The Structure of Vision in "Apocalypsis Goliae"

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IF the number of extant manuscripts is a dependable index, the satirical *Apocalypse* of the irreverent "Bishop Golias" was a very popular poem in its day.[1] Modern estimates, however, have been somewhat less enthusiastic. Although scholars have occasionally commented favorably on the wit of the piece — which is certainly ingenious and biting, if somewhat strained — they have at the same time found it very badly constructed. Witness the exasperation of one of the poem's editors:

> Cette longue satire n'est pas, au point de vue littéraire, vraiment digne de remarque. Il y a sans doute quelques traits d'esprit; mais il n'est pas du tout certain qu'ils soient originaux. Ce qui appartient plus sûrement à l'auteur, ce sont les défauts de son œuvre. Elle est d'abord très mal composée; la première partie ne tient au reste par aucun lien. Il ne suffit pas de donner à une pièce le titre d'Apocalypse pour avoir le droit d'y mêler toutes sortes de choses incohérentes.[2]

The aim of the present essay is to suggest that such accusations of formlessness are mistaken. If the *Apocalypsis Goliae* is placed in its proper intellectual context, it will be recognized as a much more carefully shaped (and, perhaps for that reason, a better) poem than its critics have hitherto allowed.

First, however, we should understand exactly what it is that has given rise to the view that the poem is incoherent, "très mal composée." Golias opens with a setting of the scene: it is noon on a warm spring day and the narrator has taken refuge from the heat under the shade of a large oak. As he lies there, he is suddenly confronted by the rather bizarre shade of Pythagoras, who leads him into a "terram alteram." This land is not described, but is said to be peopled by a "plebem innumeram" composed of *auctores* like Priscian, Aristotle, Virgil, and Hippocrates. The poet provides a lengthy list of such ancients and with the conclusion of the list

[1] See the census of MSS printed in Karl Strecker's edition, *Die Apokalypse des Golias*, Texte zur Kulturgeschichte des Mittelalters, 5 (Rome, 1928), 1-7. All quotations are from this edition.

[2] J. B. Hauréau, *Notices et extraits des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale et autres bibliothèques*, 29, 2 (1880), 291-292.

the first section of the poem (strophes 1-13) ends. As we have seen, Hauréau finds this part of the poem unrelated to what follows, and F. J. E. Raby agrees, describing the opening section as "not very well related to the rest of the narrative" and "irrelevant."[3]

The transition to the second section of the poem is abrupt:

> Dum vulgi censeo gestus innumeri,
> accessit angelus prefulgens sideri,
> qui dixit, 'Suspice ! Oculos aperi
> et vide, cito que oportet fieri !' (strophe 14)

Obedient to the angel's command, Golias looks upward and is thereupon drawn into the heavens "in spiritu." This last phrase is quoted from Apoc. 1:10 and marks the beginning of the direct Apocalyptic parody in the work. The vision that subsequently unfolds constitutes the bulk of the poem (strophes 14-104). The essential action of this second of Golias' visions is the progressive unbinding of the Book of the Seven Seals, a satirical parody of Apoc. 5-8. In the Apocalypse according to Golias each chapter of the mystic Book is a fresh revelation of clerical corruption, beginning with the avarice of the Pope and descending to the sluttish gluttony of monks. Although this ferocious anatomy of the clergy is clearly the main satiric burden of the poem, Golias does not stop there, but adds six more strophes, which relate yet a third vision and form a comic coda to the poem. The final vision derives, not from the Biblical Apocalypse, but from St. Paul's famous narrative of heavenly rapture in II Corin. 12:2-4: Golias is carried into the third heaven, where he, as Paul did before him, witnesses mysteries unutterable by man. This section of the poem is brief, and for good reason. Golias tells us regretfully that while in the third heaven he made the mistake of eating some poppy bread and washing it down with a draught of Lethe water, a dinner that caused him to forget everything he had seen in the third heaven. Karl Strecker, the most recent editor of the poem, is skeptical of the relevance of this third vision: "Mit [strophe] 104 schliesst die Vision, die Versetzung in den dritten Himmel und die Erlebnisse daselbst sind ohne Motieverung daran geklebt und verlaufen völlig im Sande."[4]

The *Apocalypsis Goliae*, then, is very clearly divided into a series of three separate visions: a preliminary confrontation with a vast crowd of ancient wise men; the central parody of John's Apocalypse (or, specifically, of its earlier chapters); and a brief burlesque of the Pauline *raptus*. The structural

[3] *A History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages*, 2nd ed., (Oxford, 1957), 2, 216.
[4] *Die Apokalypse des Golias*, p. 36 n.

problem is not one of clarity, but of relevance: why does Golias surround his pseudo-Apocalyptic satire of the clergy with two other visions of doubtful appropriateness? If we propose to find formal coherence in the poem we must show that there is a reason for *three* visions, rather than one; that there is a reason for *these* three visions; and that there is a reason for arranging them in *this* particular order.

Such reasons are to be found just where we might expect to find them: in contemporary comments on the nature of the Apocalyptic vision. Golias's poem is a work of the late twelfth century, appearing at a time when the Johannine Apocalypse was receiving a great deal of attention from exegetes and spiritual writers. One focus of such attention was the nature of vision experience itself. What does it mean to say that the Apocalypse was a "vision"? The following (from Honorius of Autun) is typical of the way this question was answered:

> Significative quoque tres coeli leguntur; quia tres visiones, scilicet sensualis, spiritualis, intellectualis a sapientibus non nesciuntur. Sensualis quippe visio est, cum colores et formas rerum exterius cernimus, sed interius aliquid celari, ut in litteris significantiam intelligimus. Haec ergo visio primum et sensuale coelum nominatur, quia in scripturis intelligentia celatur. Coelum etenim a celando denominatur. Secunda visio spiritualis est, qua non res, sed imagines rebus similes spiritualiter videmus, sicut in somniis solemus, et sicut Joannem in Apocalypsi, et Prophetas multa vidisse novimus: et haec visio secundum coelum nuncupatur, quia vere res in his similitudinibus celantur. Tertia visio est intellectualis, cum neque res exterius, neque imagines rerum interius, sed ipsas substantias prout vere sunt, abstractis coloribus intellectu conspicimus, et uniuscujusque qualitatem inter se differentem ratione discernimus: et haec visio tertium coelum vocitatur, quia veritas rerum in hac, quasi in coelo, a stultis celatur. Igitur si Apostolus in corpore est raptus, tunc ad corporeum coelum, scilicet firmamentum, est perductus: si autem extra corpus, quod magis videtur, tunc utique ad intellectuale coelum raptus creditur, in quo essentiam deitatis sicuti est, et angelicas substantias prout sunt, non sensualiter, quod nequit fieri nisi per corpus, nec spiritualiter, quod non fit nisi per imagines rebus similes; sed veraciter, quod non fit nisi ipso intellectu, vidisse cognoscitur.[5]

This analysis of vision into three distinct kinds is by no means original with Honorius, but derives, directly or indirectly, from St. Augustine, particularly from the very influential final book of his *De Genesi ad litteram.*[6] In order to see how relevant the Augustinian scheme of vision is to a reading of *Apocalypsis Goliae*, it will be useful to summarize Augustine's theory and sketch its influence on the exegesis of the canonical Apocalypse.

[5] *De cognitione verae vitae*, xliii (PL, 40:1028-1029). On Honorius's authorship, see *Dictionnaire de théologie catholique*, 7, 148-149.

[6] Ed. Iosephus Zycha, CSEL, 28 (1):379-435.

In Books I-XI of the *De Genesi ad litteram* Augustine covers only the first three chapters of Genesis, concluding with a commentary on man's expulsion from Eden. In the twelfth and final book he turns from consecutive exegesis of the text to an expansive meditation on what he calls "the question of paradise." Since the text Augustine chooses as the touchstone of this meditation is II Corin. 12:2-4 (the Pauline *raptus*), the conclusion of *De Genesi ad litteram* becomes a discussion of man's return to paradise, the completion of the cycle whose beginning is narrated in the opening chapters of Genesis. The specific reason for the choice of the Pauline text is the problem raised by the saint's allusion to the "third heaven." Is the third heaven synonymous with *paradisus*? If so, what are the other two "heavens"? Eventually (faithful to his promise to handle the question "liberius et prolixius") Augustine answers that the three Pauline "heavens" are a figure for the three modes of human vision, that is, the three fundamental modes of knowledge available to man. The first of these is the *visio corporalis*, that is, the literal sight of the eye, the perception of physical objects. In a wider sense corporeal vision signifies sensation in general, not simply that of the eye. The second "heaven" is equivalent to the *visio spiritualis*, the exercise of the imaginative faculty. In spiritual vision we perceive *imagines*, *similitudines*, *ficta*, etc.: corporeal objects which are not present to the senses. The third "heaven" is the *visio intellectualis*, the direct intellectual perception of realities, such as God, the angels, or charity, which have neither corporeal form nor corporeal substance. Sensation, imagination, and intellection are thus the three ways by which man knows whatever he knows, but Augustine insists that they are most importantly the ways by which man knows God. Thus Moses looking at the burning bush, or Balthasar watching the divine hand, saw (or knew) God by means of corporeal vision. St. John, in the Apocalyptic vision, saw God by means of figures and images, and Augustine repeatedly cites the Apocalypse as a prime example of the *visio spiritualis*. Paul, of course, was uniquely privileged to see God directly, without the intervention of images, and his rapture is for Augustine the great model of the *visio intellectualis*. In citing Biblical examples of the three visions Augustine is at pains to distinguish the modes from each other, but he also emphasizes that "vision" is essentially a continuum. The three visions are related in a hierarchical sequence: in normal experience sensation is primary, but its images are soon translated into the phantasms of imagination, and these in turn are the material from which are drawn the imageless ideas of the intellect.

There is nothing in all this that is not a commonplace of classical philosophy. Nevertheless, Augustine's schema was widely influential. The characterization of the modes of knowledge as "visions," as well as the

examples Augustine used, made his formulation a useful exegetical tool for the discussion of Biblical visions and dreams. This is particularly true of the tradition of commentary on the Apocalypse. By Carolingian times the connection between Augustine's three visions and the vision of St. John appears to have become conventional. Thus Alcuin in the preface to his commentary asks about the "qualitas" of John's vision and answers: "Tres itaque visionum modos patres nostri intelligendos docuerunt: corporalem... spiritalem... intellectualis...."[7] Aimon of Auxerre, writing not long after, copies Alcuin almost verbatim: "Tria namque genera visionum patres nostri intelligenda dixerunt: primum scilicet corporale.... Secundum spiritale.... Tertium genus est intellectuale...."[8] Though neither names Augustine, the description of the three visions each gives is a straightforward condensation of the *De Genesi ad litteram*, XII. In another context, however, Aimon specifically praises Augustine's theory of vision as a "more profound and loftier" explanation of Paul's rapture than that given by any other Father.[9]

In the twelfth century, the period of the *Apocalypsis Goliae*, the Augustinian doctrine of vision was especially influential. It was a tool of many uses, as the following examples will suggest. Hugh of St. Victor uses the formula in order to effect a schematic comparison of the three kinds of visions, of dreams, and of prophecies,[10] while Alanus de Insulis uses it to characterize the three kinds of sleep.[11] William of St. Thierry finds it a convenient means of specifying the nature of the beatific vision,[12] John of Salisbury uses it to explain the three varieties of "supreme contemplation,"[13] and Clarembaldus of Arras makes it a paradigm of the three modes of prophecy.[14] We even find the sequence of three visions used as the structural principle of extended works, a fact relevant to our immediate concern with Golias's poem. One example is Honorius of Autun's *Scala Coeli Major*.[15] Subtitled "De ordine cognoscendi Deum in creaturis," the organizing metaphor of this treatise is the ladder which leads the

[7] *Commentarius in Apocalypsin*, praefatio (PL, 100:1089).

[8] *Expositio in Apocalypsin*, praefatio (PL, 117:938-40).

[9] *In divi Pauli Epistolas expositio*, in II Cor. 12 (PL, 117:661).

[10] *Adnotatiunculae elucidatoriae in Joelem prophetam* (PL, 175:355-356). On the disputed authorship of this work see Roger Bacon, *Science et sagesse chez Hugues de Saint-Victor* (Paris, 1957), pp. xxxi-xxxii, n.

[11] *Summa de arte praedicatoria*, vii, xlviii (PL, 210:126, 195-196).

[12] *Aenigma fidei* (PL, 180:399-405).

[13] *De septem septenis*, vi (PL, 199:959-960).

[14] *Tractatulus*, 7, ed. N. Haring, *AHDLMA*, 22 (1955), 202.

[15] PL, 172:1229-1240.

Christian to the third heaven by means of three "ordines graduum": corporeal, spiritual, and intellectual vision. A similar structure appears in the *De discretione animae, spiritus, et mentis*, a short work variously attributed to Achard of St. Victor and Gilbert of Poitiers.[16] The treatise is an analysis of the powers of the soul, and the author divides them into three: *anima*, *spiritus*, and *mens*. In characterizing these powers Gilbert (or Achard), emphasizing epistemology, uses Augustine's formula for vision (and even some of his language): *anima* is the faculty "quae per instrumenta corporis ad ultimas rerum species... pertendit;" *spiritus* is the "potentia corporalium rerum imagines non corporales iuxta sensus similitudinem percipiendi;" and *mens* is "ratio," "intelligentia."[17] These examples suggest something of the range of influence that the Augustinian vision formula had in the twelfth century,[18] but perhaps its commonest single use was in exegeses of the Apocalypse. As in the Carolingian commentaries cited earlier, the three visions were used to "place" John's experience. The *Glossa Ordinaria*, for example, raises the problem of the visionary character of the Apocalypse almost at the outset:

> Sed quia constat hanc revelationem factam esse visione videndum est sub quo genere visionis est. Visio enim alia corporalis est alia spiritualis: alia intellectualis.[19]

The gloss then goes on to give a conventionally condensed summary of the three visions and concludes that John saw images by means of spiritual vision, but understood their significance intellectually. If we examine the opening pages of other twelfth-century Apocalypse commentaries — such

[16] Ed. Germain Morin, *Aus der Geisteswelt des Mittelalters* (*Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, suppl. III, 251-262). See also Nicholas M. Haring, "Gilbert of Poitiers, Author of the 'De Discretione animae, spiritus et mentis' commonly attributed to Achard of Saint Victor," *Mediaeval Studies*, 22 (1960), 148-191. Haring's discussion of the sources of the treatise does not mention Augustine. Jean Chatillon restores the treatise to Achard in *AHDLMA*, 31 (1964), 7-35.

[17] Morin, 256, 258, 259.

[18] For further instances see the Gilbertian treatise *Sententiae divinitatis*, ed. Bernhard Geyer (*Beiträge zur Geschichte der Philosophie des Mittelalters*, VII [2-3], 1*-3*); Alanus de Insulis, *Distinctiones dictionum theologicalium*, sc. *visio* (PL, 210:1007); Hugh of St. Victor, *Quaestiones in Epistolas Pauli*, II Cor., xxxv (PL, 175:552); *Commentarius Cantabrigiensis in Epistolas Pauli e Schola Petri Abelardi*, ed. Artur Landgraf (Notre Dame, 1937-45), 2, 330; Herveus of Bourg-Dieu, *Commentaria in Isaiam*, prologus, and *Commentaria in Epistolas Pauli*, II Cor., 12 (PL, 181: 19-20, 1113-1114); Garnerius of Clairvaux, *Sermones*, III (PL, 205:583-586); Godfrey of Admont, *Homiliae in festa totius anni*, lxxiii (PL, 174: 998-999); and Innocent III, *Sermones*, ii, xxxii (PL, 217:319-324, 592-593).

[19] *Biblia latina...* (Basel, Johann Froben and Johann Petri, 1498), VI, sig. M2^{v}.

as those of Gilbert of Poitiers,[20] Rupert of Deutz,[21] Richard of St. Victor,[22] and St. Martin of Leon[23] — we find a similar pattern.

All of this evidence suggests that it would have been difficult for a literate author of the late twelfth century to be unaware either of the Augustinian analysis of vision or of its relevance to the last book of the Bible. When, therefore, we are confronted, as we are in the case of *Apocalypsis Goliae*, with a late twelfth century poem by an obviously learned and sophisticated poet, cast in the form of a mock Apocalypse, and arranged in a series of three distinct visions, we may suspect the influence of Augustine's schema. Examination of the text confirms this suspicion.

The most difficult problem in making such a connection arises at the outset: how can Augustine's category of corporeal vision be related to Golias' opening vision of the *auctores*? In the second and third sections of the poem Golias and Augustine both use the same examples: Apocalypse for the second vision and Paul's rapture for the third. But Augustine's Biblical examples of corporeal vision (Balthasar's vision of the writing hand, for instance) are nothing like the crowd of sages whom Golias first confronts. There are, I think, two points to be made in this connection. First, we should note that the figures of the first vision are not selected randomly, but comprise a conspectus of the *artes*. Priscian, Aristotle, Cicero, Ptolemy, Boethius, Euclid, and Pythagoras are the first seven named and represent the traditional seven arts; Virgil, Ovid, Persius, and Statius are next, and stand for the varieties of poetic art; and Hippocrates, the last figure named, represents the practical art of medicine. With the possible exception of Boethius, this is a roster of pagan authorities, each embodying a branch of natural knowledge. In other words, the crowd of *auctores* is in effect a synopsis of the arts and thus a summation of the varieties of knowledge based upon sense perception. As John of Salisbury puts it, "Sic itaque sensus corporis, qui prima vis aut primum exercitum anime est, omnium artium preiacit fundamenta..."[24] John's "sensus corporis" and Augustine's "visio corporalis" are both names for the same mode of knowledge. In using the *artes* as his embodiment of corporeal vision,

[20] *Ibid.*, VI, sig. M2. Gilbert's prologue to his commentary was commonly used as a preface to the *Gloss* on the Apocalypse: see Beryl Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1952), 61.

[21] *Commentaria in Apocalypsim*, I, i (PL, 169:851-852).

[22] *In Apocalypsim*, I, i (PL, 196:686-687). Richard's gloss is, to my knowledge, unique in that he increases the number of visions to four. He does so by dividing corporeal vision into two kinds, significant and non-significant.

[23] *Expositio libri Apocalypsis*, preface (PL, 209:300).

[24] *Metalogicon* IV, i, ed. Clemens C. J. Webb (Oxford, 1929), 174.

rather than one of the conventional Augustinian examples, "Golias" only reveals his contemporaneity. The procedure can be compared to that of Godfrey of St. Victor's *Fons Philosophiae*, in which the arts, liberal and practical, form the propaedeutic to the knowledge based on revelation.

Golias' initial vision corresponds to Augustine's corporeal vision in still another way. Pythagoras, who is the visionary's guide through the first vision, appears in a peculiar shape, that of a man-book, "totum explicans corpus pro codice."[25] Golias, in fact, "reads" Pythagoras, or at least, the dark characters engraved in his *corpus-codex*. This odd procedure corresponds to an aspect of Augustine's explanation of corporeal vision. One illustration used in the *De Genesi ad litteram* to explain the nature of the three visions is the process of grasping the meaning of a text such as the precept "Love thy neighbor as thyself." In understanding this, or any text, says Augustine, one begins with the exercise of corporeal vision, that is, with the physical reading of the letters. Spiritual vision comes next as we try to create a phantasm of the absent "neighbor" and intellectual vision as we contemplate the meaning of "love."[26] This identification of corporeal vision with the act of reading the *litterae* of a text recurs in later versions of Augustine's doctrine; as we saw above, Honorius of Autun characterizes the first kind of vision as that "cum colores et formas rerum exterius cernimus, sed interius aliquid celari, ut in litteris significantiam intelligimus."[27]

In its emphasis, then, on the liberal and practical arts and its picture of a man-book as guide, the first of Golias' visions corresponds to Augustine's first level of vision, knowledge by means of sense perception. The connections between the remaining two sections of the poem and Augustine's schema are more manifest. As we have seen, Augustine and many later writers use the Apocalypse as an instance of the *visio spiritualis*, and Golias' second vision is a pseudo-Apocalypse. But the correspondence extends beyond the parallel of subject matter. Spiritual vision, in Augustine's scheme, is knowledge by means of images, that is, by means of shapes

[25] Strophe 6 (ed. Strecker, p. 17). Pythagoras is a "man transformed into a book," in the words of E. R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, tr. Willard R. Trask (New York, 1953), 317. The motif of the body as book in the poem is extended to the antique sages of the first vision: "per frontes singulas traducens lumina,/ vidi quorumlibet inscripta nomina" (Strophe 9, p. 17).

[26] *De Genesi ad litteram* XII, 11 (CSEL, 28 [1]:392-393)

[27] Cf. Herveus of Bourg-Dieu, PL, 181:1113. Godfrey of Admont draws a parallel between corporeal vision and the *sensus litteralis* of Scripture: "...sicut triplex est visio, corporis, spiritus, et mentis, ita triplex etiam sensus est in Scripturis sanctis, litteralis, spiritalis, intellectualis," *Homiliae*, lxxiii (PL, 174:999).

which have corporeal form, but lack corporeal substance. It is just such figurative insight that Golias is promised in his second vision. Once again a book is central, but a different kind of book:

> Post hec apposuit cum septem titulis
> signatum codicem septem signaculis
> dicens: 'Respicias intentis oculis,
> que nota facies terrarum circulis.
>
> Est vite presulum codex hic conscius,
> quod per signacula videtur clarius,
> nam intus clauditur detestabilius,
> et laudabilia pendent exterius.'[28]

The angel who has replaced Pythagoras as guide for this section of the poem describes the book of the seven seals as a vehicle of figurative revelation: Golias sees, in this case, "per signacula." The word *signacula* could be, in twelfth-century usage, synonymous with *imagines*,[29] and Golias here uses it in this sense, but with a witty reversal of the meaning: since the topic is the lives of the bishops, the manifest image (the external *integumentum*) is fair, while the significance of the image (the internal truth) is foul. Perhaps the joke is a deliberate inversion of the sense of the Dionysian theory of *dissimilia symbola* (sublime truth conveyed by ignoble images), an idea that appears occasionally in discussions of the imagery of the Apocalypse.[30] Whatever the degree of sophistication, however, the point to notice is that Golias, in accord with a long tradition of commentary, announces his pseudo-Apocalypse as a vision of images (*signacula*), the same kind of vision Augustine called *spiritualis* or *imaginativa*.

Golias and Augustine agree, finally, in making Paul's rapture the exemplar of their third visions. Augustine's *visio intellectualis* is the unmediated confrontation of immaterial reality, knowledge involved in no way with corporeality. Golias' vision is likewise unmediated: there is no guide for this part of the poem, just as there is none in St. Paul's account of his experience, and it is of immaterial reality:

> Ad summi indicis tractus concilia
> inter tot milies centena milia
> profunda didici dei consilia
> humanis mentibus inscrutabilia.[31]

[28] Strophes 21-22 (ed. Strecker, p. 20).

[29] See Theodore Silverstein, "The Fabulous Cosmogony of Bernardus Silvestris," MP, 46 (1948-49), 113.

[30] For example, in Richard of St. Victor's commentary, PL, 196: 687-690.

[31] Strophe 106 (ed. Strecker, p. 36).

But Golias has his joke here, too. At this moment of supremely incorporeal experience, his stomach growls and he eats a most inopportune meal:

> Que postquam noveram, statim esurii
> michique proceres magni consilii
> panem papaveris proponunt, alii
> Lethei laticem propinant fluvii.[32]

The poem ends with a sigh of regret from the visionary over what he *might* have reported had he not eaten unwisely. Even in the third heaven Golias cannot ignore the claims of the flesh, and we should notice the deliberate wit of the device. Several times in the course of the poem Golias puts into his own mouth the famous disclaimer of St. Paul: "whether in the body or out of the body, I know not. God knows." Augustine was also struck by the phrase and eventually resolved Paul's uncertainty by reasoning that the Apostle must certainly have been "out" of the body in the third heaven of incorporeal vision. Golias, while echoing Paul's phrase, leaves us in no doubt that *he* was very much "in" the body when in the third heaven. Being Golias, how could he ever be anything but in — and of — the body? As with his play on *signacula* in the second vision, Golias again comically inverts the conventional sense of his source material. Neither Paul nor Golias can report on his vision of the third heaven, Paul because he utterly overcame the senses, Golias because the senses overcame him.

The *Apocalypsis Goliae*, then, does have a coherent structure, one based squarely on a contemporarily popular method of glossing the Johannine Apocalypse. But, once we have recognized this unifying pattern, we can also see the structure of the poem is more than a response to current exegetical fashion; it is rather an act of significant wit. Whoever wrote the *Apocalypsis Goliae* could very easily have limited the poem to the central section of clerical satire and avoided any potential confusion, but he did not. Rather he chose to complicate his form in order to gain poetic ends that the simpler structure could not attain. As we now have it, the main interest of the poem still lies in the central vision, but by expanding the poem briefly at either end the author has converted a mock Apocalypse into something more, a mocking act of *total* vision. By tacitly alluding to the conventional Augustinian schema, the form of the poem implies that Golias is not merely a witness to contemporary ecclesiastical rot, but a visionary who has seen all. On the level of natural knowledge he is acquainted with the ancient masters of the various arts; on the level of imaginative insight, he has pierced the *integumentum* under which the clergy conceals its vice; on the level of intellectual vision, he has soared to the direct confrontation

[32] Strophe 107 (ed. Strecker, p. 36).

of divinity. Dante said he was not Aeneas, nor Paul; Golias will have nothing to do with such modesty. He is Aeneas *and* Paul, and John as well. As master of the three visions, he is master of the three ways man has of knowing. In thus laying implicit claim to unparalleled knowledge, Golias solves a problem common to poems of vision, that of rhetorical authority. The structure of the poem provides him automatically with the right to expose clerical corruption, because he, in effect, knows everything.

But what the poem implicitly claims with one hand, it throws away with the other. *Apocalypsis Goliae* is, after all, parody and, while it sweeps its seer to the summit of vision, it disperses that vision with the pang of an empty stomach. The concluding device of transferring focus from the mysteries of the heavenly court to the workings of the narrator's digestive system recalls that Augustine's theory was not the only way to explain the vision experience. The Middle Ages knew that dreams and visions came from below as well as above: "ex inanitate ventris" is Gregory's phrase for one of the frequent causes of dreams.[33] By concluding his vision with a rumble in the belly, Golias reminds us that there are less than glorious reasons for vision and he also reminds us that he is Golias, a poetic *persona* who never takes himself with utter seriousness.

The complex form of *Apocalypsis Goliae* is a deliberate artistic device and in recognizing it we can perceive something of the special tone that marks the poems of Golias — that "charming literary phantom," as Raby calls him. The Goliardic spirit at its most sophisticated combines a genuine moral vehemence with a sly self-mockery. The open eye of the satirist is trained inwardly as well as outwardly. It is this complexity of attitude that is appropriately reflected, in the Goliardic Apocalypse, by a meaningful complexity of form.[34]

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[33] *Moralia*, VIII, xxiv, 42 (PL, 75:827).

[34] For a further, and more complex, instance of the influence of Augustine's doctrine of vision on medieval poetry, see my article, "St. Augustine's Three Visions and the Structure of the *Commedia*," *MLN*, 82 (1967), 56-78.