JUDAISM AND CHRISTIAN ART

Aesthetic Anxieties from the Catacombs to Colonialism

Edited by

Herbert L. Kessler

and

David Nirenberg

PENN
University of Pennsylvania Press
Philadelphia · Oxford
2011
CHAPTER 2

Unfeigned Witness: Jews, Matter, and Vision in Twelfth-Century Christian Art

Sara Lipton

When around the year 1120 the Benedictine monk Rupert of Deutz rewrote the Vita of his abbey’s sainted founder, Archbishop Heribert of Cologne (d. 1021), he added a novel and curious detail. The miraculous heavenly light that accompanied the birth of the future saint was no longer seen solely by the Christian mother and midwives, as in the original text, but was now also witnessed by a Jew. Moreover, according to Rupert, this Jew enjoyed the privilege of being the first to voice the meaning of the blessed vision, telling the boy’s father: “Surely [by this light] you may know that [he who] is born to you will fill you with joy, and he will make his family shine with the great splendor of his name.” At roughly the same time that Rupert inserted this Jewish witness into Heribert’s life story, images of Jews began to proliferate in Christian art. In this essay I argue that this coincidental creation of the visionary and the visible Jew was not fortuitous. Rather, a constellation of specific intellectual, ecclesiastical, and devotional trends combined to provoke a fundamental reorientation of the age-old theological concept of “Jewish witness,” and to lay new stress on Jewish vision. Although in Christian polemic the Jews were traditionally characterized as “blind,” Christian art and texts in the twelfth century began to highlight Jewish sight, and “seeing” Jews became central objects of the Christian gaze.

Becoming Visible: Identifiable Jews in Christian Art

As is well known, Christian theology adopted a bifurcated approach to Jews and Judaism. Although polemicists from the Gospels through John Chrysostom and
well beyond routinely castigated "the Jews" for their blindness, Jews were also regarded as crucial witnesses to and signs of Christian truth. As expounded by Saint Augustine, Jews filled this role by virtue of their possession of Scripture, their descent from those present at the Crucifixion, and their subsequent state of subjugation, which testified to Christian triumph. In spite of this conceptual centrality, however, for the first half of the Middle Ages Jews played little role in Christian art. Israelites indistinguishable from their gentile foes and prophets identical to apostles (Figure 2.1) occasionally inhabited illuminated pages of Scripture, but before the eleventh century Old Testament illustration was rare, and there was no such thing as a visually distinct Jew. Only with the creation of great Romanesque Bibles in the 1080s did a specific "Jewish" iconography finally appear, as illuminators adopted peaked Persian hats, scrolls, pseudoclassical drapery, and beards to signal the antiquity of Hebrew prophecy (Figure 2.2). Within a few decades, archaising depictions of Hebrew prophets and patriarchs were widespread, and the scroll, beard, and pointed hat had become familiar and consistent enough to constitute identifying marks of Jewishness.

An obvious starting point for any investigation into the new prominence of imagery from Hebrew Scripture is contemporary biblical scholarship. The first half of the twelfth century was a time of intense activity in the area of exegesis: typological interpretation (which read the Old Testament as foreshadowing Christian history) was elaborated, new layers of signification were articulated, and new approaches to the "letter" were developed. Major works of biblical commentary, in particular the heavily typological Glossa ordinaria (created at Laon c. 1100–1140), the even more typological and wildly idiosyncratic readings of Rupert of Deutz himself, and the literal-historical approach pioneered by Hugh of St.-Victor (d. 1141) and his Victorine School, all devised sophisticated new methods for teasing out the relationship between Old Law and New, matter and spirit, sign and meaning. These works affirmed the ongoing value of the Old Testament, but also highlighted the extent to which Jews, misled by their "carnal" attachment to the "letter" of Scripture, were "blind" to its true spiritual import. Castigation of the Jews' "superficial" and "material" understanding, linked to their stereotypical greed and carnality, thus came to form a conventional component of high medieval Christian interpretation.

These developments are frequently cited to explain the growing prominence in the twelfth century of Old Testament visual imagery. Just as the Jews’ language, texts, and heritage were rendered ever more central to Christian study, scholars have assumed, so naturally their Scriptures and persons figured more centrally in Christian art. It is certainly clear that contemporary exegesis—and the anti-Jewish polemic that so often accompanied it—must be considered an
Incipit Sophonias

essential context for our images. Typological imagery undoubtedly draws on typological biblical commentary, and the exegesis of Rupert of Deutz has been shown to have influenced several works of art. Nonetheless, simply citing contemporary exegesis cannot satisfactorily explain why the new intellectual trends were so rapidly and widely transposed into visual imagery, much less account for the spread of a specific “Jewish” iconography or illuminate how it was understood. To begin to answer these questions we need to pay careful attention to the full range of issues addressed in text, image, and object, and ask what work representations of Jews were designed to do. Rupert of Deutz’s story of the witnessing Jew provides significant guidance concerning these questions; it is to this story that I now turn.

The Vita Heriberti: The Jew as Outside Witness

The first striking feature of the revised Vita is the fact that Rupert’s account of the miraculous birth inverts the standard Christian characterization of Jewish perception as mired in carnal error. Rupert writes: “On the night when [Heribert] was poured out from the maternal womb, an immense heavenly light shone there, which some sleeping people saw with the eyes of the heart, and some waking people saw with the eyes of the body.” One might expect that the Jew, stereotypically associated with the flesh, was one of the waking witnesses who saw with “the eyes of the body,” but this is not the case. Rupert’s narrative continues: “The father of the infant was sleeping, and with him a certain one of his friends (yet a Jew), who had come to him for customary conversation or friendly business. Sleeping together at that hour in which the light of the happy birth came forth, each [of these two men] saw the same dream. Awaking, they spoke immediately to one another, each . . . relating his own dream. . . . [The Jew] narrated first. [He dreamt that] the bed, in which the beloved wife lay in childbirth, [seemed] to open at the front, and a radiance bright as the midday sun was admitted and shone.” The Jew then interprets the vision as an omen of Heribert’s future “splendor.”

Rupert was well aware that his monastic audience would be startled by his casting of a Jew in such a pivotal role, and he hastens to explain. Without the Jew, he asserts, the miracle would not have been credible: “Indeed, it would, perhaps rightly, have seemed unbelievable to anyone, if only the light of spiritual grace, which Judaic blindness knows not, had been fit to be conferred on [Heribert]. A Jew may well seem to be an unworthy sharer of the same luminous dream that the Christian father desired to see. But the elect and glorious son of light [Heribert] was able to shine both with the interior gift of eternal light . . . and [also] with the external prosperity of temporal glory.” That is to say,
in Rupert’s view, the miracle might have been disputed had Heribert’s greatness been signaled only through invisible grace, via a purely private and internal vision. Perceptible physical phenomena were far more persuasive. Apparently many Christians, even Christian monks, were like spiritually blind Jews: in need of concrete signs.

Rupert’s concern that Christians would question a spiritual sign of sanctity may seem somewhat surprising, but it was very much in accord with contemporary trends. In the later eleventh century, as part of the papal reform program, the newly rediscovered Roman law and the revived discipline of dialectic began to be applied to canonization procedures. Standards of proof changed and tightened; both the type of testimony that could be adduced and the type of person who was allowed to testify were subject to more rigorous regulation. In a significant epistemological shift, mere rumor, second-hand testimony, and even written depositions were no longer deemed adequate forms of evidence. Witnesses had to be personally present at a hearing; there had to be at least two witnesses to any event; they had to have direct, sensory experience of the facts to which they were testifying; and they had to be of respectable social rank, unimpeachable character, and demonstrated impartiality. Women were disparaged as unreliable, open to persuasion, and prone to fancy. Personal visions were considered a particularly suspect source of knowledge. A report of the 1131 canonization of St. Godo of Hildesheim explains the reasons for such caution: “It was decreed at that time that on account of the illusions of demons which frequently happened . . . in these matters, no one should be canonized except by apostolic authority and after his life had been examined by duly qualified persons.”

This, then, suggests one motivation for Rupert’s revision: the account of Heribert’s birth provided by his mid-eleventh-century source no longer satisfied twelfth-century legal requirements. As servants, members of the subject’s household or family, and as women, the midwives and even Heribert’s mother failed to meet the standards for suitable witnesses. (The fact that canonists’ disapproval of female testimony seems often to have been ignored in practice does not negate the basic point. Rupert would have wanted his account to reflect the ideal.) Only male witnesses could provide convincing testimony. Since men were generally excluded from birthing chambers, the miraculous physical light accompanying the birth could not be directly perceived by a male witness; hence its reception in dream form. Heribert’s aristocratic father could not be the sole male witness to his son’s miraculous splendor, however, and in any case as a close relative, he was an overly partisan and therefore less than ideal witness. The best possible confirmation of the heavenly grace conferred upon Heribert was the simultaneous revelation of the dream to a figure with no such intimate
ties. And who could be more disinterested on the subject of Christian sainthood than a Jew? The visitor may have been a friendly familiar of the household, but as a Jew he was still inevitably an outsider (as Rupert put it: “a friend, yet a Jew” [amicus, Iudeus tamen]). Hence his usefulness. As a canon law compiled in the 1170s stated, quoting 1 Timothy 3:7: “[for a bishop’s probity to be assured] it is necessary that he have good testimony from those who are outside.”

The Vita Heriberti: The Jew as Material Witness

The significance of the Jew in Rupert’s narrative can hardly be reduced to mere forensic convenience, however. Rupert explicitly indicates that as a formulaic embodiment of materiality, the Jew was uniquely suited to testify not only to Heribert’s miraculous birth, but also to his future glory. Rupert comments, “Who, indeed, does not know the splendor of the great church of Cologne, how . . . it glittered also in temporal resources and honors? Since therefore [Heribert] was destined to be so preeminent in rank, and since this light of the Lord was destined to have been exalted upon so great a candelabrum . . . it ought not seem unworthy that a Jew, too, should have received the portent of his future brightness.” Heribert’s temporal greatness, then, vindicated the Jew’s mundane reading of the miraculous sign (“he will make his family shine with the great splendor of his name”).

Rupert thus uses Heribert’s birth miracle to mount a defense of ecclesiastical splendor—a quality that was under attack by ascetic reformers. Wealth and worldliness are—as they had long been in Christian polemic—associated with the Jew, but here they are nevertheless accorded positive valence, qualifying as the fitting attributes of an ecclesiastical saint. Nor was this the first time that Rupert wielded a Jew, or at least Judaic references, in this way. Faced with the reformers’ denigration of custom (Pope Gregory VII famously noted that “Christ did not say, ‘I am custom . . .’”), defenders of monastic and ecclesiastical splendor needed to cite a more powerful precedent than simply longstanding practice. Rupert found it in the Hebrew Scriptures: in his commentary On the Divine Offices (written c. 1112); he compared ornately decorated altars and churches to the Jerusalem Temple itself. It is surely not by chance that in the Vita Rupert describes Heribert as a great candelabrum—the kind of church furnishing under increasing attack by critics of ecclesiastical excess, and often associated with Hebrew ritual. In his Apologia of 1125, for example, Bernard of Clairvaux, greatest of the Cistercian reformers, lamented: “Churches are decorated, not simply with jeweled crowns, but with jeweled wheels illuminated as much by their precious stones as by their lamps. We see candelabra like big bronze trees, marvelously wrought, their gems glowing no less than their
flames. . . . [These things] seem to me in some sense a revival of ancient Jewish rites.\\n\\nRupert turns this "judaizing" strategy on its head. Most scholars agree that Rupert's rewriting of the *Vita*, which far more than the earlier version emphasizes Heribert's humility and likeness to the apostles, was intended to condemn the ambition, pride, and venality of over-worldly prelates. But he also seeks to demonstrate that one can and must distinguish unrestrained worldliness from appropriate grandeur. The Jew's participation in Heribert's miraculous birth heralds the temporal majesty rightly claimed by a great ecclesiastical lord, and rightly displayed in a great ecclesiastical foundation. Rupert, then, introduced the Jew for more than his juridical utility. He was using this exemplar of antique materiality to uphold the value of material splendor.

But we are still not quite done with Rupert and his Jew. Eager as he was to demonstrate and defend Heribert's earthly grandeur, and thereby to justify the artistic grandeur of the monastery founded by Heribert (his own Abbey of Deutz), Rupert was of course even more committed to affirming the saint's spiritual perfection. He did this by interrupting his chronological narrative to relate a second, wondrous event that took place when Heribert was twenty-four. Rupert concludes his discussion of the Jew's prophesy of Heribert's future temporal splendor by noting: "This he could say by gazing at the light or glory only of the secular world. But Christ, the true light and glory of the heavens miraculously fulfilled the miraculous prediction [of Heribert's spiritual splendor]. For [twenty-four years later] on [Christmas night], during the sacred celebration of the Mass, when we sing 'The light will shine today over us,' Heribert, carrier of the true light, was consecrated a priest. Who will doubt that this happened through providence or the same arrangement of God, with which care or grace he first sent out the afore-mentioned sign, when he was being born?" This second miracle—the fact that the service sung during Heribert's consecration mentions a shining light—contrasts starkly with the first. It involves no bodily sight, only proper (spiritual) understanding of breath and sound. As opposed to the first, well-attested event, we have here no mention of witnesses, proof, discussion, or interpretation. And yet no suspicion whatever is attached to this miracle; this time Rupert explicitly rules out the possibility of doubt. And, finally, of course, this is a miracle in which the Jew plays no part. He is physically absent, and his prediction of Heribert's future familial glory made no mention of spiritual exaltation.

In sum, Rupert's tale uses the witnessing Jew to present a complex epistemology of faith, one, I should add, by no means unique to Rupert. Two sources of knowledge are recognized: sensory experience and inward spiritual enlightenment. Both are valid. Indeed, the former provides an instructive, even
necessary model and metaphor for, and offers a pathway to, the latter. Although spiritual understanding is manifestly a higher form of knowledge, it is inaccessible to most Christians, and the human need for concrete signs is accepted, and even enshrined in canon law.38 Thus, the Jew, whose “vision” and understanding are traditionally—and notoriously—material and corporeal, can still provide valuable and valued witness, even of Christian truths. During those rare moments when a few select Christians are able to achieve purely spiritual intellectus (exemplified by the saint’s consecration), the Jew again provides testimony—in the form of his absence and/or oblivion. In this imperfect world, in which the seeking Christian stands ever poised at the juncture of flesh and spirit, one figure stands at the crossroads and indicates the road not to be taken: the figure of the Jew.39

The Eilbertus Altar: Unfeigned Prophecy and Fashioned Words

In Rupert’s Vita the testifying Jew remains a purely textual sign. But he would soon be given visible form. As we have seen, in the first decades of the twelfth century a host of Hebrew characters made their way into Christian art. A stunning work of art from Rupert’s hometown helps explain the introduction and clarify the function of such representations. Within twenty or so years of the rewriting of the Vita Heriberti, the makers of this object mobilized Old Testament prophets in support of corporeal perception, creating visual parallels to Rupert’s Jewish witness.

The object in question is a portable altar from Cologne dating to c. 1130–50 (Figure 2.3).37 On the altar table are depicted Christ in Majesty surrounded by the evangelists’ symbols, the twelve apostles holding scrolls and seated on thrones, and scenes from the life, Passion, and Resurrection of Christ (Figure 2.4). These are all quite standard images for an altarpiece. Around the sides are sixteen standing Hebrew prophets and kings holding inscribed scrolls.38 This is, according to Robert Favreau, an entirely new kind of iconography for portable altars, which had not previously featured figures from Hebrew Scripture.39 The Hebrews’ inscriptions are in many cases also unprecedented and have never been fully explained.40 The kings and prophets are framed above and below by a larger inscription. It reads: “Filled with the doctrine of faith, the twelve fathers bear witness that the prophetic words are not fictions [ficta non esse prophetica dicta]. Inspired by heaven, they prophesied about Christ; they foretold those things which were to come after.”41 The “twelve fathers” presumably refers to Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Malachi, Jonah, Nahum, Joel, Obadiah,
Zechariah, and Zephaniah. Balaam was considered a false prophet, although he predicted the rising “star,” and the remaining three are kings.

This inscription seems on the surface to be a straightforward articulation of Christian exegesis: as far back as the recorded words of Jesus, and most powerfully in the epistles of Paul, the Old Testament was read as foretelling the coming of Christ. As presented here on the altar and embodied by the Hebrew prophets, this is powerful and positive witness indeed: the fathers’ testimony is said to be “inspired by heaven,” and their portrayal is respectful and dignified. David is crowned and wears a chlamys and robe, Solomon is crowned and cloaked, while the remaining Hebrews are identical in physiognomy and dress to the apostles themselves: barcheade, bearded, and dressed in togas, but also (unusually) barefoot—a mark of asceticism that, together with the signs of wisdom, displays the purity and truth of their words, their dicta non ficta.

Yet for all the visual serenity and conceptual concordance between old and new apparent here, there is a discordant note, a defensive tone embedded in that phrase: dicta non ficta. Why should our altar feel the need to proclaim so forcefully that prophecy is not fictive? In fact, the phrase did not originate in medieval Cologne; it is a paraphrase of words penned by Saint Augustine as Christian Rome was beset on all sides, and also, in his view, from within. They
appear in Contra Faustum 16.21, a work written c. 387 to refute dualist Manichaean charges that the Hebrew Scriptures were blasphemous nonsense, and that Catholics had forged both the Old Testament Christological prophecies and the Gospel passages that echo them. According to Augustine, the Jews' Scriptures disprove such accusations: "It is a great confirmation of our faith that such important testimony is borne by enemies. The... Gentiles cannot suppose these testimonies to Christ to be [our] recent forgeries [non passunt putare confictum]; for they find them in books held sacred for so many ages by those who crucified Christ." The passage is repeated in slightly modified form in City of God 18.46: "[The Jews] were dispersed through the lands, so that indeed there is no place where they are not, and [they] are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony that we have not forged the prophecies about Christ [prophetias nos non finixisse]." This is part of the famous "Augustinian justification" or "doctrine of tolerance," which explained why Jews continued to reside in Christian lands. Augustine’s valuation of Jewish testimony, however, had not been much invoked in Christian texts in the intervening centuries, which actually cited Gregory the Great and Roman law far more than Augustine when justifying toleration of Jews within Christendom. It seems strange for our altar to echo this defense of the antiquity and verity of Scripture, in the heart of the Holy Roman Empire, at the height of the age of faith. Why, and to whom, does our inscription insist that the words of prophecy were not forged?

It is unlikely that this defense of prophecy was aimed in the first instance at Jews. Typological exegesis is, indeed, in function and often in intention a rebuttal of Jewish literalistic interpretation, and Jews certainly disputed Christological readings of Hebrew prophecy. But they did not as a rule allege that the Hebrew prophetic books were forged by Christians. Augustine (and others) wielded typology against gnostics, and there were some dualistic heresies plaguing Cologne at this time. But they were small voice, and unlikely to be a central concern of the clerics who made this altar. I think, rather, that the defense of the antiquity and authenticity of prophecy is directed toward a more powerful chorus in the mid-twelfth-century Rhineland: the very same critics of ecclesiastical ostentation who provoked Rupert’s revisions. (In fact, Rupert of Deutz may have been the first high medieval exegete to revive the exact wording of Augustine’s justification. In his commentary on the story of Cain, he echoes Augustine’s reading in Contra Faustum 12, and then quotes the justification from Contra Faustum 16.)

When Augustine repeated his discussion of Jewish testimony in City of God, he added a further comment: "And very many [Israelites], considering [their own dispersal], even before His passion, but chiefly after His resurrection, believed in Him. ... But the rest are blinded, of whom it was predicted, 'Let
their table be made before them a trap, and a retribution, and a stumbling-
block. Let their eyes be darkened lest they see. “”2 Testimony, then, is here
conflated with visual perception. This is, of course, an extremely common, even
ubiquitous conflation: throughout western history knowing has been construed
as seeing and vice versa.48 But what was to Augustine primarily a metaphor for
religious insight takes on rather more pointed resonance when inscribed on a
three-dimensional, image-soaked, enameled and gilt altar table.49 Let us look
again that word ficta. It is usually translated as “false,” “feigned,” or “fictive,”
but, as the past participle of fingere, it literally means “formed,” “fashioned,”
molded,” “sculpted.” How is one to take it here? Certainly the words of proph-
ecy are neither “false” nor “fictions,” but on this particular object, the prophe-
cies—the words of the prophets, the words of the Apostles, and the Gospel
deeds that fulfilled them—are nevertheless indisputably “formed” and “fash-
ioned.” It is these “fashioned” words and works, I believe, that need to be
defended. The altar is intervening in a debate, not about Scripture, but about
art. The contested text whose antiquity and authenticity must be upheld is the
object itself.

In placing the antique authority of the Hebrew prophets and the spiritual
usefulness of material artifice at the center of a debate about luxurious art, the
Elbertus Altar was joining a broad discussion. Rupert of Deutz’s linkage of
ecclesiastical ornamentation with Old Testament grandeur was by no means an
isolated example. As Conrad Rudolph, Jean-Claude Schmitt, and Herbert Kess-
sler have all demonstrated, ancient Hebrew precedent was rhetorically central
to the Benedictine-Cistercian debate over art and excess; it featured equally
prominently in contemporary quarrels between regular canons and cloistered
monks over their respective callings.50 Hebrew Scripture figured in these debates
in two distinct ways. On the one hand, as Rupert’s invocation of the Temple
indicated, Hebrew antiquity conveyed authority (one superior to the previously
privileged custom), which both sides were eager to claim. The writings of Abbot
Suger of Saint-Denis (d. 1151), the most famous art patron of the twelfth century,
are crammed with parallels for and justifications of his projects drawn from
Hebrew Scripture.51 But traditionalists did not monopolize scriptural citation.
The pro-reform (although himself Benedictine) Abbot William of St. Thierry
(d. 1148) also invoked the authority of Hebrew precedent, defending the Carth-
usan way of life against accusations of novelty by saying that the new monks
were merely emulating Elijah and Elisha.52

On the other hand, Christian exegetical practice, and especially the temporal
tension inherent in typological thinking, which simultaneously insisted on the
ongoing relevance of the past and the linear march of time, considerably com-
licated the question of Hebrew precedent.53 Christianity insisted that in spite

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of the ongoing validity of the Old Testament, most aspects of antique Hebrew observance had been either “spiritualized” or utterly superseded. Monastic reformers thus frequently cast their project as a contest between the pure spirituality of the New Dispensation and the corrupt, overly ritualistic materiality of the Old. As we have seen, Bernard of Clairvaux criticized church ornamentation as disturbingly suggestive of “ancient Jewish rites.” When secular clerics and Cluniacs excused their wealth by noting that Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and other holy Hebrews possessed earthly riches, the Cistercian Idung of Prüflingen (fl. c. 1155) criticized their biblical understanding and their hermeneutical method: “Just as Christ told the Jews: ‘you err, not knowing scripture,’ so the Cistercian says to the Clunia: ‘you err, not knowing scripture.’” And he added, quoting Saint Jerome: “Those things in Old Testament times were just the shadow of future things. All things happened to [the patriarchs] in figures. . . . Let us repudiate therefore gold with the rest of the Jewish superstitions; or if one loves gold, then one loves also the Jews.” The traditionalists, not to be cowed, threw accusations of “Judaizing” interpretation back upon their critics, charging them with excessive literalism and legalism. Cardinal Matthew of Albano (d. 1134), a Benedictine and proponent of monastic tradition and moderation, chastised reformist abbots for making cloister life more onerous by warning: “Dear brothers, when you multiply the mandates, you multiply the transgressions. As Paul said: ‘The Law indeed brings wrath.’ And lest the point be lost, he turned Christ’s own imprecations against his adversaries: “Let not that Lord’s reproach apply to you: ‘Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees—who took the key of knowledge, so that neither you enter, nor do you permit others to enter!’” (The reformist abbots in turn echoed the implicit anti-Judaism of the Gospels in their reply to Cardinal Matthew, complaining to him, “You spit in our face!” [i.e., as the Jews did to Christ].)

If the status of letter was under continual debate, the status of the “thing” proved equally problematic. Reformers insisted that signs—whether the words of Scripture or an image in a church—were to be valued for what they signified, not in their own right. Paintings were an acceptable form of representation because they made no claim to innate, material worth. Gold and silver objects, by contrast, were as liable to be valued for their matter and their craftsmanship as for what they represented. For this reason Bernard of Clairvaux and William of St.-Thierry both warned about the dangers of craftsmanship and “artifice”—a hypocritical attempt on the part of humans to usurp the beauty of nature and borrow the shine of the sun. In doing so, they consciously echoed Hebrew Scripture: Bernard’s “miro artificis opere” and William’s “per manus artificio” both recall terms used in Jeremiah to condemn Israelite materialism. And three-dimensional images, whether precious metalwork objects or
rough wood or stone sculptures, struck many Christians as uncomfortably, even dangerously akin to idols. The initial shock of the cleric Bernard of Angers (c. 1020) at his first encounter with the cult of the statue of Ste. Foi at Conques is well known. By the year 1100, concern about possible idolatrous misuse of images led to the incorporation of disclaimers of divinity into images themselves: an inscription on the north portal of the early twelfth-century Church of San Miguel, Estella warns: “The image that you see, is neither God nor man. But he whom the sacred image figures, is both God and man.” Christians felt particularly vulnerable to Jewish mockery of the new devotional and representational practices: many contemporary texts incorporate defenses of images directed against real or imagined Jews. A central concern of Rupert’s Dialogue Between Jews and Christians, for example, was to refute the charge that Christian veneration of images—especially the image of Christ—amounted to idolatry. In the text, the Christian discussant repeats longstanding Christian explanations of the efficacy of image: “While we externally image forth [Christ’s] death through the likeness of the cross, we [are kindled] inwardly to love of him.” He then criticizes the Jews for their “blindness,” by which he means their inability to recognize the spiritual in the material.

The debate over church ornament and monastic and ecclesiastical image-based practices thus quickly mutated into a debate over who was most “Jewish”—in their manner of worship, in their interpretation of the letter, and in their approach to matter. We have moved from ritual to representation: what began as a disagreement over wealth and gold, clothing and prayer, eventually inspired competing verbal and visual semiotic approaches. One man’s “shine” is another man’s “shadow,” and the ongoing validity of the “figure” (biblical or artistic) poses a problem of pressing import. In Idung’s Dialogue, the Cluniac defender of art was silenced, offering no response to his interlocutor’s critique. In real life, however, as we have seen, the traditionalists responded vigorously, accusing their critics—whether Cistercian or Jewish—of not knowing the difference between spurs to devotion and objects of devotion, in the process articulating a legitimizing theory of luxurious matter and a theology of “spiritual seeing.” But the proponents of sumptuous decoration and visual devotion did more than argue the efficacy of art. In perhaps the most eloquent of all their responses, they created art.

The Eilbertus Altar: Visible Witness and Invisible Truth

And so the visible Jewish witness is born. Just as Rupert invented a Jew whose vision and presence attested to the truth of tangible signs, and whose blindness and absence then attested to the higher truth of invisible ones, so our altarpiece
forge prophets to point the way by look, word, and deed... and then to fall behind.

The prophets witness by look: their very visual similarity to the apostles, their haloed and hatless heads, affirm that they have received divine revelation. They do differ from the Apostles in one way, however: in their posture. The Apostles are all seated, whereas the prophets all stand, a contrast that perforce draws attention to their stances.69 This composition cannot have been dictated solely by the form of the altar—there are plenty of twelfth-century portable altars with seated figures on their sides.70 Rather, the positioning of the figures, presided over by an image of Christ enthroned, echoes Matthew 19:27–29:

“When the Son of Man sits on the Throne of His Glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” This text was quoted by Bernard of Clairvaux in 1147, when he scolded the secular clergy in Cologne for leading a “disordered” or “pattern-less” (informem) life. According to Bernard, Christ’s prophecy signifies that monks would one day be exalted over and allowed to sit in judgment upon secular clerics.71 An earlier interpretation, found in Jerome and echoed by the ninth-century exegete Christian of Stavelot, had read the text as predicting that believers would judge unbelievers, especially the Jews.72 Bernard was thus implicitly comparing secular clerics to unbelieving Jews. The Eilbertus Altar, then, may be seen as offering a retort on the part of Cologne churchmen—secular canons or traditionalist monks—to Bernard’s charge, replacing the analogy “apostles are to Hebrews as reformers are to traditionalists/Jews” with the equation “apostles are to Hebrews as those who draw spiritual insight from corporeal vision, are to those who see only literally.” It thus serves to indict all those who cannot spiritually appreciate the object, as themselves matter-bound.

The prophets witness with words: the inscriptions almost all in some way relate light, sight, and shine to knowledge of God, and equate corporeal vision with religious faith. Thus Jeremiah’s scroll asserts: “He was seen on earth and conversed with men.”73 Jacob’s verse proclaims, “I saw the Lord face to face.”74 Zechariah announces: “He who will have touched you, touches the pupil of my eye.”75 Isaiah exclaims to his viewer, “Behold! A virgin will conceive and bear a son” as he curves his body to the right and gestures toward the Annunciation, visible just above him and to his right, on the top of the altar.76 The phrase flourished by Ezekiel, “I will sanctify my name, which was polluted among the nations,” while apparently unrelated to vision, continues in the next verse: “The nations will know that I am the Lord when I will be sanctified in you before their eyes.”77 Malachi assures his viewers, “For you who fear God, the sun of justice will rise.”78 Nahum predicts: “The Lord has restored the pride [or: splendor] of Jacob like the pride [or: splendor] of Israel.”79 Joel’s inscription invokes
an image associated with darkness and blindness: "The beasts have rotted in their dung." The scroll of Zephaniah reads, "Morning after morning, the lord will bring his judgment into the light, and it [or he] will not be hidden." The verse of Obadiah proclaims, "Those exiles from Jerusalem who are in the Bosphorus will possess the cities of the South." Although this inscription is labeled by Favreau "particularly obscure," the South was inevitably associated with light, and Favreau himself records that Rupert of Deutz comments in relation to this passage, "The Bosphorus signifies the pagans nations, who are without knowledge of God, in the obscurity of cold, but who will find the light." Balaam, as is customary, holds his sole true prophecy: "There shall arise a star from Jacob, and a man shall rise out of Israel," lines that are in Scripture preceded by a verse that (in Christian exegesis) simultaneously affirms the truth of Hebrew prophecy, the insufficiency of the Judaic era, and the visible reality of the Incarnation: "I shall see him, but not now; I shall behold him, but not near." It is difficult to find a reference to shine or vision in the verse flourished by Hosea: "The number of the sons of Israel will be like the sands of the sea," but the ever sight-sensitive Rupert of Deutz managed to do so: "And in the end the aquatic sand of the sea will be separated by the shining stars of heaven." Rupert explained that in this verse Hosea was predicting that great things would arise out of the seed of Abraham. And Daniel's phrase, "When the holy of holies comes, unction will cease," while recalling Christian polemical assertions of the Hebrews' supersession, also paraphrases a verse that explicitly equates justice and knowledge with vision and prophecy: "Seventy weeks are shortened upon thy people ... that iniquity may be abolished; and everlasting justice may be brought; and vision and prophecy may be fulfilled; and the saint of saints may be anointed." The prophets witness with deeds: each points upward toward the truth, makes an expressive gesture, or holds objects that prefigure the Christian liturgy (especially as observed in traditional, ornament-laden churches). Thus Isaiah gestures toward the Annunciation image enameled on the top of the golden altar as he foretells the Incarnation. Melchizedek displays bread and wine, or rather a golden paten and chalice, symbols of the body and blood of Christ consumed in the Mass, but also the type of luxury items so frequently criticized by reformers. David grasps his harp, indicative alike of the Hebrew Psalms and of the music that played so central a role in Benedictine worship, and which was frequently criticized by reformers. (The Cistercian Aelred of Rievaulx, for example, railed against the use of musical instruments in church as overly Hebraic, exclaiming: "Where does it come from, since types and figures have already ceased, where does it come from, that there are in church so many instruments, so many cymbals?!")
The prophets fall behind, or rather remain below: they function as supports for the altar table, but their view of the top is blocked, and they cannot see either the painted image of Christ or the Body that is daily sacrificed upon it.

This last, visible act of negative witness—the prophets’ physical inability to see the Body of Christ, which they nonetheless spiritually foresaw through heavenly inspiration—rouns out their usefulness to the Christian viewer. For he, too, cannot “see” the Body of Christ, in the sense of perceiving flesh, limbs, and so on; he needs to look with “the eyes of faith” if he is to discern Christ in the consecrated bread. Although Christian imagery had linked the Eucharist to Old Testament figures as early as the sixth century, the growing theological consensus in favor of complete transubstantiation (which insisted that the bread and wine of the Mass actually turned into the physical, if disguised, body and blood of Christ) rendered issues of matter, vision, and representation more significant—and vexing—than ever before. The central sacrament of medieval Christianity now required the same ability to transcend mundane perception and “see spiritually,” as did religious art. And it was subject to the same criticisms, by internal Christian sectarian critics as well as by external ones. It is for this reason that a defense of the sacrament written by the Cistercian Baldwin of Canterbury (d. 1190) reads very much like defenses of religious art in general, and the inscription on the Eilbertus Altar in particular: “nothing [in the sacrament] is false, feigned, counterfeit, or faked by magical manipulations. There is truth in that which is evident, and in that which is hidden.” And to provide a model for how Christians might “see” what cannot be seen, he cites the prophets: “The law and prophets bear witness to future promise (in the shadows).” But he also indict those who could not learn to see properly: “The Pharisees, who did not believe, were made more blind.”

The imagery of the Eilbertus Altar, then, embodies Christian theology regarding Jewish prophecy—its truth, its centrality, its incompleteness without Christ. But it also embodies, and links Hebrew prophecy to, one specific—and embattled—stream of Christian thought promoting the spiritual efficacy of luxurious matter and bodily perception. The ancient Hebrew prophets, who forecast the coming of Christ in words and imagery drawn from their own pre-Christian world, demonstrate that splendor can lead to salvation, if viewed with properly spiritual vision. But the altar is also preserving, and enshrining in its very form, the difference between “types” and “figures” on the one hand (represented by the Hebrew prophets and kings) and the transcendent truth they herald (represented by the invisible godhead above them). Each time the celebrant leans over the shining surface of this altar, its words, images, composition, and very shape instruct him in the correct path to knowledge of God. He is to move progressively upward from corporeal sight (the beauty of the object
and the appearance of the prophets), through visual imagination (the inspired words of the prophets), to the climax of the Christian Mass: ingestion of the unseeable Body of Christ. This last act foreshadows the ultimate goal of the Christian believer: to come as close as is possible in this flawed, flesh-bound world to purely image-less intellectus or understanding.

Conclusion

It is natural and tempting to link the new prominence of Hebrew figures in twelfth-century art with contemporary anti-Jewish polemic, and to see these images as early harbingers of the growing intolerance that came to mark high medieval Christendom. But although it is clear that these works of art are strongly influenced by debates over scriptural interpretation and reflect deep disapproval of Jewish literal understanding, exegesis on its own cannot explain material and visual innovation. Differences in medium and audience must be taken into account; the function of images must be considered. I have suggested that the most immediate and compelling context for the new imagery is the challenge posed by ecclesiastical reform to traditional ritual and splendor, and the corresponding need felt by many twelfth-century monks, priests, and prelates to articulate a space within Christian spirituality for sensory perception and embodied existence. That is, the primary realm in which religious images must be understood is the realm in which religious imagery was used: Christian devotion. I have no wish to fall into Marc Bloch’s “fetish of single cause.” But it is necessary to look at when and where images were made, how images work, and why they do what they do. The Eilbertus Altar was made in the Rhineland by and for secular clerics or Benedictine monks: men who, like Rupert of Deutz, continued to be moved by ritual and grandeur, and who, while committed to reform and purification, spurned the more ascetic and potentially dualistic practices and ideals of the Cistercians. Adopting and adapting the very judaizing label assigned them by their critics, they used Judaic imagery to demonstrate the difference between purely materialistic appreciation of matter and spiritually motivated use of matter.

Jewish prophets appear as venerable and authoritative witnesses to the antiquity, sanctity, and efficacy of luxurious matter and corporeal vision. Their function is not to rehabilitate the Jew as a spiritual witness, but to rehabilitate the realm long associated with Jews (the external, glorious, temporal, image-saturated world so inimical to early Cistercians) as a valid part of Christianity. By peopling innovative objects with visibly antique Hebrew figures, art makers and patrons could simultaneously claim prophetic authority for their artistic innovations, and point to contemporary Jews’ carefully preserved though (from
the Christian perspective) woefully misunderstood ancient Scriptures for affirmation. That is, the witnessing Jew appears in art in order to provide historical, scriptural, and epistemological justification for art, and to justify the very artworks in which he appears.

Although we cannot see the artistic representation of the Jew as a straightforward reflection of contemporary attitudes toward Jews, the Vita Heriberti and the Eilbertus Altar can help illuminate developments in contemporary Christian thought about the Jews. As Rupert of Deutz and his brethren asserted the testimonial value of matter, the power of Old Testament imagery, and the spiritual status of vision, Augustine’s long-dormant articulation of Jewish witness acquired new relevance and force. Ideas that had previously been exclusively textual and largely metaphorical were given visual expression and tangible form. And, in turn, these images subtly affected the realm of ideas: an inevitable (and perhaps unintended) side effect of their representational strategy is to demonstrate graphically the Jews’ own stagnancy, sterility, materiality, subordination, and supercession. These themes had always been present in Christian thought, of course, but they received new emphasis in twelfth-century texts, for reasons that are perhaps now somewhat clearer. The final lesson of this examination of twelfth-century text and image, then, is a historiographical one: just as Rupert of Deutz wrote a Jew into his source in order to illuminate Christian history, so by investigating the changing iconography of the Jew we can illuminate the history of Jews and of Christians in medieval Europe.

NOTES


2. Rupert of Deutz, Vita Heriberti: Kritische Edition mit Kommentar und Untersuchungen, ed. Peter Dinter (Bonn: Röhrscheid, 1976), 1.4–8, p. 34. The original version of the miracle is in Lantbert von Deutz, Vita Heriberti, 141–42.


6. The Old Law was symbolized by the personification of Synagoga. On the absence of Jews in early medieval art, see Bernhard Blumenkranz, *Le juif médiéval au miroir de l'art chrétien* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1966).

7. On these developments, see Sara Lipton, *Dark Mirror: Jews, Vision, and Witness in Medieval Christian Art, 1000–1500* (New York: Metropolitan Books, forthcoming), chap. 1. Bearded and scroll-bearing prophets had occasionally appeared in Carolingian and Ottonian manuscripts, but before 1100 their appearance was not standardized; it was equally common for Hebrew prophets to be depicted as clean-shaven.

8. See, for example, the prophets on the western portal of the cathedral of Modena (consecrated 1106), the famous sculpted prophets at the monastery of Moissac (c. 1100), the jamb sculptures at Cremona (c. 1107–17), the nine prophets at Verona (1199), and many more. For a discussion of the spread of images of prophets, see Jean-Pierre Cailler, "La réappropriation du prophétisme par les imaginiers chrétiens du XIIe siècle," *Le Monde de la Bible* 131 (2000): 47–53. Hats were less ubiquitous signs but were also common. Wide-brimmed pointed hats appear on the heads of Hosea, Jonah, and Daniel in the earliest stained glass windows that survive intact, on the south side of the nave of Augsburg Cathedral (c. 1100 or 1130); Ezekiel and Micah wear rounded, peaked caps in the Bury Bible (c. 1130–35); and Saint Joseph, Simon the Pharisee, Joseph of Arimathea, and Nicodemus all wear knobbed or peaked caps in the St. Albans Psalter (c. 1120–30).


13. Nigel Morgan, "The Iconography of Twelfth-century Mosan Enamels," in *Rhein und Maas: Kunst und Kultur 800–1400* (Cologne: Schnütgen-Museum, 1973), 2.263–75; "Typological was art presumably stimulated by Bible scholarship such as at Laon (Glossa Ordinaria)" (263). Cailler, "La réappropriation," likewise links prophetic imagery to biblical study. Robert


16. Like almost all Christian commentators, Rupert in his exegesis had often associated the Jews’ literal interpretation with moral carnality, assigning them the major “worldly” sins: greed, lust, and pride. This last quality is presented by Rupert as the efficient cause of the Jews’ exegetical blindness: “They are blinded by the pride of those who are wise with their own wisdom and prudent in their own eyes.” Anulus sive Dialogus inter Christianum et Iudaean, ed. Rhabanus Haacke, in Arduini, Ruperto di Deutz, 183–234 (quotation at 203). See Timmer, “Biblical Exegesis,” 315. In Rupert, the Jews’ pride is primarily intellectual: they are the “sapientes et prudentes” of Matt. 11:25; see also Rupert of Deutz, De sancta Trinitate et operibus eis, ed. R. Haacke, CCCM 21 (Turnholt: Brepolis, 1971), 125.


18. Ibid. Iudicae cecitas is from Rom. 11:25.


21. For an interesting study of legal culture around 1000, see Jeffrey A. Bowman, Shifting Landmarks: Property, Proof, and Dispute in Catalonia around the Year 1000 (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2004).

22. In the 1090s Pope Urban II refused to canonize a Breton saint on the grounds that proper witnesses had not been produced. In 1139, Innocent II refused to canonize Edward the Confessor on the same grounds. This may have been a political decision, but the grounds he cited must have been widely accepted: E. W. Kemp, “Pope Alexander III and the Canonization of Saints: The Alexander Prize Essay,” Transactions of the Royal Historical Society.


26. “Oportet autem illum et testimoniun habere bonum ab iis qui foris sunt.” For its incorporation into canon law, see Gilchrist, The Collection, 163 (Titulus 20, Capitula 169).


28. The benefits reaped by so many monasteries from the economic flourishing of the later eleventh and early twelfth centuries generated a strong reaction, known as the “monastic crisis of prosperity.” New monastic orders (particularly the Carthusians, founded 1084, and the Cistercians, founded 1098) critiqued the excesses even of secular clerics, and promoted greater simplicity in lifestyle, liturgy, art, and architecture. So, for example, the earliest account of the first Carthusians, written in 1104, notes that they allowed no gold or silver ornaments in their church, except for a silver chalice (Guibert de Nogent, PL 156:851ff.). The phrase “monastic crisis of prosperity” was coined by Jean Leclercq; see Conrad Rudolph, The Things of Greater Importance: Bernard of Clairvaux’s Apologia and the Medieval Attitude toward Art (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 3–4. On reformers’ criticisms, see Jean Leclercq, “La crise du monachisme aux Xle et Xlle siècles,” Bulletin dell’Istituto storico italiano per il medio evo 70 (1958): 39–41, and John van Engen, “The ‘Crisis of Cenobitism’ Reconsidered,” Speculum 61 (1986): 269–304.


32. Van Engen, Rupert of Deutz, 226, and Vita Heriberti, ed. Dinter, 126.

33. Vita Heriberti, ed. Dinter, 35.


35. Neither route to knowledge is completely autonomous: waking witnesses see spiritual light with their physical bodies, and sleeping witnesses see secular light in their dreaming minds. This almost inextricable intertwining of the external and the ineffable is reflected in
the living world: Heribert is simultaneously majestic lord and humble saint; the Christian reader is simultaneously skeptical and devout.

36. The same argument, expressed in almost identical words, appears in David Nirenberg, "Christian Sovereignty and Jewish Flesh," in *Rethinking the Medieval Senses*, ed. S. Nichols, A. Kablitz, and A. Calhoun (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 154–85: "At the crossroads of [the relationship between the material world and the divine Word], representing the possibility of confusion in its purest form, they placed the Jews." I thank David Nirenberg for this reference.


38. Daniel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, David, Melchisedek, Osee (Hosea), Malachi, Jonah, Nahum, Solomon, Joel, Abdiad (Obadiah), Zechariah, Zephaniah, and Balaam.


40. Favreau, "Les autels portatifs," 340, notes that all these texts "strongly assert the superiority of the Christian faith over Israelite law," but confesses himself otherwise baffled by the selection of unpreceended and often obscure verses. In "Controverses judéochrétiennes," 1282, Favreau points out that the verses on the scrolls of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel are identical to the verses cited in the pseudo-Augustinian anti-Jewish sermon now attributed to Quodvultdeus, which was incorporated into the Nativty liturgy and, eventually, the *Drama of the Prophets*. The other thirteen inscriptions, however, do not appear in the sermon or the drama.

41. "Doctrina pleni fidei patres duodenis testantur, ficta non esse prophetica dicta/Celitus afflati de christo vaticinat/i hi predixerunt que post ventura fuerunt."

42. *Contra Faustum* 16.21: "nihil de illo ad tempus possunt putare conficatum," ed. J. Zycha, CSEL 25 (Vienna: F. Tempisky, 1891–92). See also 13.10: "One might rather fear that the inquirer . . . would say that the Christians composed those writings when the events described had already begun to take place . . . were it not for the widely spread and widely known people of the Jews. . . . From the Jewish manuscripts we prove that these things were not written by us to suit the event, but were long ago published and preserved as prophecies in the Jewish nation." Augustine was primarily interested in defending Christianity against pagan critics who mocked its novelty, by invoking texts known to be ancient. But he was doing more than relying on the Jews' antiquity. Like Rupert after him, he was relying on their status as outsiders: he knew his Bible, and may well have been thinking of 1 Tim. 37 ("It is necessary to have witness from outsiders"). But Augustine was a professor of rhetoric, and he also knew his rhetoric and law. The Roman rhetorician Quintilian wrote (*Institutio Oratorii* V.1–2) that witness testimony, one of the most persuasive forms of evidence, was classified as "inautificial proofs" (*inautificialia*), that is, proofs external to the speaker's art.
and drawn into the service of a case from without. Augustine, then, may have been invoking Quintilian when defending the prophetic books as "non fictum." See also Aristotle's Poetics, 145b: "Non ficta fabula, sed vera historia."

43. De civitate dei 18.46, ed. Dombart and Kalb, 2.328. The passage explains the role of Jews in salvific history: "[The Jews] were dispersed through the lands (so that indeed there is no place where they are not), and [they] are thus by their own Scriptures a testimony [testimonia] that we have not forger the prophecies about Christ."

44. I owe this observation to Kenneth Stow, whom I thank for the insight and for encouraging me to think further about the Augustinian legacy. See his "Conversion, Apostasy, and Preternaturalness: Eincho of Flonheim and the Fear of Jews in the Twelfth Century," Speculum 76 (2001): 911–33; also his review of Amnon Linder, Jews in Legal Sources of the Early Middle Ages in Jewish Quarterly Review n.s. 89 (1999): 460–65. For a different view of the influence of Augustine's doctrine of tolerance in the Middle Ages, see Cohen, Living Letters of the Law, and Abulafia, Christians and Jews, 65–66.

45. For example, by Irenaeus of Lyon, in his Adversus Haereticos, Book 4. On dualist heretics in Cologne in the 1140s and 1150s, see R. I. Moore, The Birth of Popular Heresy (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 72–75, and Malcolm Lambert, Medieval Heresy: Popular Movements from the Gregorian Reform to the Reformation, 3rd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 62–64. Everwin of Steinfeld, the Cologne cleric who reported on dualist heretics in Cologne in 1143–44, dwelled less on their unorthodox ideas than on their critique of monastic wealth—a charge that stood precisely because it echoed perfectly orthodox critics (see Lambert, Medieval Heresy, 63). The dualistic tendencies inherent in Catholic thought—and brought to the fore in Catholic reformist debates and in Catholic critiques of Jewish materialism—made it all the more necessary to stress the heterodoxy of dualism, and all the more crucial to identify a "proper" Christian approach to matter, distinct from the mistaken Jewish approach.

46. In Genesis 4.6 in De Sancta Trinitate, ed. Haacke, CCCM 21, 288. See Gilbert Dahan, "L'exégèse de l'historie de Cain et Abel du XIIe au XIVe siècle en Occident," in RTAM 49 (1982): 21–89 and 50 (1983): 5–68. The only other contemporary citation of which I am aware was written by Hervé de Déols (d. c. 1150), a Cluniac monk who had studied in the schools, translated the highly visual pseudo-Dionysian treatise on Celestial Hierarchy, commented on Scripture, and influenced art: "The crime of [the Jews] is the salvation of the Gentiles, since because of the killing of the Savior they are dispersed, they bear the Holy Scriptures for all nations, they are testimony for us, that we have not forger the prophecies about Christ, and they corroborate the faith of the gentiles" (PL 181:751). On Hervé's influence on art, see Marcia Kupfer, "Spiritual Passage and Pictorial Strategy in the Romanesque Frescoes at Vicq," Art Bulletin 68 (1986): 35–53. On Hervé's literary work, see Germain Morin, "Un critique en liturgie au douzième siècle. Le traité inédit de Hervé de Bourgdeau," Revue bénédictine 97 (1997): 36–61.

47. De civitate dei 18.46, ed. Dombart and Kalb, 2.328–29. Augustine was citing Rom. 11:7–10, which was, in turn, quoting Ps. 68:23–24.


49. The medieval Latin word for portable altar is "tabula."

50. Rudolph, Things of Greater Importance and Artistic Change at St-Denis; Jean-Claude Schmitt, Le corps des images: essais sur la culture visuelle au moyen âge (Paris: Gallimard,


53. Chenu, *Nature, Man, and Society*, 149–50 and 156, notes the temporal complexity inherent in the Christian notion of typology: the “ages of the fathers” was superseded, but also actively present.


55. Idung, *Dialogus* 1.6 and 1.36, in R.B.C. Huygens, ed., “Le moine Idung et ses deux ouvrages,” in *Studia medievalia* 13 (1972): 291–470. Idung was quoting St. Jerome, who in his *Letter to Nepotian* says, “Either we reject gold together with other superstitions of the Jews, or if the gold is pleasing, the Jews must also be pleasing” (Ep. 52:10, in CSEL 54, 433).


57. Ibid. See also André Wilmart, “Une riposte de l’ancien monachisme au manifeste de Saint Bernard,” *Revue bénédictine* 46 (1934): 296–344: “There are some improvident people [Cistercian reformers] who impose hard laws, like those of the Pharisees, on the weak, when even perfect people can scarcely fulfill them” (313).

58. Wilmart, “Une riposte,” 300. See also Nicholas of Clairvaux (d. 1180), *Epistola* 8: “And finally with common accord we leave all things, and fly from the Old Testament and the shadow of the Cluniacs up into Cistercian purity [of the New].” PL 196: 1605.


60. Rudolph, *Things of Greater Importance*, 59, notes that Cistercian Statutes 10 and 20 forbade the use of gold and silver in most liturgical objects, but allowed a painted image of Christ on the crucifix.


62. See Sara Lipton, “Images and Their Uses,” in *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Christianity in Western Europe c. 1000–c. 1500*, ed. Miri Rubin and Walter Simons (Cambridge:
Cambridge University Press, 2009), 254–83, for further discussion of concern over potentially idolatrous image veneration.


65. Anulus, in Arduini, Ruperto di Deutz, 181–242. Elsewhere Rupert recounted a powerful spiritual vision inspired by an image of Christ. On these texts, and Rupert’s attitude to art in general, see Lipton, “The Sweet Lean of His Head,” Jewish criticisms of Christian images also figure in the Dialogue of Gilbert Crispin and Anselm, Cur Deus Homo.

66. This helps explain a fact noted by van Engen, Rupert of Deutz, 241, that Benedictine monks were in the forefront of the Christian-Jewish debate in the first half of the twelfth century. Being accused of “Jewishness” made it all the more important that they distinguish themselves from Jews.


68. Indeed, Bernard of Clairvaux seems to have worried about the eloquence of the sculpted figure: see his retort to Abelard, quoted in Caroline Walker Bynum, Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Northern Germany and Beyond (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007), 230 and 344:6: “Does the fashioned thing/image/area of art ever say to the one who fashioned it, why did you shape me thus?” (“Num-quid dicit figmentum ei qui se finxit: quid me finxist es?”). S. Bernardi, Epist. 190, chap. 8, (Opera 8:34).

69. This contrast appears in other locations, as well, of course. The Apostles are seated and the prophets are standing on the Heribert Shrine, which also dates to mid-century Cologne. On the facade of Chartres Cathedral (c. 1145), Old Testament kings and prophets on the door jambs are standing while the Apostles on the lintel above are seated.

70. See, for example, the portable altar made in Cologne, c. 1160, now in the Treasury of the abbey of St. Vitus, Mönchengladbach (Rhein und Maas 1:271).

71. The accusation is mentioned in the preface to the Liber miraculorum (Book VI of Geoffrey of Axerre’s Vita prima Bernardi): John van Engen, “The God of Images: Sacred Texts and Social Realities,” in Intellectual Life in the Middle Ages: Essays Presented to Margaret Gibson, ed. Lesley Smith and Benedicta Ward (London: Hambledon Press, 1992), 243–64 (quotation at 243). Bernard’s Cologne discourse also quotes Isaiah 26:10: “Let us pity the impious—he will not discern justice, and in the land of the holy ones he acted iniquitously, and he will not see the glory of God.”

72. PL 106:1253.

73. “Visus est in terris et cum hominibus conversatus est.” This is not from Jeremiah, in fact, but from Baruch 3:38. The verse features prominently in the section of Rupert’s Anulus devoted to defending veneration of the crucifix: Arduini, Ruperto di Deutz, 237–36.
77. “Sanctificabo nomen meum quod pollutum est inter gentes . . . [ut sciat gentes quia ego Dominus, ait Dominus exercituum, cum sanctificatus fuero in vobis coram eis].” Ezek. 36:23.
78. “Vobis timentibus deum orietur sol justitiae.” Mal. 4:2.
80. “Computuerunt jumenta in stercore suo.” Joel 1:11. In Tob. 2:3, dung falls on the eyes of Tobias and blinds him. The thrust of Joel 1 is to lament the loss of beauty: “Yea and the beasts of the field have looked up to thee, as a garden bed that thirsts after rain, for the springs of waters are dried up, and fire has devoured the beautiful places of the wilderness” (Joel 1:12).
81. “Mane, mane judicium suum dabit dominus in lucem et non abscendetur.” Zeph. 3:5.
83. Favreau, “Les autels portatif.”
84. “[Video eum, sed non modo: intuebor illum, sed non prope.] Ex Jacob stella predict et de Israhel homo surget.” Num. 24:17. As Favreau, “Les autels portatif” notes, the scriptural “a scepter will rise” (consurget virga) is here, as in the liturgy, replaced with the phrase “a man will rise” (exsurget homo).
86. Commentary on Osee (PL 168:29). Also noteworthy is Augustine’s discussion of the verse in Contra Faustum (chap. 80). There Augustine proves that the Old Testament was fulfilled in the New, by pointing to the citation of Hosea in Romans 9:23–26: “What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, That he might show the riches of his glory in vessels of mercy, which he hath prepared unto glory?” Sand is, of course, the fundamental ingredient of enamel, which is made of glass.
87. Favreau, “Les autels portatif,” 338, plausibly suggests that “Cum venerit sanctus sanctorum cessabit un[c]tio” was inspired by Dan. 9:24, and identifies several anti-Jewish texts that cite the verse. The three remaining inscriptions are somewhat more difficult to relate to vision or shine. The scroll of Solomon reads: “Per sapientiam sanati sunt qui placuerint dominio un principe” (Sap. 9:19). It may be included because of a verse that comes three lines earlier: “Et quae in prospectu sunt inver nutritious cum labore” (“And we find with labor those things that are in sight”) (Sap. 9:18). Alternatively, it may refer to a comment of Augustine related to this verse: “Quod autem Christus est veritas, quod idem ostendit cum splendor Patria nuncupatur; non est enim quidquam in circuitu solis, nisi splendor ipse quem gigiit: quid ergo potuit apertius et clarius ex Vetere Testamento huic sententiae consonare, quam illud quod dictum est . . . et paulo post, ‘per sapientiam sanati sunt’” (PL 32:133). See, too, a treatise ascribed to Cyprian, which remarks, “Per sapientiam sanati sunt: ambulantes in tenebris sihnetipsis lumen non possunt ostendere, nisi ulterior seipsum non videntibus offerat lumen. Ita humanum caecitas ad Deum non diriget viam, nisi ipse lucernam legis ostendat” (PL 4:848). Jonah’s scroll reads, “Tolle animam meam quoniam melior est mihi mors quam vita” (Jon. 4:3). Again, a neighboring verse (Jon. 4:5) refers to
darkness and sight: "Et egressus est Jonas de civitate, et sedit contra orientem civitatis: et fecit sibimet umbraculum ibi, et sedebat subter illud in umbra, donec videret quid accideret civitatii" ("Then Jonas went out of the city, and sat toward the east side of the city: and he made himself a booth there, and he sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would befall the city"). And Rupert commented regarding this verse: "Verba eius prae oculis habere debemus" (PL 168:434). David's verse (Ps. 93:12, "Beatus est quem tu erudieris domine," "Blessed is he whom you will instruct, Lord") is likewise perplexing, though it is located close to others that emphasize that physical vision is a gift of God and related to knowledge: "He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? or he that formed the eye, does he not consider? He that chastises nations, shall he not rebuke: he that teaches man knowledge?" (Ps. 93:9-10).

And Rupert comments of this verse: "Suaviter namque et magna cum deliciarum multitudine summam sapientiam cito discit ille ad quem fit Verbum Domini, quia videlicet hoc Verbum lux vera est, quae illuminat omne hominum venientem in hunc mundum (John 1), et dum infulget humanae menti, repente illuminat, repente docet" (PL 168:15).


91. An inscription on a nearly contemporary portable altar also from Cologne, the Gregory Portable altar by Fridericus of St. Pantaleon (c. 1160), is explicit in this regard: "Quicquid in altari tractatur materialis / Cordis in altari complectur spiritualis. / Hostia visibilis mactatur operta figura, / Immolat hanc pura devotionis mentis in ara" ("Whatever is handled on the material altar / Is fulfilled in the spiritual altar of the heart / With the figure veiled, the visible host is immolated / Pure devotion sacrifices this [host] on the altar of the mind").


94. Palazzo, L’Espace rituel, 36–37, notes that the images on liturgical artworks are constitutive elements of ritual and serve as models for the man who participates in the liturgy.