

RE-THINKING THE *CARMINA BURANA* II: THE CHILD, THE JEW, AND THE DRAMA

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Abstract: This study of the “Christmas play” preserved by the Codex Buranus (Munich, Bavarian State Library clm. 4660) examines its place in the culture of the Augustinian order of regular canons at Neustift (Novacella), near to Brixen (Bressanone), in South Tyrol, probing the use of Jewish stereotypes, the limits of secular scholarship, and the nature of religious knowledge.

Keywords: *Carmina Burana*, Codex Buranus, Neustift, *h*¹-Conrad, drama, Jewish stereotypes, *trivium*, *quadrivium*, religious knowledge.

The stage-directions are evocative but precise:

*Primo ponatur sedes Augustino in fronte ecclesie, et Augustinus habeat a dextera parte Isaiam et Daniele et alios prophetas, a sinistra autem Archisynagogum et suos Iudeos. Postea surgat Isaias cum prophetia sua sic: ...*¹

First let a seat be placed for Augustine before the church, and let him have on the right-hand side Isaiah and Daniel and the other prophets, but on the left the leader of the synagogue and his Jews. Then let Isaiah rise and deliver his prophecy as follows: ...

So reads the rubric copied and perhaps composed by the master-scribe of the Codex Buranus (Munich, Bavarian State Library, clm. 4660) on folio 99r.² Writing at Neustift (Novacella), near to Brixen (Bressanone) in South Tyrol ca. 1230, he served as *scholasticus* in that community of Augustinian canons, who venerated the leading character in this drama as their patron-saint. *H*¹-Conrad—so called from the siglum traditionally assigned to his hand in the manuscript and from his name recently identified by charter-evidence³—knew that presentation of Augustine in a play required caution. The self-styled oracle of the order, Gerhoh of Reichersberg, ca. 1162 had denounced “theatrical spectacles performed in God’s church.”⁴ Not by chance does *h*¹-Conrad specify that his Christmas-play is enacted *in fronte ecclesiae* (“in front of the church”). No one was to confuse his religious drama with others’ “ravings” which Gerhoh deplored as blasphemous. Nor should anyone fancy that he was participating in or witnessing one of the “games” (*ludi / ludibria*) which Innocent III had con-

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¹ *Carmina Burana* I, 3. *Die Trink- und Spiellieder – Die geistlichen Dramen*, ed. Bernhard Bischoff (Heidelberg 1970) 86 and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Benedikt Konrad Vollmann (Berlin 2011) 704. The title *Ludus de Nativitate*, by which this work is sometimes known, has no manuscript authority. This is the third in a series of studies preliminary to the edition, in three volumes, of the *Carmina Burana* (CB) which Frank Bezner (UC, Berkeley) and I are preparing for Oxford University Press.

² The manuscript been digitalised and can be accessed at URL: http://daten.digital-e-sammlungen.de/bsb00085130/image_1.

³ See Peter Godman, “Re-Thinking the *Carmina Burana* I: Medieval Context and Modern Reception,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 45.2 (2015) 245–286.

⁴ See Bernd Neumann, *Geistliches Schauspiel im Zeugnis der Zeit. Zur Aufführung mittelalterlicher religiöser Dramen im deutschen Sprachgebiet* 2 (Munich 1987) 888–889 (no. 3725).

demned so categorically in 1207, with a ruling that became canon law in Gregory IX's *Liber Extra* (1234).⁵ *H*¹-Conrad wrote his Christmas-play in the wake of the fourth Lateran council which his mentor, Conrad of Rodank, Brixen's bishop, had attended in November 1215. His namesake was informed, by Bishop Conrad's account of proceedings, that the Lateran's line on actors, *jongleurs*, and theatrical performances was restrictive and tough.⁶ Moreover, the drama was enacted by almost fifty members of the community before a mixed audience, many of whom were young and some of whom may have been laymen. The scope, scale, and setting of the event excluded open display of the ambivalence to ecclesiastical reform which *h*¹-Conrad reveals in his choice of erotic poetry elsewhere in the Codex Buranus.⁷ Before the church, rather than inside it,⁸ the Augustinian order at Neustift was making its dramatic début.

I. SYMBOLIC SCENOGRAPHY

The scenography addresses these concerns. At center-stage, apparently the arbiter but in fact a protagonist, sits Augustine. To his right, on the side of the spirit, are stationed the prophets.⁹ There the Jews are assigned by the liturgy, in opposition to pagans.¹⁰ Now they are demoted to the left, and the lower status of the flesh. Not a word has been said, but much has been expressed symbolically. The first, perhaps the most urgent, implication is the sartorial separateness of Jews (and Saracens), on which the fourth Lateran Council had insisted.¹¹ Christian contacts with these immigrants to southern Germany were anyway limited. Writing to King Philip Augustus of France in 1205, Innocent III condemned Jewish derision of Christians.¹² They were required, by the same pope, to litigate with clerics in ecclesiastical, not secular, courts. The rituals of mass might be likened to the proceedings of a tribunal,¹³ and the paraliturgical stage set at Neustift ca. 1230 pitted Jews and Christians against one another in dispute. An implication of semi-legal strife between this religious community and outsiders to the

⁵ *Corpus Iuris Canonici Pars Secunda: Decretalium Collectiones: Decreta Gregorii p. IX* ed. Aemilius Ludwig Richter and Emil Friedberg (Leipzig 1881) 452.

⁶ *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis una cum commentariis glossatorum* ed Antonio García y García, Monumenta Iuris Canonici A, 2 (Vatican 1981) 64 (16, 2–3).

⁷ On Conrad of Rodank, the fourth Lateran Council, and *h*¹-Conrad, see Peter Godman, "Re-Thinking the *Carmina Burana* III: Poetry and History" (forthcoming).

⁸ The translation of *in fronte ecclesie* as "the front part of the church-interior" by David Bevington, *Medieval Drama* (Boston 1975) 180 n. 1. strains the Latin beyond limits, which is why the observation of Christopher A. Lee, "Augustine vs. Archisynagogus: Competing Modes of Christian Instruction in the Benediktbeuern *Ludus de Nativitate*," *Florilegium* 32 (2006) 83—"... it is highly unlikely that the viewers of a Latin play performed inside a church during the Christmas season included any real Jews"—although true, is irrelevant.

⁹ See Sr. Ursula von Deitmaring OSU, "Die Bedeutung von Rechts und Links in theologischen und literarischen Texten bis um 1200," *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 93 (1969) 265–292.

¹⁰ See Rudolf Suntrup, *Die Bedeutung der liturgischen Gebärden und Bewegungen in lateinischen und deutschen Auslegungen des 9. bis 13. Jahrhunderts*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Studien, vol. 37 (Munich 1978) 206ff.

¹¹ *Constitutiones Concilii quarti Lateranensis* ed. García y García (n. 6 above) 107–108 (68).

¹² Robert Chazan, "Pope Innocent III and the Jews," *Pope Innocent III and his World*, ed. John C. Moore (Aldershot 1999) 187–204; and John C. Moore, *Pope Innocent III (1160/61–1216). To Root Up and to Plant* (Leiden 2003) 135–168.

¹³ Honorius Augustodunensis, *Gemma animae* i. 80 (PL 172.568D–569A).

faith hung heavy in the atmosphere.¹⁴ The outcome appeared predictable before the play had begun. When the Jews of Germany sought exculpation from the charge of ritual murder in 1235, they appealed not to the pope but to Emperor Frederick II.¹⁵

Neustift, however, was by no means a community in which the anti-Judaic attitudes of the friars could flourish.¹⁶ These Augustinian canons adhered to the more moderate position of their patron-saint. In France of the twelfth century, with which the Codex Buranus demonstrates their contacts to have been various and deep, religious drama was not uniformly hostile in its treatment of Jews.¹⁷ External influence and the internal customs of the order tempered antipathy toward aliens. That is why it was both traditional and original that the Neustift Christmas-play began on the basis of a sermon, falsely attributed to Augustine and actually composed by Quodvultdeus, bishop of Carthage (d. October 454), which served as a reading at matins on Christmas Day.¹⁸ The audience heard, during the Feast of the Holy Innocents on 28 December, a variant of its liturgical experience three days earlier. That variant was amplified by music; the text on folios 99r–102r is neumed by *h*¹-Conrad. For choristers and those whose childhoods were spent in such foundations as Neustift, the matutinal office at Christmas involved reading and singing with dramatic qualities by performers who were familiar with coded conduct.¹⁹ Assuming a precisely-defined posture during services, kneeling in ordered groups, reading or reciting in chapter²⁰: each and every member of the community for whom *h*¹-Conrad designed his work had received, or was being trained in, the rituals of the liturgy which contributed to this didactic drama.

Farce, with its modern anachronisms of “implicit mockery” and “sacred clowns,”²¹ was out of place. *H*¹-Conrad took as his point of departure a foundational text of religious theatre both in the learned language and in the vernacular.²² Augustinianism,

¹⁴ On the issue in general, see Lynette Muir, “European Communities and Medieval Drama,” *Drama and Community. People and Plays in Medieval Europe*, ed. Alan Hindley (Turnhout 1999) 1–17; and Heinz Kindermann, *Das Theaterpublikum des Mittelalters* (Salzburg 1980).

¹⁵ Robert Chazan, *The Jews of Medieval Western Christendom 1000–1500* (Cambridge 2006) 190ff.

¹⁶ See Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews. The Formation of Medieval Anti-Judaism* (Ithaca 1983).

¹⁷ See Gilbert Dahan, “Les Juifs dans le théâtre religieux en France du XII^e au XIV^e siècles,” *Archives Juives* 13 (1977) 1–10; and idem, “Le Judeus du Jeu de saint Nicolas dit de ‘Fleury,’” *Cahiers de civilisation médiévale* 16 (1973) 221–236.

¹⁸ *Contra Iudeos, Paganos et Arianos*, ed. R. Braun, Opera Quodvultdeo Chartaginensi Episcopo Tributa CCSL 60 (Turnhout 1976) 227–258. The relevant sections are xi–xviii *ibid.* 241ff.

¹⁹ See Susan Boynton, “Boy Singers in Medieval Monasteries and Cathedrals,” *Young Choristers 650–1700*, ed. Susan Boynton and Eric Rice (Woodbridge 2008) 37–48; and Craig M. Wright, *Music and Ceremony at Notre Dame of Paris 500–1550* (Cambridge 1989) 165ff.

²⁰ See Maria Lahaye-Geussen, *Das Opfer der Kinder. Ein Beitrag zur Liturgie- und Sozialgeschichte des Mönchtums im Hohen Mittelalter*, Münsteraner Theologische Abhandlungen 13 (Altenberg 1991) 185ff, 203ff, 268ff, 442.

²¹ Pace Mark Addison Amos, “Cum nimio cachinno: The Politics of Participation in the Boy-Bishop Feast and the Benediktbeuern *Ludus de Nativitate*,” *The European Studies Journal* 17/18 (2001) 99–114.

²² See Eckart Conrad Lutz, “Vulgäraugustinisches Denken? Überlegungen zu den Geistlichen Spielen des Mittelalters,” *Zeitschrift für deutsches Altertum und deutsche Literatur* 121 (1992) 290–309; and

real or attributed, was no laughing-matter in the order of regular canons to which he belonged, nor could this *scholasticus* responsible for educating the young permit levity in his Christmas-play. Acted and sung in large part by choristers, to whose needs and interests the liturgy might be adapted during such festivities,²³ it reflects the worth attached to their high and pure voices.²⁴ Sound is therefore a significant factor in the drama of *CB 227*. So too are gesture, movement, and pose. After the performers had made their entry, doubtless in procession, the one playing Augustine took his seat in the manner of a bishop at pontifical mass. Judicial authority was implied by this sedentary posture, which Rupert of Deutz considered less physical than symbolic.²⁵ When the first prophet, Isaiah, rose, his upright stance recalled that of the priest before the altar in readiness for combat with foes of the faith. They, in contrast to the four prophets and the Sibyl, are relegated to the wings. There, on the left side of Augustine, “Archisynagogus and his Jews” lower in their anonymous place, while the named heralds of Christian revelation, in stately turn, occupy center-stage. Drawing on readings from *Contra Iudeos* which the audience recalls from the Christmas service, they bring that liturgy to life.

One of these prophets is less stately than the others. The Sibyl was celebrated in a rich literary tradition,²⁶ and during the thirteenth century her vaticinations served political purposes.²⁷ Not politics but gesture,²⁸ emphasized in the stage-directions (*gesticulose procedat / cum gestu mobili cantet*²⁹), distinguishes the performance of this Sibyl from the measured motions of Isaiah, Daniel, and Aaron. She belongs to a different order, and her movements are accordingly disordered. Neither the standing nor the sitting, kneeling, bowing, prostration, and raising or outstretching of hands prescribed by the liturgy accommodates her actions.³⁰ The Sibyl is frenzied. *Furor propheticus* sets her apart from the Old Testament prophets, in the style of an ancient *vates*. It is less what she declares in verse familiar from St Augustine’s *City of God* (xviii. 23) and from the Augustinian tradition than how she sings her lines on the Vir-

Vincent Marsicano, “Adaptions of the Pseudo-Augustine *Sermon Against the Jews* in the *Benediktbeuern Christmas Play* and the *Frankfurt Passion Play*,” *Colloquia Germanica* 15 (1982) 59–65.

²³ See Boynton, “Boy Singers in Monasteries and Cathedrals” (n. 19 above) 46–47, and see further below.

²⁴ See Marius Linnenborn, *Der Gesang der Kinder in der Liturgie. Eine liturgiewissenschaftliche Untersuchung zur Geschichte des Chorgesangs* (Regensburg 2010) 116ff., 139ff.

²⁵ *Sedere...non membrorum positionem sed iudiciariam significat potestatem. De divinis officiis* ix. 8 ed. Hrabanus Haacke, CCCM 7 (Turnhout 1967) 323, 933–934.

²⁶ See Bernhard Bischoff, “Die lateinischen Übersetzungen und Bearbeitungen aus den *Oracula Sibyllina*,” *Mittelalterliche Studien* 1, ed. Bernhard Bischoff (Stuttgart 1966) 150–171; and cf. Peter Dronke, “Medieval Sibyls: Their Character and their ‘Auctoritas,’” *Studi Medievali* 36 (1995) 581–616; and “Hermes and the Sibyl: Continuations and Creations,” *Intellectuals and Poets in Medieval Europe*, ed. Peter Dronke (Rome 1992) 219–244.

²⁷ Christian Jostmann, *Sibilla Eriethea Babilonica. Papsttum und Prophetie im 13. Jahrhundert* MGH Schriften 54 (Hanover 2006).

²⁸ On the subject in general see Jean-Claude Schmitt, *La Raison des Gestes dans l’Occident médiéval* (Paris 1990).

²⁹ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 87; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 706.

³⁰ On liturgical motion, see Suntrup, *Die Bedeutung der liturgischen Gebärden und Bewegungen* (n. 10 above) 122–181.

gin Birth that enhances the ambivalence of the Sibyl. Inspired but unstable, she is the first of the performers to diverge from the liturgical line.

The second is Balaam's ass. As it is required to "retreat in terror" (*perterritus retrocedat*³¹) on seeing the angel who appears with drawn sword, an animal could hardly be expected to follow the stage-direction. And since Balaam, played by a child, sits on the ass, its role can only have been taken by a youth or an adult robed in drapery reminiscent of pantomime. This touch of humor complements the hint of melodrama in the gesticulating Sibyl's appearance. "Paralitururgical", in such a context, meant both proximity to the rites of the Church and departure from them. None of the understated comedy, however, bordered on burlesque; nor did any spectator of the ass in reverse imagine that he was attending a *festum asinorum*.

II. THE BOY-BISHOP AND THE JEW

The beast and the Sibyl express, by their gestures and by their movements, emotions of ecstasy and dread. Affectivity professed in public amounted to political and religious communication in a system of signs.³² Unusual but not unprecedented, the signs sent by these actors barely disturbed the stage. Disturbance was caused by the Jews and their rumbustious rouser:

*Archisynagogus cum suis Iudeis valde obstrepet auditis prophetiis et dicat trudendo socium suum, movendo caput suum et totum corpus, et percutiendo terram pede, baculo etiam imitando gestus Iudei in omnibus. Et sociis suis indignando dicat: ...*³³

Let the leader of the synagogue with his Jews, on hearing the prophecies, make an uproar and speak, while shoving his companion, shaking his head and entire body, and kicking the ground with his foot, mimicking Jewish behavior in every respect with his staff. And let him say with outrage to his companions ...

This is not ecstasy but excess, the contrary of the prophets' stateliness. If Archisynagogus does violence to the Jew beside him, he also violates Christian order. Shaking both his body and his staff in noisy indignation during the festival, he shatters the spiritual quiet which the hierarchy had commanded him and his likes to observe. When *h*^l-Conrad wrote this stage-direction, he was aware, from the bishop of Brixen's reports, that the pope and the fathers assembled at the fourth Lateran council had admonished the Jews to restrained conduct on holy days. It is not just that Archisynagogus behaves like a lout; it is also that he breaches a rule laid down recently by the

³¹ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 88; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 710.

³² Cf. Gerd Althoff, *Spielregeln der Politik im Mittelalter. Kommunikation in Frieden und Fehde* (Düsseldorf 1997) 258–281; and Barbara H. Rosenwein, ed., *Anger's Past. The Social Uses of an Emotion in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, 198) See further below.

³³ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 89 and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 710.

universal Church. Before he has delivered a speech, his uncontrolled behavior puts him beyond the pale.

When the Jew does speak, it is in a parody of biblical diction:

*Dic mihi, quid predicat dealbatus paries?*³⁴ (v. 45)

Tell me, what is the whitened wall preaching?

An audience skilled in Scripture will have noted that Archisynagogus refers not to the Old Testament but to the New (Acts 23.3; cf. Matthew 23.27). The allusion is all the more stinging for being borrowed from the Apostle Paul, and the repetitive request for information that follows (*Dic mihi .../ Dic mihi ...* vv. 46–47) emphasizes that the curiosity is feigned. The Jew wants to know nothing, because he is convinced that Christian truths are lies. His taunt amounts to a tirade. Aggressive in his disbelief, Archisynagogus, at conflict with the prophets and the Sibyl, appears to be challenging not only them but also the saint's authority. This is the point at which the audience might expect Augustine to intervene. By a dramatic *tour de force*, he does not. Instead, above "the uproarious errors of the Jews" (*auditis tumultu et errore Judeorum*), is raised the clear and calm voice of a boy-bishop (*episcopus puerorum*):

*Horum sermo vacuus, sensus peregrini,
quos et furor agitat et libertas vini.
Sed restat consulere mentem Augustini,
per quem disputatio concedatur fini.*³⁵
(vv. 53–56)

Their verbosity is nonsense; they are
both crazed and under the influence.
It remains to consult the opinion of Augustine,
through whom an end will be put to this dispute.

These lines mark a shift in the scenography of 28 December. They bear no resemblance to homilies traditionally delivered during the Feast of the Holy Innocents, despite the evidence which survives of children preaching on that occasion.³⁶ Moreover, it is striking that the speech on folio 101r of the Codex Buranus, unlike all the texts which surround it, is not neumed. After the jibes of Archisynagogus in the uproar of his arrogance, silence falls. But the boy-bishop—who, at Neustift as elsewhere, was usually a chorister—does not sing. Instead he appeals to Augustine. Order is re-established in the eyes of canons who live under that saint's Rule. They detect no subversion of hierarchy, no world turned upside-down. Confusion that is common in the secondary literature between the Feast of the Holy Innocents, as regular as it was

³⁴ Ibid. 89 and 710.

³⁵ Ibid. 89 and 712.

³⁶ For homilies, see Paul Antony Hayward, "Suffering and Innocence in Latin Sermons for the Feast of the Holy Innocents," *The Church and Childhood*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford, 1994) 67–80; and, on the boy-bishop, Tanja Skambraks, *Das Kinderbischofsfest im Mittelalter* Micrologus Library 62 (Florence 2014) 151ff.

real, and the intermittent or illusory Feast of Fools³⁷ is dispelled by *CB* 227. Hurly-burly is halted, rather than promoted, by the boy. In a society which practiced infanticide as birth-control,³⁸ this child performs as a living heir to the kingdom of heaven (Luke 18.15; Matthew 19.3).³⁹

He does not speak with the eloquence or at the length of the young in Middle High German literature of the period.⁴⁰ The boy-bishop recites only four lines, briefly as befits a novice of the Augustinian order. One of its leading intellectuals, Hugh of Saint-Victor, had written about the issue of verbal discipline in the twelfth century. We know that his major treatise, *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*, was copied at Neustift in a script similar to that of the amanuensis who assisted *h*¹-Conrad with the Codex Buranus;⁴¹ and the *scholasticus* was likely to have been aware of Hugh's precepts. Wordy arguments are to be avoided, he recommends in *De institutione clericorum*,⁴² just as wild gestures should be eschewed.⁴³ The young are enjoined to cultivate *discretio*, ethical insight,⁴⁴ which is displayed in a concise way with words. Sober speech indicates modesty and humility.⁴⁵ Such were the standards by which the child's tranquil restraint was measured at Neustift, in contrast to the loud effusiveness of the Jew. To the trained imagination of the audience, they typified antitheses of conflict and control.

Sic et non, the dialectical principle on which the Codex Buranus is constructed,⁴⁶ shapes the development of its drama. At what is considered (or neglected) a cultural periphery of medieval Europe in South Tyrol, this responsiveness to methods of enquiry for which centers such as Paris are famous has been ignored. In the scholastic context of Neustift, it was significant that the boy-bishop, appealing to the patron-saint of his order, hopes that he will end what is described as a *disputatio* (v. 56). The writings of Augustine, opponent of violence in preaching to the Jews,⁴⁷ provided a point of

³⁷ Cf. Max Harris, *Sacred Folly. A New History of the Feast of Fools* (Ithaca 2011).

³⁸ See Esther R. Coleman, "L'infanticide dans le Haut Moyen Âge," *Annales* 29 (1974) 315–335.

³⁹ Hubertus Lutterbach, *Gotteskindschaft. Kultur- und Sozialgeschichte eines christlichen Ideals* (Freiburg 2003) 159.

⁴⁰ Cf. James Alfred Schultz, *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1000–1350* (Philadelphia 1995) 217ff.

⁴¹ See Godman, "Re-Thinking the *Carmina Burana* II" (n. 7 above).

⁴² PL 176.931B–C. For context, cf. C. Stephen Jaeger, "Humanism and Ethics at the School of St. Victor in the early Twelfth Century," *Scholars and Courtiers: Intellectuals and Society in the Medieval West*. Variorum (Aldershot 2002) iii. 51–79 (n.)

⁴³ *Ibid.* 940C–941C.

⁴⁴ See François Dingjan, OSB, *Discretio: Les Origines patristiques et monastiques de la doctrine de la prudence chez Saint Thomas d'Aquin* (Assen 1967).

⁴⁵ PL 176.943B, 946B.

⁴⁶ See Godman, "Re-Thinking the *Carmina Burana* II" (n. 7 above)

⁴⁷ See Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Die Judenpredigt Augustins* (Paris 1973); and Gerhart B. Ladner, "Aspects of Patristic Anti-Judaism," *Viator* 2 (1971) 355–363; (= *id.* *Images and Ideas in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies in History and Art* ([Rome 1982]) 867–876.)

reference for the learned debates of the schools.⁴⁸ Both parts are pertinent to the role he takes in *CB 227*, with no notion of his actual animosity to the theatre (*Confessions* iii.2.2; vi.7.11⁴⁹). Yet the saint of this drama is not the paragon whom theologians elevated on a pedestal.⁵⁰ Less exalted and more animated, he is visualized with a freshness found in art.⁵¹ Inviting the Jews to join him on the path of Scripture previously closed to them:

et Scripture pateat ipsis clausa semita
(v. 64)

Augustine chooses the plain diction and shuns the high style which he compares unfavorably with one another in *De doctrina christiana*.⁵² *Res*, not *verba*, are his priorities. Edification—*verbo et exemplo, vita et doctrina*—is his purpose. To Augustinian canons, this emphasis on pastoral action complemented by verbal directness summed up a distinctive feature of their spirituality.⁵³

The Jew of the *disputatio* in *CB 227* differs from the figures who argue with Christians in the prose-literature of the High Middle Ages.⁵⁴ Neither legalistic nor literal-minded, Archisynagogus resembles John of Salisbury's Cornificius—the logic-chopper, the casuist, the sophist. Few of the clichés of medieval anti-Judaism fit the stance he assumes. No indication is given of his dress, although it is probable that his costume included a Phrygian hat, in keeping with the fourth Lateran council's decree that Jews should be identifiable by appearance.⁵⁵ But it is above all laughter that sets Archisynagogus apart. *Cum nimio cacchino*, using the double-edged weapon of derision,⁵⁶ he mounts his assault on the Christian faith, inverting the pillory of Jews

⁴⁸ See Coloman Etienne Viola, "Manières personnelles et impersonnelles d'aborder un problème: saint Augustin et le XII^e siècle. Contribution à l'histoire de la *quaestio*," *Les Genres littéraires dans les sources théologiques et philosophiques médiévales. Définition, critique et exploitation* Actes du Colloque international de Louvain-la-Neuve 25–27 Mai 1981 (Louvain-la-Neuve 1982) 11–30.

⁴⁹ See Werner Weisemann, *Kirche und Schauspiele. Die Schauspiele im Urteil der lateinischen Kirchenväter unter besonderer Berücksichtigung von Augustin* (Würzburg 1972).

⁵⁰ Willemien Otten, "The Reception of Augustine in the Early Middle Ages (c. 700 – c. 1200) Presence, Absence, Reverence, and other Modes of Appropriation," *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine* i., ed. Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten (Oxford 2013) 23–38.

⁵¹ Cf. Karla Pollmann, "Art and Authority: Three Paradigmatic Visualisations of Augustine of Hippo," *Augustine beyond the Book: Intermediality, Transmediality, and Reception*, ed. Karla Pollmann, Meredith Jane Gill, and Vladimir Cvetković, Brill's Series in Church History 58 (Leiden 2012) 13–38; and Dorothea Weber, "Augustine and Drama," *ibid.* 97–110.

⁵² *De doctrina christiana* iv. 28 (61), ed. Joseph Martin, S. Aurelii Augustini De doctrina christiana. De vera religione CCSL 32 (Turnhout 1967) 164–165.

⁵³ See Caroline W. Bynum, "The Spirituality of Regular Canons in the Twelfth Century: a New Approach," *Medievalia et Humanistica* 4 (1973) 3–24.

⁵⁴ See Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in Dispute. Disputational Literature and the Rise of Anti-Judaism in the West (c. 1000–1150)* (Aldershot 1998).

⁵⁵ On the visual evidence, see Debra Higgs Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews. Making Monsters in Medieval Art* (Princeton 2003) 95–156.

⁵⁶ See Jean-Claude Schmitt, "Les images de la derision," *La Dérision au Moyen Âge. De la pratique sociale au rituel politique*, ed. Élisabeth Crouzel-Pavan and Jacques Verger (Paris 2007) 263–272; and Gerd Althoff, "Vom Lachen zum Verlachen," *Lachgemeinschaften. Kulturelle Beziehungen und soziale Wirkungen von Gelächter im Mittelalter und in der Frühen Neuzeit*, ed. Werner Röcke and Hans Rudolf Velten, Trends in Medieval Philology (Berlin 2005) 3–16.

conventional in Christian polemic and iconography. A close, if later, analogy is provided by Stephen of Derby's Psalter which, in a historiated initial, depicts an Augustinian canon disputing with a Jew, while above them God, in the words of Psalm 52.1, dismisses the cleric's opponent as a fool.⁵⁷ Archisynagogus's laughter—excessive (*nimio*), unlike the measured utterance of the saint—far from serving to ridicule the Christians, demotes himself to the ranks of folly.

The mocked strives and fails to become the mocker. His inversion of Christian categories is more telling on the intellectual plane:

<i>Tu quid contra resonas qui non illud respicis, Nam si virgo pariet, Natura de proprio</i>	<i>labe tactus veteri, quod est iustum fieri? quod prophetant pueri, iure potest conqueri.</i>
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<i>Quando virgo pariet, Lupus agnum fugiet, Si moderna colligis in adiecto ponitur (vv. 74–81)</i>	<i>Xante, retro propera! plana fient aspera! et attendis vetera, est virgo puerpera.⁵⁸</i>
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What are you bellowing back, infected by the ancient plague,
why don't you consider proper behavior?
For if a virgin gives birth, as boys prophesy,
Nature is aggrieved in her very rights.

Should a virgin give birth, Xanthus shall hurry backwards!
The wolf shall flee the lamb, the planes become hilly!
If you sift modern and examine ancient evidence,
a virgin giving birth is a contradiction in terms.

An outsider to the community of the faithful, Archisynagogus is an insider of scholastic culture, who now scores points in the dispute. His dismissal of the Virgin Birth, at v. 76, as a "boys' prophecy" both snidely refers to Scripture (Psalm 8.3) and states a bald fact, since parts in the *ordo prophetarum* have indeed been played by children. When Xanthus is imagined flowing backwards at v. 78, in the manner of Ovid, *Heroides* v. 31, the Jew demonstrates a knowledge of school-literature hardly inferior to his command of logical terminology, in which *adicere* (v. 81) and its cognates denoted contradiction.⁵⁹ Not only logic and nature are contradicted by such superstitions, Archisynagogus urges, but also the rationality with which earlier works in a related

⁵⁷ See Strickland, *Saracens, Demons, Jews* (n. 55 above) 139.

⁵⁸ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 90; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 714.

⁵⁹ Cf. Adam of Balsham, *Ars disserendi* clxix, ed. Lorenzo Minio-Paluello, *Twelfth Century Logic. Texts and Studies I* (Rome 1956) 107, 21, 24.

genre, such as Gilbert Crispin's *Disputatio Iudaei et Christiani*,⁶⁰ had claimed to present irrefutable arguments for the truth of Christianity. Its dogma is irrational, asserts the Jew, contrary to the premise or the prejudice that beliefs of his people always remained unaltered.⁶¹ Change had occurred in Judaism, he effectively implies by countering the orthodox exponents of reason on their own terms. More inclined to accept assumption of parity in Biblical exegesis than in *disputatio*,⁶² they were unprepared for a figure of inferior faith as their argumentative equal.

Neither obduracy nor ignorance—standard charges of anti-Judaism—applies to Archisynagogus. He arouses antipathy by his tone and behavior, with which the stage-direction contrasts the grave thoughtfulness of Augustine's speech (*voce sobria et discreta respondeat Augustinus*⁶³):

<i>In eventu prospero</i>	<i>talis casus unici</i>
<i>argumenta claudicent</i>	<i>moresque sophistici;</i>
<i>docet enim ratio</i>	<i>naturam non reici,</i>
<i>si quid preter solitum</i>	<i>semel vides obici.</i>

<i>Dicat: "homo mortuus</i>	<i>in adiecto ponitur,</i>
<i>quod in Aristotile</i>	<i>pueris exprimitur";</i>
<i>sed hec vestra regula</i>	<i>tunc repulsam patitur,</i>
<i>cum de matre virgine</i>	<i>sermo nobis oritur.</i> ⁶⁴

(vv. 90–97)

In the happy event of such a unique case,
let argumentation and sophistical procedure limp;
for reason teaches that nature is not rejected,
if you once see something out of the ordinary.

Let him say: "A dead man is a contradiction in terms,
which children can grasp from Aristotle";
but this rule of yours is refuted at the moment
when we begin to speak of the Virgin Birth.

The reference is to Aristotle's *Sophistici Elenchi*, a work which Rahewin reports Otto of Freising having brought to Germany from France, and to a problem of semantics which, in the Parisian schools of this period linked with Neustift, was being discussed avidly.⁶⁵ Current debates provide one reason why Augustine chooses the fallacy of the

⁶⁰ See Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in Dispute* v (n. 54 above) 135ff.

⁶¹ See Amos Funkenstein, "Basic Types of Christian Anti-Jewish Polemics in the Later Middle Ages," *Viator* 2 (1971) 373–382.

⁶² See Aryeh Grabois, "The Hebraic *Veritas* and Jewish-Christian Intellectual Relations in the Twelfth Century," *Speculum* 50 (1975) 613–634; and cf. David Ernst Timmer, "The Religious Significance of Judaism for Twelfth-Century Monastic Exegesis: A Study of the Thought of Rupert of Deutz, c. 1070–1129" (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame 1983).

⁶³ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 90; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 716.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ Rahewin, *Gesta Frederici seu rectius Cronica* iv.14, ed. Franz-Josef Schmale, *Ausgewählte Quellen zur deutsche Geschichte des Mittelalters* 17 (Darmstadt 1965) 538, 27–28; Sten Ebbesen, "The Dead Man is Alive," *Synthese* 40 (1979) 43–70.

dead man and, in doing so, replies to Archisynagogus's taunt (v. 76) about "puerile prophecies". No, answers the saint, it is logic-chopping that should be regarded as low-grade (v. 96). This rejection of sophistry evokes a central subject of the *trivium*, the dialectic which was taught to the boys performing in the play by its author, *h*^l-Conrad. Now the *scholasticus* points to the limits of the learning acquired in dispute, and invites them to reflect on other modes of religious perception.

Authority, even the highest, is inadequate. Proclamation of Christian dogma by Augustine and the prophets has no effect. To every announcement of wonder, *Res miranda!* (v. 107), the Jews rejoin with negation: *Res neganda!*⁶⁶ (v. 108). Confronted with the double failure of dialectic and rhetoric, the saint, tacitly renouncing the role of arbiter, performs his most original exploit on stage by retiring to the wings. What follows amounts to a play within a play, which seeks to show how the Virgin Birth may be visualized. More than "learning by looking,"⁶⁷ it is an enactment of Augustinian teaching through example and word for which there were numerous parallels in didactic genres but no antecedents in drama by the order.⁶⁸

So is developed a distinction between seeing and believing known at Neustift from Hugh of Saint-Victor's works. In his *De sacramentis Christianae fidei*, he stressed that lack of sensory evidence for faith could be compensated by the "apt testimony" (*idoneum ... testimonium*) of signs such as words, letters, or documents (*dantur signa vel in vocibus vel in litteris vel in quibuscumque documentis*)⁶⁹. Action is added to that triad by *CB* 227, in an imaginative extension of Hugh's theology to theatre. What he argued about the sacraments could be applied to plays, since Innocent III had excluded from his ruling against profane performances the "representations" of Herod and the Magi that follow.⁷⁰ *Representare*, the papal verb, was employed in Christian Latin to define the relationship between the Eucharistic bread and Christ's body.⁷¹ The most sacral of analogies was what *h*^l-Conrad had in mind; and it is at this point, when Archisynagogus has ceased his gesticulation and laughter, that the work can legitimately be described as a *ludus*:

Hoc completo detur locus prophetis, vel ut recedant

⁶⁶ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 91; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 718.

⁶⁷ Lee, "Augustine vs. Archisynagogus" (n. 8 above) 93.

⁶⁸ On the genres of Augustinian didactic literature, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Docere verbo et exemplo. An Aspect of Twelfth-Century Spirituality*, Harvard Theological Studies 31 (Missoula 1979).

⁶⁹ *De sacramentis* ii. 18 (PL 176.614D–615A, ed. Rainer Berndt SJ, *Corpus Victorinum Textus historici* I [Aschendorff, 2008] 598–599); cf. Michal Kobińska, *This is My Body: Representational Practices in the Early Middle Ages* (Ann Arbor 1999) 180–194.

⁷⁰ Discussed by Nils Holger Petersen, "Biblical Reception, Representational Ritual, and the Question of Liturgical Drama," *Sapientia et Eloquentia. Meaning and Function in Liturgical Poetry, Music, Drama, and Biblical Commentary in the Middle Ages*, ed. Gunilla Iversen and Nicolas Bell (Turnhout 2009) 163–202.

⁷¹ See Albert Blaise, *Le vocabulaire latin des principaux thèmes liturgiques* (Turnhout 1966) 383 no. 3

*vel sedeant in locis suis propter honorem ludi.*⁷²

After this scene is finished, let the prophets take their place.
They can either withdraw or sit in the places assigned to
them, with the purpose of enhancing the dignity of the play.

Revelry eliminated, and with it the solecism of “sacred clowns,” the dignity of dramatic performance enhances the resemblance of *CB* 227 to ritual. Pupils studying the *trivium* are encouraged to raise their sights above the trivial plane of what Augustine has called sophistry. The language of learning reaches a higher register after a scene in which the angel appears to Mary and, in swift succession, the Christ-child is born (vv. 138–147). Biblically—and liturgically—based, this part of the play serves almost as an *aide-mémoire*. Direct and concise, the Latin narrating the events of Christ’s birth simply sketches the background needed for the plot. The focus is less on the Incarnation than on the phenomena that attended it, the most remarkable of which is a new star. Doubtless raised at center-stage, it is marveled by the Magi, whose cult was recent and who had figured in theatre since the eleventh century.⁷³ What they say has no foundation in Scripture (Matthew 2.1–2). Their style is scholastic; their concern, a different division of the liberal arts. Drawing on their fame for expertise in astronomy—the prime, but not the sole, motive for the prominence lent to them by *CB* 227—the first of the Magi declares:

*Per curarum distrahor frequenter quadrivium
rationis paciens et mentis naufragium,
cum hanc stellam video portantem inditium,
quod ipsius novitas novum portet nuntium.*

*Cursus ego didici et naturas siderum
et ipsorum memini perscrutari numerum,
sed cum hanc inspicio, ego miror iterum,
quia non comparuit apud quemquam veterum.*⁷⁴
(vv. 148–155)

I am repeatedly bewildered by the *quadrivium* of cares,
losing my ability to reason and my intellect,
when I see this star indicating
by its very novelty that it bears news.

I learned the paths and the character of the stars,
I remember how to research their number,
but when I gaze at this one I wonder again and again,
because it is not mentioned by any ancient author.

⁷² *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 92; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 720.

⁷³ Hans Hofmann, “Die Heiligen Drei Könige. Zur Heiligenverehrung im kirchlichen, gesellschaftlichen und politischen Leben des Mittelalters” *Rheinisches Archiv* 14 (1975) 73ff, 153.

⁷⁴ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 93; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 724.

From the commanding, if outmoded, heights of a *quadrivium* still being transformed ca. 1230,⁷⁵ this alleged master of astronomy, the most technical of the advanced disciplines, confesses his inability to grasp the significance of the star. The first speaker, although voluble, admits to being tongue-tied (v. 160ff) when the “language of the old school” (*lingua secte veteris* v. 159)—an exegetical tradition, encompassing Ambrosiaster and pseudo-Chrysostom, which sought to legitimate astronomy by reference to the Magi—fails him. The incomprehensibility of the phenomenon in technical terms is underscored by the jargon (*quesiti proposito* v. 175) with which the second Magus misapplies scholastic methods. Only the third resolves the enigma that has tied the others up in knots (*questionum ... enodare rete* v. 180), by accepting that the categories of the *quadrivium* are inadequate to fathom revelation. Demoted as experts, the Magi are promoted as participants in the drama when, at last, they fall silent. The silence which acknowledges the insufficiency of human discourse, in contrast to the eloquence of the Word made Flesh, had been discussed, in the Premonstratensian branch of the Augustinian order, by Philip of Harvengt with special reference to the Magi.⁷⁶ This antithesis between the efficacy of the speaking sign and the failure of learned terminology in conveying divine mystery informs *h*¹-Conrad’s critique of the *quadrivium* and demotion of the *trivium*. Scholarship falters before a topic that transcends the barriers of the schools.

In the school of Neustift as in others, his pupils addressed *h*¹-Conrad as *magister*. When, in the scenes that follow, Herod defers not once but twice (vv. 225, 290) to Archisynagogus, bestowing the same title on him, how did the boys react? They knew, from Matthew 2.3ff, that the hot-headed tyrant made a mere pretense of consulting the Jews. It is telling that he does so in *CB* 227 after threatening with punishment the messengers who brought him news that the Magi had arrived, should their reports differ from “reason.” Yet the *ratio* (v. 224) personified by *magister* Archisynagogus makes its appearance “with great arrogance” (*cum magna superbia*). Then, departing from his previous derision, the Jew is said to embody the Ciceronian ideal of wisdom linked with eloquence (*cum magna sapientia et eloquentia*). How is this transformation effected? By a metamorphosis consistent in malice. Archisynagogus delivers a counsel of perfidy, which enables Herod to trick the straight-speaking Magi into revealing information that leads to the Massacre of the Innocents. On 28 December, a warning was being issued about verbal craftiness that abuses *ratio*.

Reason can be manipulated, but not revelation. The learned, typified by the Magi and Archisynagogus, are criticized even as they are praised; the *simplices* are ambigu-

⁷⁵ See Guy Beaujouan, “Le *quadrivium* et la Faculté des arts,” *L’enseignement des disciplines à la Faculté des Arts (Paris et Oxford, XIII^e – XV^e siècles)*, ed. Olga Weigers and Louis Holtz (Turnhout 1977) 185–194; and idem, “The Transformation of the *Quadrivium*,” *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. Robert L Benson and Giles Constable (Cambridge, MA 1982) 463–487.

⁷⁶ *De institutione clericorum* vi. 18 (PL 203.974A–D).

ously extolled. Three times (vv. 249, 257, 269) the shepherds figure as simpletons, while they waver between angelic tidings of the Incarnation and diabolic denial. Christ's birth appears no more than a matter of opinion to the first of them, who belies his ignorance in scholastic terms:

meus simplex animus, mea mens non sobria
*ignorant, que potior sit horum sententia.*⁷⁷
 (vv. 275–276)

my simple mind and clouded understanding
 do not understand which of their opinions is more telling.

Sententia becomes fact when Archisynagogus, questioned by Herod, acknowledges gospel-truth in the words of Matthew 2.5–6. This leads—in the space of only thirty-six verses (295–321), which must have been performed with pantomimic rapidity—to the Massacre of the Innocents, the tyrant's death by vermal combustion, and the flight to Egypt of Mary and Joseph. Does *CB 227* end in such ellipsis or does *CB 228* represent its continuation?⁷⁸

The demands made by the Christmas-play in its present state were exigent enough. This text, as it is transmitted in the Codex Buranus, presents no fewer than nineteen non-liturgical melodies and surpasses every other drama produced in medieval Germany with its range of metrical, rhythmical, and strophic forms.⁷⁹ That is why it was piquant when the devil warned the shepherds against the angel's use of poetry:

utque sua phaleret nugis mendatia
*in ritmis conciliat, que profert omnia.*⁸⁰
 (vv. 259–260)

in order to trick out with frippery his lies
 he smoothes in verse all he has to say.

The charge was to be perceived as paradoxical. If the medium of mendacity invalidates the angel's announcement, then the same applies to the devil's denial, which is also couched in verse. Amid such *sic et non* of sophistry, where was the audience to place its trust? Less in what was recited so variously than in what was performed so vividly, is the subtle implication.

⁷⁷ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 98; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 738, whose singular *pastor* is preferred here to the plural.

⁷⁸ On the ending, and the hypothesis that *CB 228* was originally part of *CB 227*, see Hansjürgen Linke, "Der Schluss des mittelalterlichen Weihnachtsspiels aus Benediktbeuern," *Zeitschrift für deutsche Philologie* 94 (1975) 1–21.

⁷⁹ See Hansjürgen Linke, "Benediktbeuer Weihnachtsspiel," *Die deutsche Literatur des Mittelalters. Verfasserlexikon* I.1 (Berlin 1977) 699–700.

⁸⁰ *Carmina Burana*, ed. Bischoff (n. 1 above) I, 3, 97; and *Carmina Burana*, ed. Vollmann (n. 1 above) 736.

III. THE CENTRAL PERIPHERY

The novelty of *CB* 227 does not derive from its symbiosis between ritual and theatre, which had parallels and precedents in the Latin tradition.⁸¹ Nor does the chief innovation of the play lie in *h*¹-Conrad's treatment of Biblical narrative, notable although that is for its compression. What singles his didactic drama out from others with which it may be compared, such as the *Ordo Stellae* in its Freising-version of the eleventh century,⁸² is emphasis on the codes of clerical decorum and the limitations of scholastic learning, defined in Augustinian terms. The dual theme is developed on principles of contrast. To the *sic* of the saint, restrained and dignified, is opposed the *non* of uncouth Archisynagogus. Anti-Judaism animates, but does not comprehend, this character. He emerges less as a stereotypical monster than as an antithesis of the verbal moderation, physical control, and ethical uprightness prized in the order. Its patron declines to resolve the dispute, notwithstanding his authority as a doctor of the Church, to which the boy-bishop appeals. With humility Augustine yields place to scenes from Scripture, in which a leading role is taken by the Magi. Dialectic having been demonstrated as inadequate to grasp revelation, their expertise in astronomy falters before the novelty which the seven liberal arts cannot fathom. The equilibrium is eloquent. The faithful Magi and the faithless Jew are balanced in bewilderment or in malice until the Word is made Flesh by dramatic action. A lesson about religious perception that transcends ethnic categories and intellectual enquiry is being imparted, on analogy between the pulpit and the stage.⁸³

*H*¹-Conrad preaches *in personis*. Theatre enables him to teach, *verbo et exemplo*, without running the risks incurred by others. St. Norbert of Xanten, founder of the Premonstratensians, for example, was only been allowed to preach by Pope Gelasius II in 1118 after a synod at Fritzlar had condemned him for doing so without license.⁸⁴ Less a license than a *nil obstat* for what amounted to sermons on stage dealing with Herod and the Magi had been granted, during *h*¹-Conrad's lifetime, by Innocent III, providing this playwright with an opportunity to display the distinctiveness of Augustinian ideals. How extensively they were represented in the holdings at Neustift, the devastation of the library in the peasants' revolt of 1525 prevents us from knowing fully; but it is clear, on the evidence of the Codex Buranus, that the master-scribe

⁸¹ Cf. Christoph Petersen, *Ritual und Theater. Messallegorese, Osterfeier und Osterspiel im Mittelalter* (Tübingen 2004).

⁸² *Nine Medieval Latin Plays*, ed. Peter Dronke (Cambridge 1994) 24–51. Best discussed by Johann Drumbl, *Quem quaeritis? Teatro sacro dell'alto medioevo* (Rome 1981) 396ff.

⁸³ On this analogy in sacred drama, cf. Joachim Heinze, *Geschichte der deutschen Literatur von den Anfängen bis zum Beginn der Neuzeit* II,2 *Wandlungen und Neuansätze im 13. Jahrhundert (1220/30–1280/90)* (Tübingen 1984) 199ff.

⁸⁴ See Herbert Grundmann, "Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der religiösen Bewegungen im Mittelalter," *Ausgewählte Aufsätze i. Religiöse Bewegungen* MGH Schriften 25.1 (Stuttgart 1976) 64ff; and cf. Gerd Melville, *Die Welt der mittelalterlichen Klöster. Geschichte und Lebensform* (Munich 2012) 114ff.

disposed of resources which rivalled even those of major Carolingian collections.⁸⁵ In *CB 227*, he drew on theological, didactic, and disciplinary writings by Hugh of Saint-Victor, whose influence is consistent with the ample presence, elsewhere in the manuscript, of literature from twelfth-century France. Not only at Christmas, Neustift looked to Paris and, in this central periphery of medieval culture, fashioned a self-critical drama of faith.

⁸⁵ See Bernhard Bischoff, "Die Bibliothek im Dienst der Schule," *Mittelalterliche Studien* 3 (Stuttgart 1981) 213–233.