a similar instrumentalization of ancient symbols. The *Renovatio imperii* used in the diploma of Charlemagne echoes a *renovatio* of spolia[68], and the Latin text of the *Descriptio qualiter* fully assumes this renovation, as does the Anglo-Norman *Voyage*, even though in a parodical way. Charlemagne was purposely given ancient attributes and elements, such as the *draco* standard, in order to reinforce his imperial status.

Last but not least, I believe it is impossible to state that the Saint-Denis panels belonged to two windows, as suggested by L. Grodecki, and not to a single one, as assumed by E. A. R. Brown and M. W. Cothren. Consequently, I believe that it is of little importance to organise the scenes in any way, as we have almost no clue as to the manner of their disposition and there is also "the discontinuity in scale between the two extant panels"[69], that is,

[63] Ibid., 92.

[64] L. Grodecki thought that the Saint-Denis stained glass *draco* scene must have been a product of the restoration. Cf. Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 4: the "examination of both the front and back surfaces has revealed that the beast is an original component" of the 12th-century scene.

[65] E. A. R. Brown and M. W. Cothren speak of an "extraordinary character of the subject matter of this complex of panels, whether reconstructed as one or two windows. Depicting historical, non-saintly individuals (Charlemagne was not canonized until 1165) performing actions unconnected with relics or miraculous occurrences, these panels are without parallel in the twelfth century", Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 8.

[66] J. Ch. Nelson Coulston, "The 'draco' standard", *Journal of Roman Military Equipment Studies* 2 (1991), 101-114.

[67] The comparison was already made by E. A. R. Brown and M. W. Cothren ["The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 4, 11].

[68] B. Brenk, "Spolia from Constantine to Charlemagne: Aesthetics versus Ideology", *DOP* 41 (1987) (= *Studies on Art and Archeology in Honor of Ernst Kitzinger on His Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, ed. I. Lavin, Washington, D. C.), 103-109.

[69] Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 19.

the ones that I have identified with the March of Charlemagne and an early and unexpected representation of the Nine Worthies. The important thing is that all these stained glass scenes were perhaps linked somehow (they belonged to neighbouring windows or even to the same group of windows in the sanctuary). The only thing that we know is that the scenes were part of an unknown window somewhere in the sanctuary by the time Bernard de Montfaucon saw them before 1729[70]. As for the First Crusade scenes, de Montfaucon wrote that they were all in one window, located at a mysterious "end of the sanctuary crossroads"[71].

I will not speak of abbot Suger as the conceiver of these images for an ideological prologue of the Second Crusade, since this is a historiographical conjecture (the use of the legend at Saint-Denis predates Suger and may be ascribed to anybody connected with that site, at any other time before or after Suger). What interests me here is the odd presence of a Roman cohort standard in a depiction of Charlemagne dating from the 12th century. I believe that the choice of representing this standard is a carefully assumed reading of the past, coupled with its division into three phases (*ante legem*, *sub lege*, and *sub gratia*), provided that the subject of the other Pitcairn panel was an early representation of the Nine Worthies. This would explain the coupling of Charlemagne and the Crusaders as well, as they belonged to the *sub gratia* category. Similar readings of the past may be identified in the Latin text of the *Descriptio qualiter* or in the Anglo-Norman parody. Their narratives are construed in three key moments corresponding to three cities: Paris (Saint-Denis), Constantinople, and Jerusalem.

The essential role played by ancient ruins and ancient references in the Anglo-Norman parody is supported by the mention of the name *Crisans de Rome* next to *Alixandre* and the *vielz Costantin* in a comparison made by Charlemagne entering the Byzantine palace. Similar references to a *Chastel Creissant* in Rome in other French poems, as well as a mention of a *Castellum Crescens* in the *De nugis curialium* of Walter Map show that this was Crescentius, master of the Mausoleum of Hadrian (Castel Sant'Angelo) in Rome in the late 10th century[72]. This leaves us with a very narrow range of potentially revelatory comparisons, most of them directed into what was perceived as belonging to Antiquity during the 12th century. The Anglo-Norman poem needs to be re-evaluated according to this key for a better understanding of its ideatic world.

The synthronon, the plough-chariot, and the Carolingian *spolia*

Let us discuss for instance the throne of Christ and the seats of the Apostles in the Church of *Paternostre*, where the parody imagines that God sang mass (*Deus i chantat*

[70] *Ces figures se voient aux vitres du chevet de S. Denis, faites par l'ordre de l'Abbé Suger qui s'y est fait peindre lui-même plusieurs fois avec son nom écrit*; de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 277. Cf. Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 6 note 27, quoting B. de Montfaucon (*Les Monumens*, op.cit., 227), but the quotation is not at that page (there is only talk of the ambassadors sent to Charlemagne by the Byzantine empress Irene).

[71] *Cette premiere croisade est representée en dix tableaux sur les vitres de l'Eglise de S. Denis, à l'extrêmité du rond-point derrière le grand Autel, dans cette partie qu'on appelle le Chevet. Ces tableaux qu'on voit tous sur une même vitre, furent faits par ordre de l'Abbé Suger, qui s'est fait peindre plusieurs fois dans ces vitres du chevet avec son nom* Sugerius Abbas. *Chaque tableau, hors un, porte son inscription, ce qui nous a donné le moien de les mettre dans leur rang & dans leur tems. Sans cela il n'auroit pas été possible de le faire, les tableaux n'étant pas mis sur la vitre par ordre de tems. Nous allons donner l'histoire de cette premiere Croisade, en mettant les tableaux vis-à vis des actions qu'ils representent*; B. de Montfaucon, *Les Monumens*, op.cit. (n. 43), 384-385. Previous research has identified the *rond-point* with one of the two chapels opening from the western terminations of the hemicycle ambulatory [L. Grodecki, *Les vitraux de Saint-Denis*, op.cit. (n. 51), 115-116] or with the northernmost chapel in particular [Brown – Cothren, "The Twelfth-Century Crusading Window", op.cit. (n. 41), 6], even though this choice does not seem to be well motivated, as there is no way of telling if the "visits to the apsidal chapels proceeded from south to north in 1729" (Brown – Cothren, op.cit., 6). In the 17th century, the word *rond-point* was limited to the garden vocabulary and referred to the starting place of several radiant paths; later 18th-century contexts use this word for the crossroads of rural areas. It is difficult to interpret what de Montfaucon was really describing.

[72] G. S. Burgess, "Ne n'out Crisanz de Rome, qui tanz honurs bastid, *Pèlerinage* v. 367", *Actes du XIe Congrès international de la Société Rencesvals (Barcelone, 22-27 août 1988)* [= numéro spécial de *Memorias de la Real Academia de buenas letras de Barcelona* 21-22 (1990)], 103-120.

messe) accompanied by the Apostles (*si firent les apostle*), like in the Saint-Denis leper miracle story. At first glance, Charlemagne sitting on the throne of Christ and the Peers of France sitting on the chairs of the Apostles could be a tongue-in-cheek reference to the title of "Thirteenth Apostle" of the Byzantine emperor. Nevertheless, the scene is much more complex, as it speaks of twelve *chaëres* still located in the said church (*i sunt tutes uncore*) and of a thirteenth one in the middle of the said arrangement (*en mi*), well-sealed (*ben seëllee*) and closed (or forbidden: *close*). The details are again accurately respected in the scene where Charlemagne sits on the seat of Christ, with his Peers sitting at his sides (*li .xii. pers as altres envirunt e en coste*), therefore indicating that the author had something specific in mind.

This description looks a lot like the synthronon disposition in the apses of many Early Christian churches, a semi-circular exedra of benches with the bishop's *cathedra* at its centre, in turn a by-product of the early development of the episcopal office[73], probably based on Roman imperial protocol and on Mt 19:28 ("Jesus said to them: 'Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man sits on his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'."). This arrangement indeed associates the bishop sitting on a *cathedra* (among the clergy arrayed around him on the synthronon benches) with Christ and the Apostles seated as a group of philosophers, probably as an echo of the teaching practices of late Antiquity[74]. There are many churches still preserving the arrangement to the current day, so their number must have been only greater during the 12th century. Such is the case of Saint Irene or Saint John the Theologian, both in Ephesus, whuch perhaps the crusaders did not see, but also that of Saint Sophia in Nicaea, which they certainly saw when they captured the city. And there was no need to go on a crusade to admire this feature of Late Antiquity. One could notice it in Rome (Santa Sabina), in Ravenna (San Vitale), in Grado, in Venice (Santa Maria Assunta of Torcello), in the cathedral of Poreč, nearby, or even in monastery of Saint Gall in the Alps (with the main seat reserved for the abbot)[75]. In the Western tradition, the synthronon gradually disappeared and evolved into the bishop's throne, sometimes hosting relics, with the side-benches occasionally reduced to a basic footstool of the said throne[76]. The situation was different in the East. There are 13th-century churches replicating the old disposition, such as the one in Žiča (Serbia, erected in 1207-1217)[77], so our anonymous author probably referred to something that was both ancient to his eyes and still in use in Byzantium. If I were tempted to identify his description with a real church, I would say his arrangement with chairs corresponds to the synthronon of the basilica of Santa Cecilia in Trastevere in Rome, where the side-benches are real seats, but it is clear that we may never identify the church that the author had in mind.

San Vitale is probably the most interesting of them all for our study, as the links between Ravenna and Aachen during Carolingian times are very well known, as well as the Carolingian habit of importing ancient *spolia* from Italy. Furthermore, Ravenna was the closest Western place to Byzantine culture. Last but not least, in San Vitale, the mosaic with Christ's resurrection is located precisely above the bishop's throne, therefore explaining once more the Anglo-Norman poem's scene if it were indeed inspired by an Early Christian church with a synthronon. Since Charlemagne enters a marble church (monastery) with a painted vault (*un muster de*

[73] M. Maccarone, "Lo sviluppo dell'idea dell'episcopato nel II secolo e la formazione del simbolo della cattedra episcopale", *Problemi di storia della chiesa. La chiesa antica, secoli II-IV*, eds G. G. Meersseman – L. Polverini – M. Sordi et al., Milano 1970, 85-206. Cf. D. Th. Chatzilazarou, "Η καταγωγή και η σημασία του παλαιοχριστιανικού συνθρόνου", *DChAE* 40 (2019), 17-28.

[74] For the *synthronon*, see Th. F. Mathews, *The Clash of Gods: A Reinterpretation of Early Christian Art*, Princeton 1999 (monastery), 98-114. Cf. R. Krautheimer, *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture* (4th edition revised by R. Krautheimer and S. Ćurčić), Baltimore – London 1986 (1965), 102. For the links of this arrangement to the late ancient philosopher teaching his disciples, see Chatzilazarou, "Η καταγωγή και η σημασία του παλαιοχριστιανικού συνθρόνου", op.cit. (n. 73).

[75] For Saint Gall, see L. L. Coon, *Dark Age Bodies. Gender and Monastic Practice in the Early Medieval West*, Philadelphia – Oxford 2011, 171.

[76] Ch. Tracy – A. Budge et al., *Britain's Medieval Episcopal Thrones: History, Archaeology, and Conservation*, Oxford – Philadelphia 2015, 1-24.

[77] M. Radujko, "Камено сапрестоље и фриз фреско-икона у олтару жичке цркве Вазнесења Христовог / The stone *synthronon* and the frieze of fresco icons in the altar in the Church of the Ascension of Christ in Žiča", *Zograf* 29 (2002-2003), 93-118.

marbre peint a volte), this description of the *Paternostre* church fits well the profile of San Vitale and many other churches of the same period. It is true that it uses the verb "to paint", but it is worth noting that the Old French language does not have a documented term designating the "mosaic". The use of the verb *peinturer* may therefore refer to a wider array of artworks, including the mosaic technique, especially since the Anglo-Norman text describes the "colours" of these "paintings" as being "shiny" (*cleres colurs*).

The entire scene in the church of *Paternostre* would therefore be an unambiguous tongue-in-cheek reference to the revival of Late Antiquity during Carolingian times. But it would not be the only reference of this kind. The best example is in the introductory scene with Hugh the Byzantine "king" majestically ploughing his field:

XVI *Chevalchet li emperere, ne se vait atargeant;*
Truvat lu rei Hugun a sa carue arant;
Les cuningles en sunt a or fin relusant,
Li essues e les roes et li cultres arant.
Il ne vait mie a pet, le aguilun en sa main,
Mais de chascune part [*at*] *un fort mul amblant*
Une caiere sus le tent d'or suzpendant:
La sist l'emperere sur un cuisin vaillant;
La plume est de oriol, la teie d'escarimant.
A ses pez un escamel neëlé de argent blanc.
Sun capel en sun chef, mult par sunt bel li gaunt.
Quatre estaches [*d'or mier*] *entur lui en estant;*
Desus [*i*] *ad jetet un bon paile grizain.*
Une verge d'or fin tint li reis en sa main,
Si acundut sun aret tant adreceëment,
Si fait dreite sa rei[*e*] *cume line que tent.*
Atant est vus Carlun sur un [*fort*] *mul amblant.*

XVII *Li reis tint sa carue pur sun jur espleiter.*
E vint i Carlemaines tut un antif senter;
Vit le paile tendud e le or reflambeier. [...][78].

W. Foerster wrote a whole article about the word used for "plough" and "chariot" in this short passage, trying to identify two meanings for it[79], but he neglected to analyse the scene from an iconographical point of view, unaware that ancient chariots, still represented as such in Carolingian times, became basic carts in 13th-century miniatures[80]. A. H. Krappe was fascinated by a possible connection between the name of Hugon and Hu the Mighty, a legendary figure from the Welsh triads who is presented as the civilizing hero who introduced ploughing[81]. Of course, nothing else could be related to this apart from the name and the plough. Some tried to identify here a reference to Sasanian richness and attire, that is, to Khosrow II from the time of Heraclius[82]. Others, such as E. J. Burns, imagined that "each portrait of kingship in the *Pèlerinage*, including the anomalous depiction of King Hugon on the plough, is cast in conformity with the notion of *regnum* and *sacerdotium* that appears on the sculpted façade at Saint Denis"[83]. Even though this idea is hard to follow entirely, another of E. J. Burns' observations seems valuable to the present analysis: "Hugon, as he is depicted in the *Pèlerinage*, appears both as the monarch in his triumphal chariot and as the labourer guiding the plough"[84].

One could link this ploughing monarch to Odo of Deuil's description of the gardens of Constantinople, and perhaps there is some truth to this matter, but the

[78] *L'Épopée pour rire*, op.cit. (n. 1), 150, 152 (v. 282-301).

[79] W. Foerster, "Der Pflug in Frankreich und Vers 296 in Karl des Grossen Wallfahrt nach Jerusalem", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 29 (1905), 1-18.

[80] M. Nice Boyer, "The Humble Profile of the Regal Chariot in Medieval Miniatures", *Gesta* 29/1 (1990), 25-30.

[81] A. Haggerty Krappe, "The Ploughman King: a comparative study in literature and folklore", *Revue hispanique* 46 (1919), 516-546; Idem, "Hugo von Byzanz, der Pflügerkönig", *Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur* 59 (1935), 361-366. Cf. A. C. Rejhon, "Hu Gadarn: folklore and fabrication", *Celtic Folklore and Christianity: Studies in Memory of William W. Heist*, ed. P. K. Ford, Los Angeles 1983, 201-212. For an "Indo-European" hypothesis linking this episode with a golden plough descended from the heavens, see K. Heisig, "Ein phrygisch-skythisches Sagenmotiv in der Karlsreise", *Germanisch-romanische Monatsschrift* 15 (1965), 194-195. Cf. A. Corbellari, "Le roi laboureur. Enquête sur un motif indo-européen", *Uns clers ait dit que chanson en ferait. Mélanges de langue, d'histoire et de littérature offerts à Jean-Charles Herbin*, eds M.-G. Grossel – J.-P. Martin – L. Nys – M. Ott – F. Suard, Valenciennes 2019, 243-252.

[82] L. Polak, "Charlemagne and the marvels of Constantinople", *The Medieval Alexander Legend and Romance Epic: Essays in Honour of David J. A. Ross*, eds P. Noble – L. Polak – C. Isoz, Millwood – London – Nendeln 1982, 159-171.

[83] E. J. Burns, "Portraits of kingship in the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne*", *Olifant* 10/4 (1984), 161-181, esp. 166.

[84] Burns, "Portraits of kingship", op.cit. (n. 83), 175.

use of the words plough and chariot together point to a precise Antique context, further supported by the image itself. The only chance of refining the interpretation is to properly analyse the Anglo-Norman scene and to find a typology of images that sufficiently covers the ambiguity of the description.

The Byzantine "king" Hugh of the parody wears magnificent gloves (*mult par sunt bel li gaunt*) and a hat (*capel*). He has a *carue*, whose meaning is ambiguous, as it can refer to the plough itself, as indicated by the determining participle (*arant*) or to a cart / chariot, as warranted by the rest of the description. He has an *aguilun en sa main* ("iron tip at the end of a stick used to prick oxen", according to the DEAF*él*)[85], but does not walk on foot in order to use it properly, as the poem specifically insists on this detail (*il ne vait mie a pet*). Perhaps this is the reason why the *aguilun* is re-described as a *verge d'or fin* ("a wand of fine gold"). Hugh is seated upon a *cuisin vaillant* ("great cushion") with Persian silk covers (*la teie d'escarimant*) filled with feathers plucked from golden-oriole songbirds (*la plume est de oriol*). The cushion is laid upon a *caiere d'or* ("golden seat"), with the king's feet resting on a "footstool" (*escamel*) nielloed in white silver (*neëlé de argent blanc*). The entire structure is suspended (*suzpendant*) between four columns or pillars (*quatre estaches*) supporting a canopy made of good Greek cloth (*un bon paile grizain*), with two strong mules carrying it on both sides (*de chascune part un fort mul amblant*). When describing the plough, the author also mentions its fine gold yoke straps (*cuningles a or fin relusant*), its axles (*essues*), its wheels (*roes*), and its body (*cultres*), so it is difficult to say if he is describing two things in one (a plough and a hitch) or a mixed structure (the coupling of a plough and chariot). The poem's description starts by mentioning agricultural notions, but then switches to the splendour of a triumphant scene, thus rendering the entire arrangement ambiguous. When one takes into account the double description of the stick held by the Byzantine sovereign, first as a stick for oxen, next as a wand of gold, the ambiguous use of the word *carue,* which puzzled W. Foerster and made him write an entire article, and the fact that the anonymous author started by imagining a scene with oxen (named only later, when Hugh uncouples them from the plough)[86], only to mention a pair of mules in a different position on the cart's sides, it is safe to assume that he too was unsure of what he was describing from the start. For all these reasons, the verses do not need critical emendations, as the description of the scene was evolving in the mind of the anonymous author[87]. The extremely precise details of the canopy, chair, cushion, and footstool also attest to the author's use of an actual representation that could have intrigued him too.

Anca Dan kindly pointed out to me that the *Cybele Plate* from the Parisian *Musée Guimet*, a 3rd-century BC gilded medallion, has an image quite similar to ours. The plate depicts the goddess Cybele and a servant carrying a stick in a chariot drawn by lions, under a canopy, with a representation of Helios, in front of a fire altar. It was discovered in Ai-Khanum and is of Hellenistic influence, so the subject of our depiction could originate in pagan Antiquity[88]. If we interpret the scene with Hugh the Byzantine ploughman-king as being of ancient pagan origin, the three main groups of representations corresponding to the description would be the triumph, the religious procession, or the foundational act. Scenes such as these appear on many media, including coins, but the detailed Anglo-Norman description probably came from a sculpture. It could have been inspired by a scene with Triptolemus ploughing with oxen as he was taught by the goddess Demeter; or by Jason ploughing the magical field in Colchis; and most of all by a scene with Romulus (in the case of Rome) or any other founder of a city ploughing the *sulcus primigenius*. Chariots drawn by oxen are typical of the Selene representations, but the plough could also be a product of a confusion following a destruction of the sculpture, thus explaining the late mention of the oxen in the description and the reference to mules at the sides of the chariot. As there

[85] *Dictionnaire Étymologique de l'Ancien Français*, Heidelberg, *version électronique:* http://www.deaf-page.de/index.php.

[86] *Li reis desjunt ses beos e laset sa carue*, Corbellari 2015, 152, v. 317.

[87] See e.g. the emendation *une caiere d'or le sustent en pendant* instead of *une caiere sus le tent d'or suzpendant*; J.-L. Picherit, "Sur le vers 288 du *Voyage de Charlemagne à Jérusalem et à Constantinople*", *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie* 99/5-6 (1983), 512-513.

[88] F. Hiebert – P. Cambon, *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World*, London 2011.

are countless representations which may illustrate this hypothesis, I mention only the western frieze of the Siphnian Treasury in Delphi: the destruction of the ancient sculpture made the chariot of Aphrodite very similar to a plough[89]. But there are also cases of chariots proper, represented in unexpected contexts[90]. And if the source were fragmentary (making it impossible to notice the animals drawing the chariot), it would also be possible to imagine a Dionysian chariot, since Dionysus is often carrying a stick similar to our parody's *aguilun*[91]. There are also pairings of triumphant processions with rural scenes, such as the one in Vidin (Bulgaria), where Zeus and Hera are in a chariot drawn by horses, with an agricultural scene underneath them, showing a cart drawn by several pairs of oxen[92]. Likewise, pastoral scenes are indeed more popular on Roman sarcophagi than rural ones, but there are several agricultural representations on sarcophagi nevertheless[93], and one may also think of allegorical representations featuring oxen drawing carts or chariots[94].

To test this hypothesis, I looked into the first volume of the *Sarkophag-Corpus*, instantly identifying several scenes that may be compared to the one described by the Anglo-Norman poem[95]. Nevertheless, the alluded scene could also be Christian, as it may be linked with the story of Joseph in the book of Genesis[96]. It could equally translate into a bucolical scene, perhaps a variation of the Good Shepherd theme based on classical models, as there are several such compositions on early Christian sarcophagi[97]. Or it could be a partially destroyed "Catechesis of the deacon Phillip" on a late antique Christian sarcophagus (that is, the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch; Acts 8:26-40). This other scene was very similar to the Voyage to the Other World represented on the pagan sarcophagi, in turn a scene of Etruscan origin initially[98]. Last but not least, the parody's source could be pagan: a Voyage to the Other World[99]. There is frankly no way of choosing between all these options.

However, the cart drawn by oxen could have early medieval connotations too. The *quadriga*, for instance, was a symbol of virtue in Carolingian thought[100], but this meaning was of course drawn from ancient models. For the Merovingian kings, touring their realm in a cart drawn by oxen was an important ritual with sacred undertones as well. Einhard mocks Childeric III for always travelling in a cart drawn by oxen everywhere, including his palace or the yearly assembly, therefore proving that the memory of the ritual was fresh in Carolingian

[89] Cf. M. B. Moore, "The West Frieze of the Siphnian Treasury: a new Reconstruction", *BCH* 109/1 (1985), 131-156.

[90] See e.g. the Barbarian family in a chariot depicted on the metope IX of the Tropaeum Traiani monument of Adamclisi, Dobrudja, Romania.

[91] J. Ardu, *Iconographie du char dionysiaque dans le monde romain*, 3 vols, PhD dissertation, University of Tours, Tours 2000, esp. vol. 2 (*Notices, photos et dessins*).

[92] I. Atanasova-Georgieva – D. Mitova-Djonova, *Антична пластика от Видинския музей*, Sofia 1985, 50-51.

[93] M. Allen, "Cows, Sheep, and Sages: Bucolic Sarcophagi and the Question of 'Elite Retreat'", *Römische Mitteilungen* 124 (2018), 241-267.

[94] The figurative frieze on the front lid of the Garland Sarcophagus nowadays preserved in the Walters Art Museum, Baltimore (140-150 AD) has four *putti* for the four seasons in carts drawn by bears, lions, oxen, and boars. A. M. McCann, *Roman Sarcophagi in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, New York 1978, 25-29.

[95] Cf. *Die antiken Sarkophagreliefs*, 1. *Die Sarkophage mit Darstellungen aus dem Menschenleben*, 2. *Die römischen Jagdsarkophage*, ed. B. Andreae, Berlin 1980, pls 50, 51 (oxen and carts on the sarcophagi with human life and hunting scenes). Many other studies may be of course quoted here. I did not pursue this research for the obvious reason that the precise source of the anonymous author's poem cannot be found based on a subjective interpretation of his already subjective description.

[96] I thank once again Anca Dan for pointing out to me that the scene may be linked to Genesis 41:41-43, wherein the pharaoh puts Joseph in command over all the land of Egypt, gives him his sealring, clothes him in fine linen, with a chain of gold on his neck, and invites him to ride in a chariot. The scene is echoed in the *Judean Antiquities* of Flavius Josephus (XII, 172), where the king is in a chariot with his wife and his friend Athenion, invites Joseph the Tobiad in his chariot, and later on keeps him as a guest in his palace. *Josephus in nine volumes. Jewish Antiquities, Books XII-XIV*, ed., transl. R. Marcus, London – Cambridge, Mass. 1957 (1943), 90 (and 91 for the translation).

[97] G. Wilpert, *I sarcofagi cristiani antichi*, 3 (5) vols, Rome 1929-1936, vol. 1/2, pls. XLVI, XLVII, for images. Cf. vol. 1/1, 64-65, for the analysis of various sarcophagi depicting this scene.

[98] Wilpert, *I sarcofagi*, op.cit. vol. 1/2, pls XXI-XXIV, for images. Cf. vol. 1/1, 25-31 for the analysis.

[99] See e.g. the sarcophagus of the deceased couple in a canopy chariot drawn by two mules at the Museo Nazionale Romano.

[100] S. Mähl, *Quadriga virtutum. Die Kardinaltugenden in der Geistesgeschichte der Karolingerzeit*, Vienna – Köln 1969.

times[101]. Y. Christe argued that the Merovingian ritual was copied from the high magistrates of Late Antiquity, who used a *carpentum* or *carruca biiuga*, a four-wheeled chariot, for their travels in their jurisdiction, looking very similar to the procession chariots of the late emperors, as seen on the triumphal arches of Galerius in Thessaloniki (303-304 AD) or Constantine in Rome (315 AD). With the arrival of Christianity, the story of Joseph and the Egyptian pharaoh was also attached to this processional use, and later on, in the 6th century, in Constantinople, the patricians used to be carried around in chariots, sitting on a *cathedra*. These chariots were named *bouricallia* (drawn by oxen) and they were already used in the 5th century as such[102]. As is that were not enough, perhaps they should be compared to similar depictions of chariots drawn by oxen in Byzantine manuscripts with mythological scenes, also inspired by representations of sarcophagi[103]. But it is safe to note that these early medieval comparisons are all inspired by late ancient models, so I am in fact going around in circles.

Is the Anglo-Norman reference based on a description of a patrician sarcophagus of a notable from Late Antiquity or a mockery extracted from the *Vita Karoli magni* of Einhard? Frankly, both hypotheses are possible, just like in the case of the papyrus or lamella example from my previous article dedicated to the Latin *Voyage of Charlemagne*[104], but I have a preference for the sarcophagus option simply because the description is so vivid, making use of a visual model, whereas Einhard's texts do not contain any visual details.

There is however a second reason to look for the source of our scene in the *Sarkophag-Corpus*. In Carolingian times, the sacred connotations of chariots equally derived from Ps 67:18 (the "ten thousand chariots of God"), with the chariot of fire carrying Elijah to heaven, and especially with the image of Christ triumphant at the end of time. This made its use preferable in a funeral context[105]. It is therefore not surprising that chariots like these are to be found on the ancient sarcophagi reused for the burials of Charlemagne and his son Louis the Pious. Charlemagne's sarcophagus in Aachen, be it a spolium of Carolingian or 12th-century date[106], bears the scene of the Abduction of Proserpina. The 18th century-drawings for the Bernard de Montfaucon book show the state of the Metz sarcophagus of Louis the Pious before its destruction, and its main scene was an early Christian representation of the Crossing of the Red Sea[107]. Both of them had representations of chariots.

Nothing is really known about the Metz sarcophagus of Drogo, the sarcophagus of Louis the Germanin Lorsch was ornamented with ancient motifs, and Charles the Bald's tomb in Saint-Denis was supposedly a porphyry tub similar to those of the Norman kings of Southern Italy[108]. Nevertheless, this supposition is uncertain, as the porphyry tub of Saint-Denis has an odd legendary history, sometimes related to Dagobert and Clovis, and its identification with the sarcophagus of Charles the Bald is of a recent date[109]. The only sure thing about the

[101] *Quocumque eundum erat, carpento ibat, quod bubus iunctis et bubulco rustico more agente trahebatur. Sic ad palatium, sic ad publicum populi sui conventum, qui annuatim ob regni utilitatem celebrabatur, ire, sic domum redire solebat*; Eginhard, *Vie de Charlemagne*, édition et traduction par L. Halphen, Paris 1923, ²1967, 10.

[102] Y. Christe, "Les chars à boeufs des rois fainéants", *Museum Helveticum* 40/2 (1983), 111-118.

[103] Except for the representations of Achilles, which follow other patterns, there are Byzantine representations of similar carts, drawn by horses, such as the one depicted in the chariot race between Pelops and Oenomaus in the manuscripts of Nonnus the Abbot, where the subject seems to draw inspiration from sarcophagi (K. Weitzmann, *Greek Mythology in Byzantine Art*, Princeton 1951, ²1984, 12-14), or in the depictions of Midas from the same manuscripts (ibidem, p. 23), as well as Lydian chariots in general (ibidem, p. 28 and passim), *but* there are also chariots driven by oxen in scenes such as the *Rape of Persephone*, again in connection with the depictions noticed on ancient sarcophagi and particularly with a sarcophagus in Aachen (ibidem, p. 44-46).

[104] Agrigoroaei, "Magic and Papyri", op.cit. (n. 10), 26-31.

[105] S. W. Collins, *The Carolingian Debate over Sacred Space*, New York 2012, 54.

[106] Cf. A. Dierkens, "Autour de la tombe de Charlemagne: Considérations sur les sépultures et les funérailles des souverains carolingiens et des membres de leur famille", *Byzantion* 61/1 (1991), 156-180, esp. 167-168, who argues that the "Charlemagne sarcophagus" could have been brought to Aachen during Frederick Barbarossa's reign as well.

[107] For an in-depth study of this destroyed sarcophagus, see G. Noga-Banai, "The Sarcophagus of Louis the Pious in Metz. A Roman Memory Reused", *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 45 (2011), 37-50.

[108] Dierkens, "Autour de la tombe", op.cit. (n. 106), 168.

[109] Cf. L. Hamani - D. Gaborit-Chopin, *Le trésor de Saint-Denis au Musée du Louvre*, Paris 1995, 74: *La grande baignoire de porphyre rouge, monolythe, de Saint-Denis était l'un des objets les plus*

tomb of this Carolingian monarch is that it was located somewhere behind the principal altar of the Saint-Denis abbey church, as the tomb of Louis VI was installed *ante altare Sanctae Trinitatis, ex opposito tumuli Karoli Imperatoris, mediante altari*, as Suger tells us, and the first Capetians were also buried around this altar of the Holy Trinity[110]. But this leads once again to a discussion about the essential role of Saint-Denis in the preservation of ancient cultural patterns during the Middle Ages. And if we speak of ancient sarcophagi reused in later medieval times, we frankly do not know what the state of the royal tombs of Saint-Denis could have been in the 12th century, at the time when the anonymous Anglo-Norman poet wrote his parody, so his parody could well be a mockery of such a sarcophagus.

But there is more to this picture than meets the eye. Saint-Denis itself was built upon a late antique necropolis which continued to be used until medieval times. Many other ancient sarcophagi were local ones[111], so Hugh-ploughing-the-field could mock sculptures located outside the church, in the old necropolis, as it is hard to believe that Suger and the other abbots would have chosen to display a low-quality provincial type of sarcophagus in the sanctuary of their church. Nevertheless, I would not exclude this interpretation. Who knows what image the anonymous writer had in mind? The only thing that I am certain of is that the role played by late ancient models in his mockery of the French was essential to his understanding of what Byzantine art and culture were.

I am inclined to believe that the late antique references in the Anglo-Norman poem should be connected with Saint-Denis as a link between the *renovatio* of Antiquity during Carolingian times and the reuse of these cultural habits during Capetian rule. It is however hard to determine if these references point to specific Saint-Denis artistic and literary features or to the basic idea of Saint-Denis replicating themes from antiquity. The mention of *Crisans* of Rome, master of the Castel di Sant'Angelo, and the mythological reference to Thestius follow the same ideatic path. As for Hugh-the-ploughman-king, his scene may be a tongue-in-cheek reference to a Saint-Denis sarcophagus, but it could be linked to any other ancient or Early Christian sarcophagus as well (or even to lost depictions of Byzantine magistrates in *bouricallia*). Only the synthronon clearly belongs to a wider context, maybe in reference to Ravenna, Rome, and to the old episcopal churches of Late Antiquity in general.

There is enough proof that the parody is directed toward the Parisian abbey, as the Saint-Denis monks told a mumble-jumbled story about Greek and Hebrew letters to the pilgrims, but the mockery could be directed at the entire Charlemagne relics tradition altogether, not only at the *Descriptio qualiter*. It makes fun of the French, of their vanity (the vernacular poem's insistence on the description of Charlemagne admiring his own crown and sword is a parody of the vision of the Byzantine emperor from the second letter of the *Descriptio qualiter*), and perhaps of their lack of manners, especially if we read ironically the deeds of the Twelve Peers in the Revolving Palace of Hugh. Their deeds in Constantinople may be a mockery of the deeds of the Crusaders in the window(s) at Saint-Denis or of those of Roland and the other Peers in depictions similar to the Charlemagne window at Chartres. But most of all it makes fun of a badly done reconstruction of the past. The Anglo-Norman parody is

célèbres de l'abbaye et suscitait l'imagination des commentateurs. Plusieurs légendes courraient à son propos : elle aurait été prise à Poitiers et offerte à Saint-Denis par Dagobert. Pour d'autres, elle passait pour être la cuve baptismale de Clovis. La tradition voulait que les Enfants de France y aient été baptisés. En fait, elle pourrait avoir servi de sarcophage à Charles le Chauve et les religieux de Saint-Denis avaient coutume d'y préparer l'eau bénite, la veille de Pâques. Envoyée au Cabinet des Médailles en 1791, la baignoire fut déposée au Louvre en 1918. The 1634 inventory of the Saint-Denis abbey does not mention any stone monuments, but specifically states that the tomb of Charles the Bald was made of bronze, being located in the sanctuary. M.-M. Gauthier, "Le trésor de Saint-Denis. Inventaire de 1634", *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 18/70 (1975), 149-156, esp. 150 : *Avec le numéro 160, on passe au chœur de l'église où l'on est accueilli par un lutrin et le tombeau de cuivre de Charles le Chauve* [...]. Cf. ibid., 153: *Les tombeaux métalliques. Disparus avant 1634, mais faits de métal et d'émaux, assez estimables donc pour être inventoriés, doivent ici s'ajouter les tombeaux qui, jadis, avaient commémoré le souvenir des souverains fondateurs et grands bienfaiteurs de l'abbaye et de sa basilique : Charles le Chauve 161*, [...].

[110] Cf. M. B. de Montesquiou-Fezensac, "Le tombeau de Charles le Chauve à Saint-Denis", *Bulletin de la Société nationale des Antiquaires de France*, année 1963 (Paris 1965), 84-88, esp. 85-86.

[111] See e.g. É. Salin, "Les tombes gallo-romaines et mérovingiennes de la basilique de Saint-Denis (fouilles de janvier-février 1957)", *Mémoires de l'Institut de France* 44/1 (1960), 169-264.

therefore recreating a satirical past, drawing on dissimilar sources. When the Byzantine emperor is ploughing the field with his oxen, holding a sceptre and sitting on a throne with cushions and a canopy, the vernacular poem is presenting us with an ancient image: that of a Greek or Roman god, that of a Roman emperor, or any other figure represented in such a sculpture. In the same vein, it ironically uses the comparison with the daughters of Thestius. Last but not least, it includes a brief but accurate description of the murals in a Byzantine church. Even though the Anglo-Norman *Voyage of Charlemagne* does not belong to the usual "Greek whispers" group of texts (its distortions are voluntary, not involuntary), it clearly belongs to an "it's-all-Greek-to-me" category. The author was not interested in presenting his readers with a faithful representation of Byzantium. He instrumentalized his public's unfamiliarity with Byzantium, always reimagined in connection with Antiquity, in order to mock the Saint-Denis instrumentalization of the past.

In the end, one last question: why mix Byzantium and Antiquity? The most reasonable explanation is that Old French authors saw the Byzantine oikoumene as a remnant of Antiquity[112]. Travelling eastward meant for them a descent into the Times of Old. This was connected with the ideas of *translatio imperii* and *translatio studii*: the sun moved toward the West, and so did power and wisdom[113]. At best, this is what medieval Westerners believed. Some still believe it today, as all peoples encountered by the West are measured and compared to the West's own past evolutionary stages. As for the Byzantine Commonwealth regarded as an untouched and never-evolving Late Antiquity construct stuck in a time loop, there are avatars of this idea at the time of the writing of this study. *FranceInfo* illustrated an article about the 2019 inscription of Byzantine Chant on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity with a scene from the procession of the Twenty-two Virgins in the late antique mosaics of Sant'Apollinare Nuovo in Ravenna[114]. Perhaps the 12th-century *forma mentis* did not die away but swelled into the modern mind.

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[112] For the use of ancient references in Byzantine literature, see P. Roilos, *Amphoteroglossia: A Poetics of the Twelfth Century Medieval Greek Novel*, Washington, D. C. 2005; for art, see L. Frentrop, "For this is a trait of a rhetorical and double-tongued man: artifice and ambiguity in Middle Byzantine art", *Word & Image* 35/4 (2019), 367-379.

[113] Cf. e.g. U. Krämer, *Translatio imperii et studii. Zum Geschichts- und Kulturverständnis in der französischen Literatur des Mittelalters und der frühen Neuzeit*, Bonn 1996.

[114] "Le chant byzantin inscrit au patrimoine immatériel de l'Unesco", published 11/12/2019, 19:45 on the site of *FranceInfo* station: https://www.francetvinfo.fr/culture/musique/le-chant-byzantin-inscrit-au-patrimoine-immateriel-de-l-unesco_3740447.html; accessed 12/12/2019.

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«ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΕΣ ΑΝΑΦΟΡΕΣ» ΣΤΗ ΔΗΜΩΔΗ ΠΑΡΩΔΙΑ *ΤΟ ΤΑΞΙΔΙ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΡΛΟΜΑΓΝΟΥ ΣΤΗΝ ΙΕΡΟΥΣΑΛΗΜ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΚΩΝΣΤΑΝΤΙΝΟΥΠΟΛΗ*

Η περιγραφή μιας βυζαντινής εκκλησίας στην έμμετρη παρωδία *Το Ταξίδι του Καρλομάγνου στην Ιερουσαλήμ και την Κωνσταντινούπολη*, γραμμένη στα μεσαιωνικά παλαιογαλλικά, στο δεύτερο μισό του 12ου αιώνα, μοιάζει αρκετά ακριβής, καθώς αναφέρει «μάρτυρες και παρθένους, και μεγαλειώδεις μορφές» συνοδευόμενες από σκηνές του Δωδεκαόρτου. Στον φανταστικό κόσμο του ποιήματος η εκκλησία που περιγράφεται, θα μπορούσε να είναι εκείνη στην οποία ο ίδιος ο Θεός (Χριστός) τέλεσε τη λειτουργία για τους αποστόλους. Ο Καρλομάγνος κάθεται στον θρόνο του Σωτήρα, συνοδευόμενος από τους Δώδεκα *Παλαδίνους* (Peers/Pairs) της Γαλλίας, οι οποίοι κάθονται στα καθίσματα των αποστόλων. Η ακρίβεια αυτής της περιγραφής μάς οδήγησε στο να ερευνήσουμε τη σύνδεση ανάμεσα στη δημώδη παρωδία και τις λατινικές πηγές της –ιδιαίτερα την *Descriptio qualiter Karolus Magnus clavum et coronam Domini a Constantinopoli Aquisgrani detulerit*, γραμμένη στο αββαείο του Saint Denis στο Παρίσι– και να αναλύσουμε τον τρόπο με τον οποίο το Βυζάντιο και η Αρχαιότητα συγχέονται από τον άγνωστο γάλλο ποιητή.

Έπειτα από μια σύντομη παρουσίαση της υπόθεσης του ποιήματος και την εξέταση του είδους –σατιρικό– και της προέλευσής του –νησιωτική ή ηπειρωτική–, ερευνάται το πολιτιστικό περιβάλλον που δημιούργησε αυτήν τη βυζαντινο-αρχαία σύγχυση. Η επανεξέταση πολλών παλαιότερων θεωριών οδήγησε στην επανεκτίμηση των περιγραφών κωνσταντινουπολίτικων κτηρίων και κήπων στο μεσαιωνικό-λατινικό αφήγημα του Odo de Deuil (1110-1162). Μάλιστα, το παλαιογαλλικό ποίημα περιέχει πολλές σκηνές και περιγραφές που μπορεί να ερμηνευτούν σύμφωνα με την περιγραφή του τελευταίου, αλλά είναι εξίσου ασαφείς, κυρίως επειδή δεν σχετίζονται με συγκεκριμένους τόπους. Η επιθυμία να ταυτιστούν πραγματικά κτήρια, ονόματα ιστορικών προσώπων ή ακόμα και τοπωνύμια τροφοδοτήθηκε από την τάση της παλαιότερης έρευνας να προσεγγίσει και την παλαιογαλλική παρωδία και τις μεσαιωνικές λατινικές πηγές της με πολιτικούς όρους. Έτσι, οι περιγραφές της δημώδους παρωδίας, που αλλοιώθηκαν προκειμένου να προσαρμοστούν σε συγκεκριμένα πολιτικά μηνύματα, και οι ταυτίσεις με πραγματικούς τόπους ή κτήρια υπαγορεύτηκαν από αυτήν την ερμηνευτική μέθοδο. Ωστόσο, στην *Descriptio qualiter* και στο δημώδες *Voyage* οι συγγραφείς τους χρησιμοποίησαν εκείνο το ελληνικό υλικό που έκριναν κατάλληλο: μερικές φορές οι πληροφορίες αυτές ήταν αληθινές και βασίζονταν σε πραγματικές αναμνήσεις συμπατριωτών τους περιηγητών από την εποχή των Σταυροφοριών, ενώ άλλες φορές βασίζονταν στη φαντασία και ήταν κυρίως εμπνευσμένες από ιστορίες του παρελθόντος. Στη μελέτη επανεξετάζεται η λατινική *Descriptio qualiter* και η παλαιογαλλική παρωδία της υπό το πρίσμα των μαρτυριών που παρέχουν οι υαλογραφίες του 12ου αιώνα στο Saint Denis, στο Παρίσι. Η παρουσία σκηνών από την Πρώτη Σταυροφορία και από το φανταστικό ταξίδι του Καρλομάγνου απαιτεί να δοθεί ιδιαίτερη προσοχή στις υαλογραφίες του παραθύρου ή των παραθύρων «Pitcairn panels», που τώρα φυλάσσονται στο Glencairn Museum στο Bryn Athyn της Pennsylvania. Μία από αυτές φέρει παράσταση αρχαίου στρατιωτικού λαβάρου με τον δράκοντα, σε μια αναπαράσταση του στρατού του Καρολομάγνου που εκστρατεύει προς την Ανατολή. Αυτή η λεπτομέρεια είναι ουσιώδης για την ανάλυση της δημώδους παρωδίας, καθώς μαρτυρείται η χρήση αρχαίων εικόνων παραπλήσιων με εκείνες του παλαιογαλλικού ποιήματος. Ο ουσιώδης ρόλος που παίζουν οι αναφορές της Αρχαιότητας στη δημώδη παρωδία ενισχύεται περαιτέρω από την αναφορά σε έναν Crisans de Rome, συνδεόμενο με τα αρχαία κτήρια της Ρώμης, αποδεικνύοντας έτσι ότι τα συμφραζόμενα πρέπει να επανεκτιμηθούν σύμφωνα με αυτήν την ερμηνεία της Ύστερης Αρχαιότητας. Ο Καρλομάγνος στον θρόνο του Σωτήρα και οι Δώδεκα *Παλαδίνοι* της Γαλλίας στις θέσεις των αποστόλων

μπορεί, συνεπώς, να είναι θέματα εμπνευσμένα από τη διάταξη του συνθρόνου στις αψίδες πολλών παλαιοχριστιανικών εκκλησιών. Ο άγνωστος συγγραφέας του παλαιογαλλικού ποιήματος μπορεί να πληροφορήθηκε γι' αυτήν από τους Σταυροφόρους που την είδαν στη Νίκαια της Βιθυνίας, ή από τους προσκυνητές που είδαν παρόμοιες διαμορφώσεις στη νότια Ιταλία.

Ωστόσο, το καθοριστικό στοιχείο είναι η σατιρική περιγραφή της συνάντησης του Καρλομάγνου με τον Ούγο, τον βυζαντινό «βασιλιά», την ώρα που όργωνε το χωράφι του. Ο βυζαντινός αυτοκράτορας φορεί μεγαλοπρεπή γάντια και ένα καπέλο. Έχει ένα *carue*, του οποίου η σημασία δεν είναι ξεκάθαρη, καθώς μπορεί να αναφέρεται στο ίδιο το άροτρο ή σε ένα άρμα. Κραδαίνει ένα ραβδί για να καθοδηγεί τους βόες, το οποίο περιγράφεται επίσης ως χρυσή ράβδος, αλλά δεν είναι πεζός. Κάθεται πάνω σε ένα μεγάλο μαξιλάρι με περσικό μεταξωτό κάλυμμα, γεμισμένο με φτερά από χρυσά πουλιά. Το μαξιλάρι είναι τοποθετημένο πάνω σε ένα χρυσό κάθισμα και τα πόδια του βασιλιά ακουμπούν σε ένα υποπόδιο με αργυροποίκιλτη διακόσμηση· όλη η κατασκευή φαίνεται να αιωρείται μεταξύ τεσσάρων πεσσών που στηρίζουν κιβώριο από λεπτό ύφασμα, το οποίο φέρουν από τις δύο πλευρές δύο δυνατοί ημίονοι. Ο συγγραφέας, όταν περιγράφει το άροτρο, αναφέρεται επίσης στους χρυσούς ιμάντες του ζυγού, στους άξονές του, στις ρόδες του και στο κυρίως τμήμα του, οπότε είναι δύσκολο να διακρίνουμε αν περιγράφει δύο πράγματα σε ένα –ένα άροτρο και μία άμαξα– ή μία υβριδική κατασκευή, δηλαδή έναν συνδυασμό αρότρου και άρματος.

Ωστόσο, οι εξαιρετικά ακριβείς λεπτομέρειες αυτής της περιγραφής αντιστοιχούν σε αυτό που ένας μεσαιωνικός άνθρωπος θα έβλεπε σε αρχαίες παραστάσεις θριάμβων, μια θρησκευτική πομπή ή μια πράξη εγκαινίων. Η περιγραφή του βυζαντινού αυτοκράτορα θα μπορούσε να ήταν η –με σατιρική διάθεση– ερμηνεία μιας σαρκοφάγου, την οποία ο άγνωστος συγγραφέας θα μπορούσε να είχε δει οπουδήποτε, ακόμα και στο αββαείο του Saint Denis. Συνεπώς, η δημώδης παρωδία αναπλάθει με σατιρικό τρόπο το παρελθόν αντλώντας από διαφορετικές πηγές, σε σχέση με εκείνες των μεσαιωνικών λατινικών πηγών της. Ο συγγραφέας δεν παρουσιάζει μια πιστή απεικόνιση του Βυζαντίου, ακόμα και αν η περιγραφή της διακόσμησης των εκκλησιών της Ανατολής αποδεικνύει ότι είχε γνώση της βυζαντινής πραγματικότητας. Εκμεταλλεύτηκε την άγνοια του κοινού του σχετικά με το Βυζάντιο, το οποίο αναπλαθόταν στη φαντασία του σε συνδυασμό με την Αρχαιότητα, προκειμένου να σατιρίσει τη χρήση του παρελθόντος από την *Descriptio qualiter*. Οι μεσαιωνικοί γάλλοι συγγραφείς έβλεπαν τη βυζαντινή οικουμένη ως κατάλοιπο της Αρχαιότητας, σε συνδυασμό με το πλαίσιο της *translatio imperii* και της *translatio studii*.

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