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A Tool for Exemplary Pastoral Care

Three Booklets of the Edwardes Manuscript in Context

HANNAH WEAVER
Harvard University

THIS INVESTIGATION BEGINS WITH a banal observation: sometime before 1300, someone bound three booklets together into a single manuscript volume.¹ To modern eyes, it seems like a curious compilation: it contains the earliest known copy of the romance *Gui de Warewic*

The author would like to thank Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, Virginie Greene, and especially the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their crucial suggestions.

1 The three booklets are now British Library (BL) MSS Add. 38662, 38663, and 40142. Two of the three booklets have been digitized at the time of writing by the British Library: Add. 38662, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_38662; and Add. 38663, http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_38663. A note in *Anglicana* datable to the later thirteenth or very early fourteenth century provides evidence that these three booklets were a single codicological entity by ca. 1300, on which more below; see Ronald Walpole, *The Old French Johannes Translation of the Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle: A Critical Edition* (hereafter *PTC*), 2 vols. (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1976), 2:171. The three were eventually subsumed into the larger manuscript known as the Edwardes manuscript, itself disassembled in the nineteenth century. Scholars have proposed the following reconstruction of the Edwardes codex: (1) [unknown]; (2) *Treatise on the Commandments*; now Princeton MS Garrett 143 [XV c.]; (3) *Gui de Warewic*; now BL MS Add. 38662 [XIII c.]; (4) *Chanson de Guillaume*; now BL MS Add. 38663 [XIII c.]; (5) *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*; now BL MS Add. 40142 [XIII c.]; (6) *Vie de sainte Marguerite et Miracles de Nostre Dame d'Adgar*; now BL MS Add. 38664 [XIV c.]; (7) *Vie de sainte Katherine*; now BL MS Add. 40143 [XIII c.]. This reconstruction was first posited in its entirety by Duncan McMillan, introduction to *La Chanson de Guillaume*, vol. 1 (Paris: Picard, 1949), x, xiv. For bibliographic information, including known ownership history, see *PTC*, 165–68.

(= *Gui*), the only extant copy of the enigmatic epic *La Chanson de Guillaume* (= *Guillaume*), and a copy of an Anglo-Norman version of the Old French translation of the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle* attributed to Johannes (= *Pseudo-Turpin*).² At first glance, the texts seem to have little in common beyond their shared Anglo-Norman dialect and portrayals of battle. They look like they belong to different genres (romance, epic, and chronicle, respectively); they have different forms (octosyllabic rhymed verse, decasyllabic laisses, and prose); and they deal with a potpourri of geographical areas (England, Constantinople, France, and Spain, among others). This project began with a question: can the fact that these texts were combined in a single codex be used as evidence for their medieval readership and reception? Essentially, I wanted to explore how far a single codex, if considered in its historical context, can act as a point of mediation between medieval textual traditions and modern perceptions of those texts. To what extent is it possible to derive significance from the collocation of booklets containing texts that, at first blush, seem disparate to modern eyes? Could the bringing together of the texts within a single codex reflect a perception of shared themes or concerns, and perhaps also point to a particular audience and/or use?

Manuscript Studies

To clarify the relationship among these three booklets, let us first delve into their physical characteristics. They are physically distinct in terms of quiring and layout, as these brief descriptions show:

Gui: folios 1–80; 1–10⁸ with quire signatures from I to X in the copyist's hand; two columns of 40 lines; octosyllabic rhymed verse;

2 In Ruth Dean and Maureen Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts* (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999), *Gui* is no. 154; *Guillaume*, no. 82; *Pseudo-Turpin*, no. 79. The critical edition of *Gui* is Alfred Ewert, ed., *Gui de Warewic, roman du XIII^e siècle* (Paris: Champion, 1932) (hereafter *GW*); of *Guillaume*, F. Suard, ed., *La Chanson de Guillaume* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 1991) (hereafter *CG*); of *Pseudo-Turpin* in *PTC*.

Gothic textura hand written above the top line; fol. 1r, large puzzle initial *P* (figure 1).

Guillaume: folios 1–25; 1–3⁸ + 4¹; two columns of 34 to 42 lines (on which more below); decasyllabic assonanced laisses; Gothic textura hand written above the top line; folio 1r, large puzzle initial *P* (figure 2).

Pseudo-Turpin: folios 1–14, 1⁸ + 2⁶; 40 lines in a single column; prose; Gothic textura hand written above the top line; folio 1r, large puzzle initial *U* (figure 3).³

There is no direct evidence for the location or date of production in any of the three. The codex made up of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* was likely bound together before circa 1300, however, as the hand of the somewhat cryptic early fourteenth-century marginal note on folio 14v of *Pseudo-Turpin* (“Dedenz le volum de tut cele romaunce si sunt contenuz si uint foyles”) may indicate, if “si uint” is interpreted as 120.⁴ As they stand, the three volumes contain 119 folios. The singleton at the end of *Guillaume* may have once been part of a bifolium, with the extra leaf later eliminated, which would account for the discrepancy of one folio.⁵

In a pathbreaking inquiry into the three booklets, in 1975 Jeanne Wathelet-Willem carefully observed ruling and layout differences between *Guillaume* and the other two. She also argued that the hand of *Guillaume* differed subtly from that of *Gui* and *Turpin*. Nevertheless, she saw enough similarities among the three to assert that the same scriptorium produced them all and that a single decorator drew all the initials.⁶ Looking for clues

3 I have translated and augmented the descriptions in Maria Careri, “Membra disiecta. I Mss. di Londra, BL, Add. 38662 (Gui de Warewic), 38663 (Chanson de Guillaume) e 40142 (Pseudo-Turpin),” *Cultura Neolatina* 62 (2002): 215.

4 Walpole was the first to note the importance of the annotation on *Turpin*; he attributed it to “a court hand of . . . ca. 1300”; *PTC*, 2:171.

5 See Careri, “Membra disiecta,” 215 n. 17.

6 Jeanne Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches sur la Chanson de Guillaume: études accompagnées d’une édition*, vol. 1 (Paris: Les Belles lettres, 1975), 41–42.

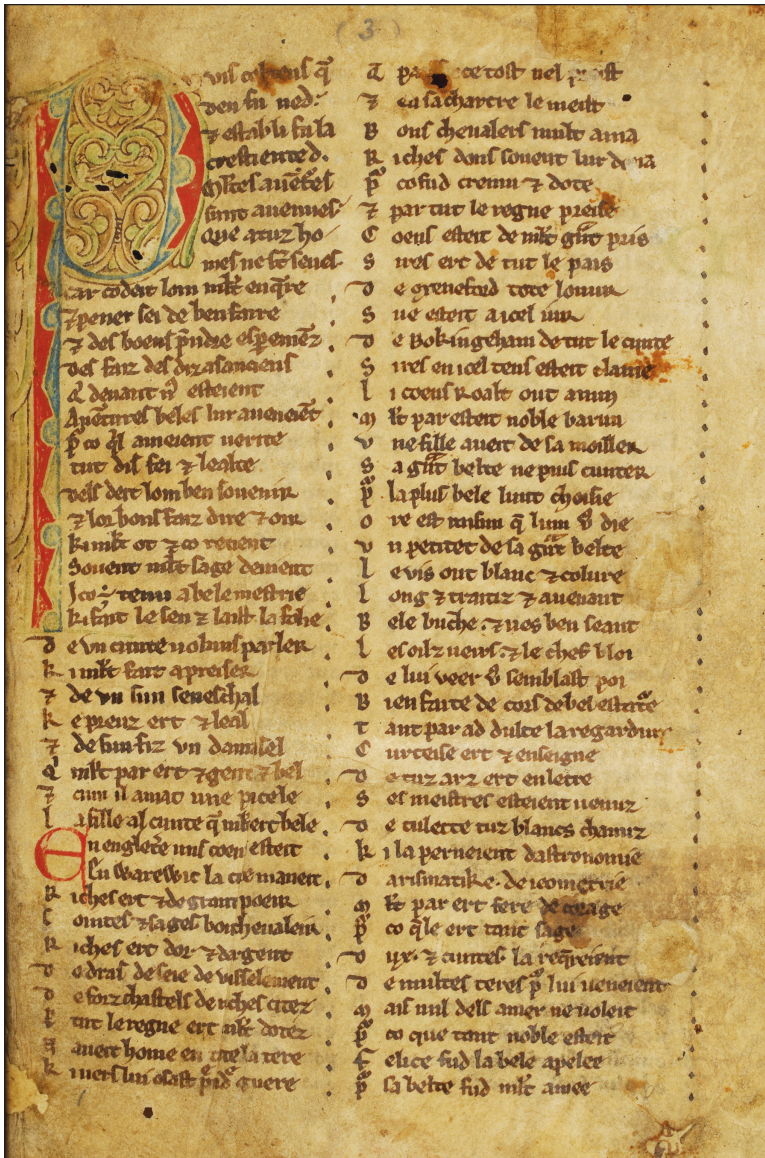


FIGURE 1. A large puzzle initial P begins this copy of *Gui de Warewic*, which would have been the first booklet in the codex. London, BL Add. MS 38662, fol. 1r. © British Library Board.

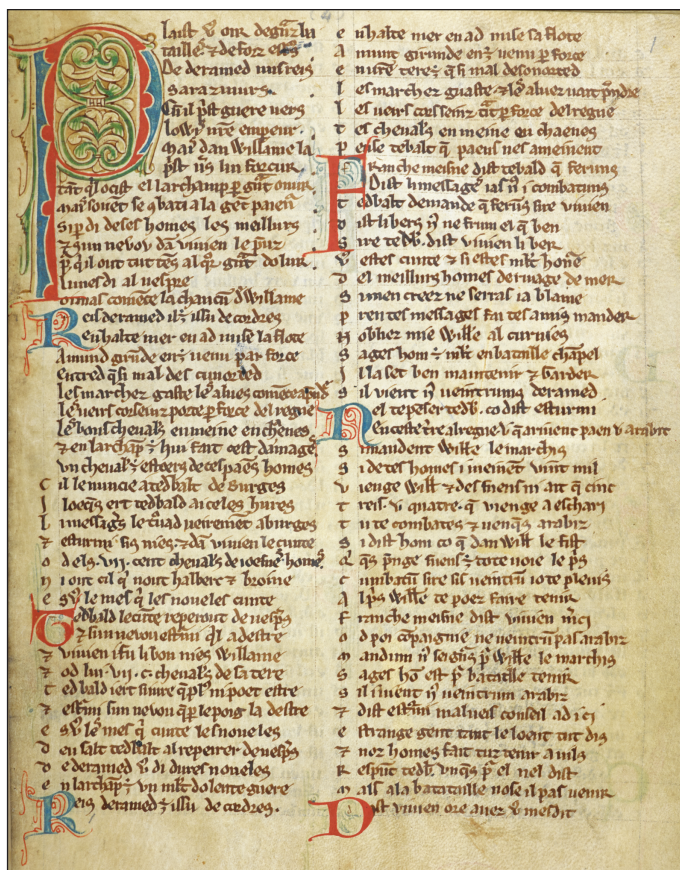


FIGURE 2. Like Gui, *La Chanson de Guillaume* begins with a large puzzle initial P; Guillaume would have been between Gui and Turpin. London, BL Add. MS 38663, fol. 1r. © British Library Board.

about where and when they may have been copied, Wathelet-Willem had a breakthrough when looking at plates of Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) MS fr. 24766, a manuscript of Brother Angier's French translation of Gregory the Great's *Dialogues* notable for its possible status as the earliest autograph in French (figure 4).⁷ The lettrines in this manuscript and those

7 A digitized version is available from the Bibliothèque nationale de France: *Dialogues de Saint Grégoire le Grand, traduction française en vers, par Angier, moine de St Frideswides*

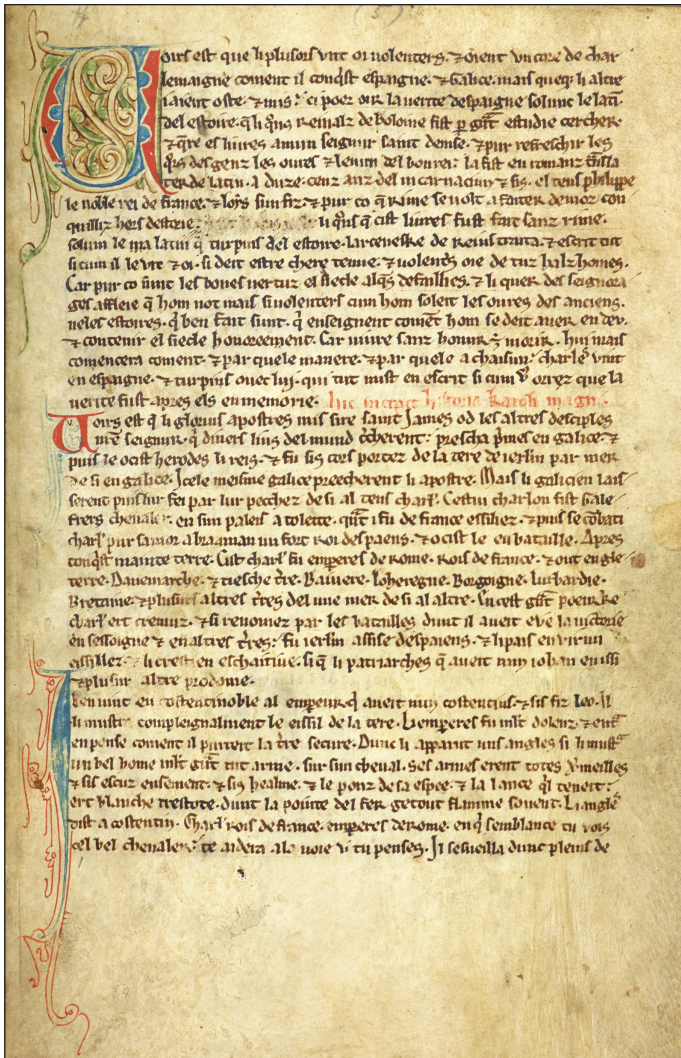


FIGURE 3. A puzzle initial U begins this copy of an Anglo-Norman version of the Old French Johannes translation of the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*, the third booklet in the medieval volume. London, BL Add. MS 40142, fol. 1r. © British Library Board.

d'Oxford, <http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8452207n>. Renato Orenco recently published an edition with an extensive introduction: *Les Dialogues de Grégoire le Grand traduits par Angier, publiés d'après le manuscrit Paris, BnF, fr. 24766 unique et autographe*, 2 vols. (Abbeville: Paillart, 2013).

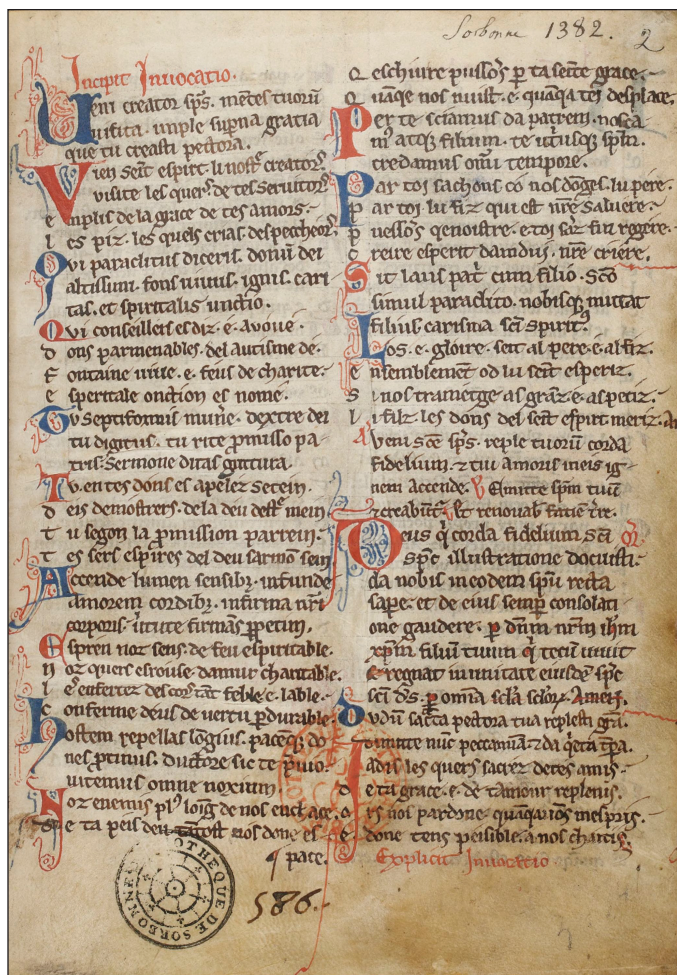


FIGURE 4. The *invocatio* of Angier's translation of Gregory displays many of the letrines under discussion. Paris, BnF MS fr. 24766, fol. 2r. © Bibliothèque nationale de France.

in *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* showed “une grande similitude,” she and paleographer Jacques Stiennon concurred.⁸ They thought the four

8 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 48.

manuscripts had been produced in the same scriptorium.⁹ A signed and dated colophon handily resolved questions of date and location:

Explicit opus manuum mearum quod complevi ego frater A. subdiaconus sancte Frideswide servientium minimus anno verbi incarnati .m.º .cc.º .xii.º, mense .xi.º, ebdomada .iiii.ª, feria .vi., in vigilia sancti Andree apostoli, anno conversionis mee .vii.º.

[*In the margin, the colophon continues*] general[is] interdic[ti] per Angliam anno [.v.º]¹⁰

[Here ends the work of my hands which I, brother A., subdeacon, the least of the servants of Saint Frideswide's, completed in the year of the incarnate word 1212, eleventh month, fourth week, sixth day, during the vigil of St. Andrew the apostle, in the seventh year of my conversion.]

[*In the margin, the colophon continues*] in the [fifth] year of the general interdict over England.]

This colophon is in large part at the origin of the disputed theory that this manuscript is an autograph: the supposition is that Angier meant “opus manuum mearum” literally.¹¹ According to his meticulous inscription, Brother A., who self-identifies as a subdeacon of St. Frideswide's, finished up his work

9 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 46–50.

10 Colophon printed in Ian Short, “Frère Angier: Notes and Conjectures,” *Medium Aevum* 80 (2011): 105; my translation.

11 Orengo, introduction to *Dialogues*, 1:169–83. Orengo defends the manuscript's autograph status at length, and asserts, based on quire structure, that if it is not an autograph, it is at least the original fair copy of the text; 183. Cf. Short, “Frère Angier,” 106; Short argues that it is unlikely that Angier went through the trouble of making a fair copy after the long labor of composition and translation.

on *Dialogues* on 29 November 1212.¹² The information provided in the colophon equipped Wathelet-Willem to link our three booklets with the Augustinian priory of St. Frideswide's in Oxford, where they would have been copied, like Angier's text, in the first quarter of the thirteenth century.¹³

Wathelet-Willem's connection of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* to Oxford took hold. From 1975 on, studies of these three booklets have been firmly associated with Oxford, and specifically with St. Frideswide's.¹⁴ In light of subsequent paleographical research, however, her conclusions must be rejected, and future consideration of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* must be separated from analysis of BnF fr. 24766.

Wathelet-Willem's argument rests on one major assertion: the lettrines of Angier's *Dialogues* and the lettrines of our three booklets are similar enough to warrant the claim that they were produced in the same scriptorium. In 1975, she was working with limited access to manuscript reproductions; with later accessibility of exemplars to compare, her observations are not as conclusive. While the lettrines of the four manuscripts in question do indeed resemble one another, subsequent work by François Avril, Patricia Stirnemann, and Sonia Scott-Fleming, among others, has demonstrated that the component elements of pen flourishes on lettrines are too generic in the earlier thirteenth century to use as evidence for a place of production.¹⁵

12 It is difficult to say whether this date refers to the conclusion of composition or the completion of the fair copy; Short contends that it refers to the composition, which may have taken place on the continent if Angier traveled abroad for the duration of England's interdict. If he indeed passed the interdict out of England, it is logical that he might return to Oxford after it ended in May 1213. See Short, "Frère Angier," 108.

13 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 49–50.

14 See, e.g., Tony Hunt, "Vernacular Literature and Its Readership, I: The Anglo-Norman Book," in *The Cambridge History of the Book in Britain*, vol. 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 378–79; Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, "Time to Read: Pastoral Care, Vernacular Access and the Case of Angier of St Frideswide," in *Texts and Traditions of Medieval Pastoral Care: Essays in Honour of Bella Millett*, ed. Cate Gunn and Catherine Innes-Parker (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 72–74.

15 Sonia Scott-Fleming, *Pen Flourishing in Thirteenth-Century Manuscripts* (Leiden: Brill, 1989); François Avril and Patricia Stirnemann, *Manuscrits enluminés d'origine insulaire, VIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris: Bibliothèque nationale de France, 1987); see also Careri's comment on the subject, "Membra disiecta," 217–18 n. 25.

Their date and place of manufacture should therefore be based on different evidence.

Discarding BnF fr. 24766 from consideration does not suffice to establish the relationship among the three remaining booklets. Other than the marginal note that indicates they formed one codex by circa 1300, as mentioned earlier, what other qualities link them together? To answer this question, I refer to the meticulous work of Maria Careri, who argues, contra Wathelet-Willem, that all three are the work of a single scribe and a single decorator.¹⁶ I will now report her findings in detail, supplementing from Wathelet-Willem and Walpole's prior descriptions when necessary.

The parchment on all three manuscripts is of middling quality, with some repairs executed before writing (*Gui*, fols. 69, 76; *Guillaume*, fol. 15; *Pseudo-Turpin*, fols. 2, 4).¹⁷ As Wathelet-Willem observes, the ruling and layout of *Guillaume* differ slightly from those of the other two booklets, with a top margin thirty millimeters larger and line spacing one millimeter wider.¹⁸ Careri refined this observation, noting that the ruling changes gradually over the course of the first quire, then the length of the column shrinks from forty-one to thirty-four lines in the second quire, which correspondingly increases spacing. She attributes this change to the difficulty of finding the best format for the decasyllabic text: the forty-one-line columns having posed problems, a new layout and ruling were tried.¹⁹

As for the script, it is a heavily shaded, "impersonal" Gothic *textura* hand.²⁰ The system of abbreviation, methods of correction, and letterforms are shared among the three booklets.²¹ Careri particularly highlights majuscule *R*, as a notable letterform, in initial, interior, and final positions in all three. The idiosyncratic sign "///+" is used as a *signe de renvoi* in *Guillaume* (fol. 10r) and *Gui* (fol. 69v); "///" is also used as a signal that two verses have been inverted in *Gui* (fol. 24r) and *Pseudo-Turpin* (fols. 1r, 8r). The

16 The account that follows translates and adapts Careri, "Membra disiecta," 214–17.

17 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 214; for parchment, see also *PTC*, 2:168.

18 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 41.

19 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 215–16.

20 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 40.

21 Walpole offers an extensive description of the hand in *PTC*, 2:171–74.

consistency of this sign and the *R* across all three booklets leads Careri to conclude that a single scribe copied them all.²² Though the widespread commonalities of pen-flourishing prohibit stating with any certainty that the lettrines were drawn by the same hand, they are of the same type, and the large puzzle initials in red, green, blue, and buff that begin each text look to have been done by the same artist. Careri confirms Wathelet-Willem's observation that the puzzle initials appear to have been drawn in first, with the beginning of each text filled in alongside afterwards. She adds that transfer from the *P* from folio 1r of *Guillaume* can be seen with ultraviolet light on the verso of the last folio of *Gui*, as can transfer from the *U* from folio 1r of *Pseudo-Turpin* on the verso of the last folio of *Guillaume*.²³

Finally, Careri comments on the binding. She notes traces of rust on folios 1 to 5 of *Gui* and folios 13 and 14 of *Turpin*, which could come from the clasp of a binding. Folio 1r of *Gui* and folio 14v of *Turpin* are darkened, perhaps from wear or exposure over time. These elements suggest "an old or original solidarity among the three specimens."²⁴ The quire numbers of *Gui* do not continue into the other two booklets; Careri finds this evidence to be ambivalent. On one hand, it detracts from the unity of the whole presented throughout the other evidence. On the other, the fact that the final quire is numbered (X) on a blank, unruled page seems unusual and may indicate an intended continuation of the book.²⁵

From the many similarities among the three booklets outlined by Careri, we can conclude that *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* share parchment quality, scribe, and decorator, and conform to similar, if not identical, specifications of layout and ruling. It is probable, therefore, that they have a similar date of production;²⁶ they may or may not have been intended to form a single codex from the outset. Since they were made by the same person(s)

22 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 216.

23 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 216–17.

24 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 217; my translation.

25 Careri, "Membra disiecta," 217.

26 Contra the varying dates given by the British Library online catalogue: *Gui* "1225–1275" (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_38662), *Guillaume* "mid 13th century" (http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_38663); *Pseudo-Turpin* "13th century" (http://searcharchives.bl.uk/IAMS_VU2:IAMS032-002091866).

and were bound together at a relatively early date, it is likely that they shared the same ownership history between their production and the moment when the booklets were integrated into a single codex.

Now we turn from material characteristics to dating. Estimates based on paleographical characteristics for the date of the three booklets first hovered around the middle of the thirteenth century; subsequent evaluation has supported the first half or, more specifically, the second quarter of the thirteenth century.²⁷ We can further hone these observations using textual characteristics of *Pseudo-Turpin* and *Gui*.

The Old French Johannes translation of *Pseudo-Turpin* was commissioned in 1206 by Reginald, count of Boulogne.²⁸ A *Genealogia Regum Francorum* is tacked on after the *explicit* at the end of this copy; it ends with the mention “Philippe li rois engendra Loys. Loys engendra” (King Philip [i.e., Philip II] begat Louis [i.e., Louis VIII]. Louis begat.) The phrase “Philippe li rois” implies that Philip II was still king at the time the genealogy was written; his son Louis VIII succeeded him in 1223. “Loys engendra” may be in a different ink than the rest of the genealogy, but the worn verso of folio 14 makes it difficult to be sure.²⁹ The statement can be read in two ways: either the scribe was predicting Louis IX’s eventual birth (likely on 25 April 1214) and leaving a blank to be filled in later, or he knew that Louis VIII had a child, but declined to enter his name (out of ignorance or lack of interest).³⁰ Evidence from regnal lists such as this one must, in any case, be treated with caution: we cannot be sure that the list was up to date

27 Middle in British Museum, *Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts, 1921–1925*, vol. 21A (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1950), 42; J. A. Herbert, “Two Newly-Found Portions of the Edwardes Ms.,” *Romania* 36 (1907): 89; first half in *PTC*, 2:171; second quarter in Ewert, intro to *GW*, 1:x.

28 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 35; for information about this manuscript’s place in the textual tradition, see *PTC*, 2:173–74.

29 Different ink asserted in Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 36.

30 For the first option, see Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 36; *PTC*, 2:173, though he believes that the phrase was copied from the exemplar used, and therefore it can be inferred that he thinks our copy was later than 1214. For the second interpretation, see Careri, “Membra disiecta,” 217 n. 25. Louis IX’s birthday was April 25, but whether the year was 1214 or 1215 is less clear; scholarship tends to adopt 1214 (see, e.g., Jacques le Goff, *Saint Louis* [Paris: Gallimard, 1996]).

at the time of copying—though if “Loys engendra” is in fact written in a different ink, this may suggest a desire to keep it current. On the other hand, the copy may simply reproduce the information from its exemplar without updating it. Wathelet-Willem’s suggestion that *Pseudo-Turpin* can be firmly dated to the period between Reginald’s commission in 1206 and Louis IX’s birth in 1214 therefore requires a bit of skepticism.³¹ We can adopt the *terminus post quem* of 1206, since an Anglo-Norman version of Reginald’s translation cannot pre-date its commission, but the date of 1214 may function as a *terminus ante quem* or a *terminus post quem*, depending on interpretation. The end of Philip II’s reign in 1223 adds another potential *terminus ante quem*. Other than 1206, none of these dates provide secure evidence due to the vagaries of copying practices of regnal lists.

The date of *Gui de Warewic*’s composition, which supports the tentative dating implied by *Pseudo-Turpin*, depends on genealogical evidence. Ewert, *Gui de Warewic*’s editor, linked its creation to a desire to glorify the Warwick family as well as the d’Oily family, founders and patrons of the Augustinian house Oseney Abbey; their baronial holding, Wallingford, features largely in the text.³² These two families were in conflict until 1205, when Earl Henry, a d’Oily, married Philippa Basset, whose family held manors from Wallingford. Thomas Basset, Philippa’s father, became the young Earl Henry’s guardian at the same time as he purchased his marriage rights, in 1205. This represented an important step up the social ladder for Basset. He went from being a minor landholder to one of the named advisers to King John on the Magna Carta in 1215; he died in 1220. Harding links the creation of this text to one of Thomas’s many successes in the period between 1205 and 1220.³³

This genealogical evidence for the date of *Gui de Warewic*’s composition along with the possible dating of the related copy of *Pseudo-Turpin* to between 1206 and 1223 might make our *Gui* a very early copy of this text.³⁴

31 Wathelet-Willem, *Recherches*, 36.

32 Ewert, introduction to *GW*, vii.

33 Carol Harding, “Dating *Gui de Warewic*: A Re-Evaluation,” *Notes and Queries* 56 (2009): 333–35.

34 For a different idea of the origin of *Gui* as the celebration of the transformation of a layman into a saint, see Judith Weiss, “The Exploitation of Ideas of Pilgrimage and Sainthood in

This tentatively suggested hypothesis could in turn indicate that south Oxfordshire, in the ambit of the Warwick and Basset families, may be a likely, if undemonstrable, place of production for all three booklets. Equally tentative speculation might situate such production in Oxford proper, thanks to the Warwick–Basset connection to Oseney Abbey, founded in 1129 as a priory by Robert d’Oily, ancestor of Earl Henry. Since the evidence of BnF fr. 24766 has been eliminated from consideration, all of these locations remain speculative.

In sum, paleographical and codicological observations from *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* link the three together and date them to the first half of the thirteenth century. Temporal locators given by the genealogy at the end of *Pseudo-Turpin* and speculations for the motives behind the composition of *Gui de Warewic* may indicate more precisely that they were produced in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Connections between the families lauded in *Gui* and Oseney Abbey might locate the manuscripts to an Oxonian, Augustinian milieu, but the evidence is more tenuous than scholarship has hitherto assumed.

Genre

Genre is a notoriously thorny word. Texts can be classed by conformation to preexisting norms, by form, by content, or by purpose, which may lead to a text falling into multiple categories. Hans Robert Jauss pointed out that medieval vernacular literature suffers from its own set of problems: the generic triad of epic, lyric, and dramatic cannot be easily applied to early vernacular texts.³⁵ Rather, he proposed a consideration of the preexisting “horizon of expectations” that conditioned the public’s reception of a text.³⁶ He encouraged a “processlike determination of the concept of genre” around

Gui de Warewic,” in *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, ed. Laura Ashe, Ivana Djordjević, and Judith Weiss (Cambridge: Brewer, 2010), 53–55.

35 Hans Robert Jauss, “Theory of Genres and Medieval Literature,” in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), 77.

36 Jauss, “Theory of Genres,” 79.

“groups or historical families” of texts.³⁷ Bearing in mind his reminder that the Middle Ages “did not yet feel any separation between religious life and literary culture, the contents of faith and the forms of art,” what can we learn about our texts if we take the codex formed of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* as a group operating under the same dominant force—that is, belonging in the same genre?³⁸

To begin exploring the question of these texts’ genre, we have to shed our own “horizon of expectations”—in this case, the generic names that have been imposed on them since the nineteenth century. Few scholars would assign *Gui de Warewic*, *La Chanson de Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle* to the same genre. *Gui* is nearly always referred to as a romance.³⁹ Dean and Boulton grouped *Gui* with romances in their *Guide*.⁴⁰ Some scholars have sought to place the text in a more specific subcategory: M. Dominica Legge called it an “ancestral romance,” but carefully excluded it from any basis in fact, commenting, “The historical background seems to be of the sketchiest.”⁴¹ Along with *Sir Isumbras*, *Gui* has also occasionally been called an “exemplary” or “pious” romance because of its religious bent.⁴² I will return to this idea shortly.

37 Jauss, “Theory of Genres,” 80.

38 Jauss, “Theory of Genres,” 102. Of course, this question makes an unprovable assumption: that someone chose to bind these booklets together because of a perceived relationship among the three texts. Another possibility exists: that someone bound the three fragile booklets together to preserve them from damage. Their collocation may be an accident born of a desire to keep them safe, but the question of dominant force nevertheless can illuminate a possible rationale for their inclusion in a single codex.

39 For a discussion of *Gui*’s manuscript tradition and genre, see Marianne Ailes, “*Gui de Warewic* in Its Manuscript Context,” in *Guy of Warwick: Icon and Ancestor*, ed. Alison Wiggins and Rosalind Field (Woodbridge: Brewer, 2007), 21–26.

40 Dean and Boulton, *Guide*, no. 154.

41 M. Dominica Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature and Its Background* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 167.

42 David Klausner, “Didacticism and Drama in *Guy of Warwick*,” *Medievalia et Humanistica* 6 (1975): 103–19; Hanspeter Schelp, *Exemplarische Romanzen in Mittelenglischen* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1967), 138. Cf. Susan Dannenbaum, “Guy of Warwick and the Question of Exemplary Romance,” *Genre* 17 (1984): 351–74.

Guillaume, on the other hand, we call a *chanson de geste*—but it is an atypical one, with a refrain (“lunesdi al vespres”) and irregular decasyllabic verse with some rhymed laisses, some assonanced ones, and some groups with baffling verse endings. Nevertheless, a strong emphasis on fighting and the prowess of individual heroes has led to a firm placement in the category of *chansons de geste* by most scholars. Furrow has recently suggested, however, that early romance and *chanson de geste* are generically indistinguishable in England.⁴³ This elision has the effect of grouping *Guillaume* and *Gui* together under one umbrella. On the other hand, Dean and Boulton place *Guillaume* alongside other *chansons de geste* under the larger category of historiographical works.⁴⁴ What is happening in these shifts is not so much the removal of *Guillaume* from the genre of *chanson de geste*, but rather reevaluation of the genre itself.

Finally, its current title betrays modern perceptions of the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*. (Our manuscript names itself in the colophon as “Ystoria Karoli gloriosissimi regis et Turpini archiepiscopi Remensis”; others, such as the late twelfth-century BL Cotton MS Nero A XI, adopt the title “De gestis Karoli magni.”) Dean and Boulton class it under historiographical works, adopting, seemingly, the medieval perspective.⁴⁵ In fact, it was considered to be a historical document until the seventeenth century. Ian Short distills the revision that has since taken place when he explains,

To the modern reader, Turpin’s Latin history reveals itself as an uneasy marriage of the epic and the homiletic, the clumsy handiwork of pious propagandists eager to turn to the Church’s advantage the broad appeal of popular, poetic legend, and unscrupulous enough to impose their fabrication on an unsuspecting public as an authentic chronicle with an ecclesiastical *imprimatur*.⁴⁶

43 Melissa Furrow, “*Chanson de geste* as Romance in England,” in Ashe, Djordjević, and Weiss, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, 57–72 at 65–67.

44 Dean and Boulton, *Guide*, no. 82.

45 Dean and Boulton, *Guide*, no. 79.

46 Short, introduction to *The Anglo-Norman Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle of William de Briane* (Oxford: ANTS, 1973), 1.

So the wisdom of modern readers has consigned *Pseudo-Turpin* to a sort of limbo between the epic and the homiletic, but certainly excluded from the historical.

If we set aside these external evaluations and consider the contents of the codex itself as a generic group, a dominant force emerges within the genre: exemplarity. In their narrative frames and in the behavior of their protagonists, each of the three texts encourages remembrance and imitation. The framing structure of *Gui* declares the importance of recalling the words and deeds of its heroes:

Aventures beles lur aveneient,
 Pur ço qu'il ameient verité,
 Tut dis fei e lealté;
 D'els deit l'om ben sovenir
 E lor bons faiz dire e oir;
 Ki mult ot e ço retient
 Sovent mult sage devient . . . (10–16)⁴⁷

[great happenings happened to them, because they always loved truth, faith, and loyalty; one must remember them well and say and hear their good deeds. He who hears much of this and retains it often becomes quite wise.]

At the end, the narrator intervenes again to say,

De ceste estorie voil fin fere,
 Plus ne voil desore retraire;
 Bel essample i puet l'um prendre,
 Qui ben le set e velt entendre,
 De prouesce amer e lealté tenir,
 De tuz bens faire e mals guerpir,
 Orguil e richescs aver en despit. (12913–19)

47 All citations from *GW*; all translations mine.

[I wish to make an end to this story. . . . One who knows it well
and wants to understand it can take a great example from it, to love
prowess and stay loyal, to do all good things and shun the bad, to
disdain pride and wealth.]

The text calls itself an *essample*—a morally righteous template—of truth, faith, and loyalty.

Gui displays a structural incoherence that the dominant force of exemplarity could explain. Several scholars have exposed the odd lack of correspondence between *Gui*'s actions and words in the pivotal confession scene halfway through the poem.⁴⁸ The hero has behaved throughout the first part of the tale as an exemplary knight in order to win Felice's love. His prowess manifested itself through resolving conflict with a treacherous duke and fending off the Saracens attacking Constantinople, both noble activities worthy of emulation. Yet, he castigates himself for his worldly failures at the transitional moment when he abruptly leaves his new wife for a life of pilgrimage. Rather than undertake heroic deeds for the sake of Felice, he should have served "sun criatur" (his creator) with at least half his actions.⁴⁹ During his penitential lamentations, Felice overhears him and asks the cause of his distress. He declares to his wife,

"Pur vus ai fait maint grant desrei,
Homes ocis, destruites citez,
Arses abbeies de plusurs regnez . . ." (7608–10)

["For you I have caused great disorder, killed men, destroyed cities,
burned abbeys in many realms . . ."]

48 Paul Price, "Confessions of a Godless Killer: *Guy of Warwick* and Comprehensive Entertainment," in *Medieval Insular Romance: Translation and Innovation*, ed. Judith Weiss, Jennifer Fellows, and Morgan Dickson (Cambridge: Brewer, 2000), 93–110; Judith Weiss, "The Exploitation of Ideas of Pilgrimage and Sainthood in *Gui de Warewic*," in Ashe, Djordjević, and Weiss, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, 47.

49 *GW*, vv. 7587, 7620.

The sins he confesses, including acts against God like the burning of abbeys, do not occur in the poem before this point. Put succinctly, “the Guy story has its hero partake of the reformatory impetus which great sins generate without Guy actually having committed them.”⁵⁰ This turning point in the narrative has been read as an engine for producing further length in an already long tale in which aggregation is clearly prized.⁵¹ Viewed another way, however, the religious fervor that lines his thoughts serves as a second *essample*. Already we have seen Gui behaving as a knight interested in fighting the enemies of Christendom; now let us see him repent (albeit needlessly) and become a Christian penitent.⁵² Though this new streak of adventures hardly differs from the first section of the book, the crucial (and fabricated) scene of confession looms over it, infusing each new battle with the odor of sanctity. Gui’s remorseful monologue provides an interpretive key for the audience: each subsequent event can be read as part of a penitential program. At the end of the poem, we see a third type of exemplary behavior, when, like saints Alexis, Gilles, and Frideswide, Gui retires to the life of a hermit near his home.⁵³ *Gui*, despite (or because of) its structural incoherence, aspires to provide a reference guide to modes of thirteenth-century exemplarity.

Like *Gui*, *Pseudo-Turpin* orients its audience toward a certain evaluation of the text that follows. The prologue to the Johannes translation presents a three-part argument. First, the text that follows is essentially true. Turpin, the ostensible author, either witnessed the events recounted himself or heard of them from reputable sources, then transcribed them as he saw and

50 Price, “Confessions,” 107.

51 Price, “Confessions,” 107; see also Susan Crane, *Insular Romance: Politics, Faith, and Culture in Anglo-Norman and Middle English Literature* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986), 81; Dieter Mehl, *The Middle English Romances of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Routledge, 1968), 22; Maldwyn Mills, “Structure and Meaning in *Guy of Warwick*,” in *From Medieval to Medievalism*, ed. J. Simons (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 66.

52 As Weiss has pointed out, he does not really change his behavior after this declaration, continuing to fight as a champion for friends in trouble; “Exploitation,” 48–49.

53 Weiss, “Exploitation,” 52–53; for *Gui*’s use of the life of St. Alexis as a model, see Klausner, “Didacticism and Drama,” 103–19.

heard them: “Torpins l’arcevesque de Reins traïta et escrist si com il le vit et oï” (Turpin the archbishop of Reims treats [the events] and writes [them] as he heard and saw [them]).⁵⁴ Eyewitness accounts had a particular claim to truth in the Middle Ages: seeing was equivalent to understanding, according to Isidore, and was a key component of distinguishing *historia* from *fabula*.⁵⁵ In addition, Turpin’s testimony is preserved in “le latin de l’estoire” (the Latin of the account) found “es livres a monseigneur Saint Denise” (in the books of monseigneur Saint Denis).⁵⁶ The conventional appeal to written authority is maintained alongside the authorship by a witness. As Gabrielle Spiegel has discussed, a third element adds to the truth-claim of the text: the fact that it is written “sanz rime.” The move away from verse in the late twelfth century was meant to escape the fabulous dangers of poetry, which might be stuffed with false information for the sake of its form, and thereby to anchor texts in historical truth.⁵⁷

The second term of the argument justifies the first: the transmission of the truth about the past is important *because* the past has concrete value in the present.

. . . por ce sunt les bones vertuz el siegle auques defaillies et li cuer des seignorages affeblouié, que l’en n’ot mes si volentiers com en soloit les oevres des enciens, ne les estoires ou li bon fet sunt qui enseignent coment l’en se doit avoir en Deu et contenir el siegle honorement. Car vivre sanz honor est morirs.⁵⁸

[. . . because good virtues are diminished in our time and the courage of great lords weakened, so one does not adhere nearly as willingly as he was accustomed to the works of his ancestors, nor [does one adhere to] histories where the good deeds are that teach

54 *PTC*, 1:131 (Prologue); all translations of *Pseudo-Turpin* are mine.

55 Isidore de Seville, *Etimologías*, vol. 1 (Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos, 1982), bk. 1, §41.

56 *PTC*, 1:131 (Prologue).

57 Gabrielle Spiegel, *Romancing the Past: The Rise of Vernacular Prose Historiography in Thirteenth-Century France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 57–69.

58 *PTC*, 1:131 (Prologue).

how one should hold himself in God and act honorably in the world. For living without honor is dying.]

It is vital to access the truth about the past, because only then can we recuperate the good values of the lost age. The prologue implies that the stories of Charlemagne's Spanish campaign will teach "hauz homes" virtues and honor that have been lost over time; the text will provide "an antidote to chivalric decay."⁵⁹

This brings us to the third part of the prologue's argument: a defense of the translation itself. In order to transmit exemplary truth effectively, the text must be comprehensible by its audience. It must be able to enter into the audience's thoughts, helping them shake off the dust of forgetfulness and bring the events recorded back into the world of living memory. "Por refreschir es cuers des genz les oeuvres et le non del bon roi," Renault of Boulogne "la fist . . . en romanz translater del latin" (To refresh the works and the name of the good king in the hearts of the people, [Renault] had it [i.e., the book] translated from Latin to French).⁶⁰ Latin does not suffice as a mode of transmission for the essential examples Pseudo-Turpin has to offer his noble audience; French is needed to reach them.

The narrator of *Pseudo-Turpin*, like *Gui*'s narrator, describes its episodes as worth emulating. He takes time out from an account of Charlemagne's activities to explain the lessons contained in the actions and visions of the principal characters. An exegetical impulse spills forth after the preparations for renewed battle against the Saracen king Agolant: "Si com les genz Charle appareillierent lor armes a la bataille, autressi devons nos appareillier noz armes, ce sunt bones vertus, contre vices" (Just as Charles's forces prepared their arms for the battle, so should we prepare our arms, that is good virtues, against vices).⁶¹ As in *Gui*, these explanations are sometimes referred to as *esemples*.⁶² The exemplarity is not literal, but interpretative: barons, noblewomen, and monks alike can gird themselves with virtue.

59 Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 80.

60 *PTC*, 1:131 (Prologue).

61 *PTC*, 1:140 (§18).

62 *PTC*, 1:139 (§15), 1:150 (§32).

Although not stated explicitly, similar forces are at work in *Guillaume*. Lone among our three texts, this poem lacks a didactic *incipit* or *explicit*. The heroics of Guillaume and Vivien are followed by the escapades of Renouart, often seen as a second, distinct poem that was later tacked on to the first section.⁶³ The ensemble ends abruptly, without a colophon or other intervention from the narrator. Even without narratorial explanation, however, the two heroes of the first part of the text, Vivien and Guillaume, are portrayed as exemplary Christian knights, battling Saracen forces to safeguard Christian territory and values. At one point, Guillaume even indicates his desire to retire from the world and become a hermit.

Ore m'en fuierai en estrange regné
 A Saint Michel al Peril de la mer,
 U a Saint Pere, le bon apostre Deu,
 U en un guast u ja mes ne seie trové.
 La devendrai hermites ordené . . . (2414–18)⁶⁴

[Now I will flee to a strange kingdom, to Saint Michel at the Edge of the sea, or to Saint Peter, the good apostle of God, or to a wasteland where I may never be found. There I will become an ordained hermit . . .]

Guibourc, his wife, convinces him that he should delay this plan until he has achieved his worldly tasks—namely, defeating the invading pagan army. Though at this moment he makes the opposite decision from Gui, remaining a fighter rather than retiring from the world, Guillaume considers the contemplative life the only viable alternative to his knightly career. (As a point of comparison, the cycle of Guillaume d'Orange, which exists separately from this text, ends with the *Moniage Guillaume*.) The artificial reversal of priorities we see when Gui ditches his new bride for the life of a pilgrim “superficially [enhances the] hero’s moral standing,” as Weiss has

63 For a survey, see F. Suard, introduction to *CG*, xv–xx.

64 *CG*; my translation.

observed; the same might be said of Guillaume's ambition to retire from the world.⁶⁵ Martial ability in the face of one's pagan enemies becomes, in this binary, a distinctly Christian choice, the only justifiable alternative to contemplation.

Gui, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* show a common interest in offering imitable examples of Christian behavior on the literal level (fighting pagan enemies and retiring from the world) and the metaphorical level (arming oneself with virtues). I propose that they were bound together to form a codex united by this shared dominant concern. Despite surface distinctions among the three texts, such as form, length, and modern generic classification, all three can in fact be seen as representatives of a genre that I call exemplary history. This term is not so different from exemplary romance, which we have already seen associated with *Gui*, nor is it far from the homiletic label applied to *Pseudo-Turpin*. Each text, as we have seen, encourages emulation of its principal figures, as did exempla such as those found in the near-contemporary *Sermones Vulgares* of Jacques de Vitry (ca. 1210). Yet, unlike collections of exempla, each of our texts presents laudable moments within the larger framework of an overarching narrative based on events in the past that were believed to have occurred.⁶⁶ Calling them "histories," rather than "romances," preserves the relationship to truth that was part of the "horizon of expectations" of the time.⁶⁷ With that in mind, I turn to the final question: who used this codex, and how?

A Codex for Whom?

There are two likely owners for this manuscript: noble Francophone families, and/or a religious foundation or individual. The audience for the codex

65 Judith Weiss, "The Exploitation of Ideas of Pilgrimage and Sainthood in *Gui de Warewic*," in Ashe, Djordjević, and Weiss, *The Exploitations of Medieval Romance*, 56.

66 See also Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury and the Ethics of History* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2012), 1–18, 70–95.

67 For more about medieval conceptions of history, see Suzanne Fleischman, "On the Representation of History and Fiction in the Middle Ages," *History and Theory* 22, no. 3 (1983): 278–310.

formed of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* could have been a baronial household. Several generations later, we have the record of a library donation that Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, made to Bordesley Abbey in Worcestershire in 1306. His library included Arthurian works, *chansons de geste*, and religious texts, along with something called the *Romaunce de Gwy et de la reygne tout enterement*, conceivably *Gui de Warewic*.⁶⁸ As for *Guillaume*, *chansons de geste* are often thought of as a source of entertainment for the nobility.⁶⁹ Spiegel has also demonstrated the appeal that the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle* might have had for noble families.⁷⁰ All three texts would thus be unsurprising additions to the library of a baron.

While a baronial household is a plausible home for the codex, I want to bring up a second possibility: that it remained in a religious library like that at Oseney Abbey, the foundation with which this codex might be associated (described earlier). Without implying that Augustinians were the only possible owners, I will in what follows take regular canons as a test case for what a religious audience might have done with such a volume. The implications could be extended to other religious communities: I do not conceive of Augustinians as exceptional in this case, but rather as representative of possibilities.

First, let us recall a bit of background about Augustinian life. Augustinian canons have three core characteristics: they have taken holy orders (meaning they are priests, deacons, or bishops), they maintain a communal life, and they follow the Rule of St. Augustine.⁷¹ Unlike monks, secular canons did not

68 “Bordesley, Worcestershire,” in *Corpus of British Medieval Library Catalogues* (henceforth CBMLC), vol. 3: *The Libraries of the Cistercians, Gilbertines and Premonstratensians*, ed. David Bell (London: British Library, 1992), 4–10 (§Z2).

69 Cf. Andrew Taylor, “Can an Englishman Read a *Chanson de Geste*?” in *Conceptualizing Multilingualism in Medieval England, c. 800–c. 1250*, ed. Elizabeth Tyler (Turnhout: Brepols, 2011).

70 Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 23.

71 J. C. Dickinson, *The Origins of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England* (London: SPCK, 1950), 7. This account of the rise of Augustinian canons follows Dickinson’s study.

generally give up the right to private property. In fact, for centuries this was seen as the crucial distinction between monks and canons.⁷² The essential tension between private property and communal life caused a flurry of canonical legislation, which quelled initial objections to what Erasmus later scornfully called an “amphibious” state.⁷³ With papal approval, the movement of regular canons became widespread over the course of the twelfth century; England alone eventually had some two hundred and fifty houses.⁷⁴ This popularity likely stems from exactly the same aspect of the order that caused its initial difficulties: its hybrid nature.⁷⁵

Augustinian canons were known for their learning. The Rule of St. Augustine dictates “a sexta usque ad nonam uacent lectioni” (from sext to none, let them be free for reading).⁷⁶ Regular canons also had an unusual relationship to their dependent churches. They hotly defended their right to administer pastoral care to the constituents of their parishes.⁷⁷ Yet, the confirmation of the right of regular canons to “baptize, preach, give penance, and bury the dead” with their bishop’s consent at the 1100 Council of

72 Dickinson, *Origins*, 15.

73 Especially notable was the fourth canon of the Lateran Council of 1059, which endorsed and urged full common life for canons; see Dickinson, *Origins*, 29–32.

74 Taylor, “Can an Englishman,” 326 n. 24; “amphibious” from Erasmus, *Colloquies*, ed. and trans. Craig R. Thompson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), I, 1:629; cited in Taylor, “Can an Englishman,” 325.

75 Taylor, “Can an Englishman,” 325–26.

76 Luc Verheijen, *La Règle de Saint Augustin*, vol. 1 (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1967), *Ordo Monasterii* §3, 150. While the Rule of St. Benedict shares a similar injunction (“A kalendas autem octobres usque caput quadragesimae, usque in hora secunda plena lectioni uacent”), the accumulation of customary communal and personal devotional rituals added to the Benedictine Rule over the previous few centuries may have restricted, though certainly not eliminated, the volume of reading Benedictines could do; *La Règle de Saint Benoît*, vol. 2, ed. Jean Neufville and trans. Adalbert de Vogüé (Paris: Éditions du cerf, 1979), §48, 600; my English translation.

77 Ivo of Chartres was among those who wrote in favor of parochial duties. In a letter to Galterius Stirpensis, he takes umbrage at the decision of the Bishop of Limoges to prohibit regular canons from providing *regimen parochiarum et confessionem poenitentium*. “Qui rectius quidem fecisset, si omnes sacerdotes ad regularem vitam invitasset, quam regulariter viventes a Dominicarum ovium custodia penitus removisset; quibus tanto plus displicet aliena malitia, quanto longius discesserunt a sua”; *Patrologia Latina* 162, cc. 88–89.

Poitiers does not necessarily imply that regular canons roamed their holdings providing such care.⁷⁸ We do, however, have several indications of Augustinian involvement in preaching outside of legislation. The careful orthography and punctuation of the eccentric twelfth-century Middle English *Ormulum*, written by the Augustinian canon Orm in Lincolnshire, may have helped Francophone canons preach to Anglophone audiences by providing clues to proper pronunciation.⁷⁹ Scholars think that Orm wrote his work to be “read aloud in church services,” presumably to unlettered audiences (“læwedd folcc”).⁸⁰ This vision of Augustinian canons preaching to the flock, however, is the exception rather than the rule in surviving evidence.

Several hints indicate, however, that Oseney may have been involved in pastoral care more than many of its brothers. In 1147, Eugenius III confirmed Oseney’s right to send some of its canons out of its conventual church for pastoral care.⁸¹ Bilbury, in Gloucestershire, and Kiltevenan, in Ireland, were served by Oseney canons.⁸² These are scanty indications, but they nevertheless indicate the foundation’s involvement with dependent churches. We also know that like many religious houses and clergymen in England, Oseney enjoyed close relationships with the nobility. As we saw in the discussion of

78 *Ut clericis regularibus jussu episcopi sui baptizare, praedicare, poenitentiam dare, mortuos sepelire liceat*; J. D. Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum Nova Amplissima Collectio*, vol. 20 (Lucca: n.p., 1775); cited in Dickinson, *Origins*, 221 n. 2. For Augustinian pastoral activities in later medieval England, see H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 61–62.

79 Meg Worley, “Using the *Ormulum* to Redefine Vernacularity,” in *The Vulgar Tongue: Medieval and Post-Medieval Vernacularity*, ed. Fiona Somerset and Nicholas Watson (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003), 23–24; Wogan-Browne, “Time to Read,” 65.

80 Worley, “Using the *Ormulum*,” 22; “læwedd folcc” from *The Ormulum*, ed. Robert Holt (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1878), v. 55.

81 “. . . in parrochialibus ecclesiis quas tenetis, de fratribus vestris presbiteros collocetis, quibus, si idonei fuerint, episcopi curam animarum commitant”; *Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, ed. H. E. Salter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1931), 3:371.

82 *Victoria History of the Counties of England: Oxfordshire* (hereafter *VCH*) (London: A. Constable, 1907), 2:91.

Gui, Oseney was founded by Robert d'Oily II, constable to Henry I.⁸³ Thomas, sixth Earl of Warwick and a d'Oily descendant, inherited its patronage in 1232.⁸⁴

Finally, we have some fragmentary evidence of Oseney's library. Monastic libraries were not fully planned entities, but rather reflect a series of chance accretions from a variety of sources and with a variety of purposes.⁸⁵ Library records often only kept track of Latin books of particular value, excluding or partially representing collections of vernacular works. Even when keeping in mind their fragmentary and somewhat haphazard nature, these records let us see the intellectual interest and activities of a community. Oseney held some thirty volumes that survive, a tiny proportion of what once must have existed; the expected glossed books of the Bible are joined by a notable number of chronicles.⁸⁶ To this list we must add Oseney's most famous holding, the codex containing *Timaeus* and the "Oxford Roland," now at the Bodleian under the shelfmark Digby 23.⁸⁷ To give an

83 *Annales Monastici*, vol. 4 : *Annales Monasterii de Oseneia*, ed. Henry Richards Luard, Rolls Series (London: Longmans, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1869), 19.

84 Legge, *Anglo-Norman Literature*, 162; Ewert, introduction to *GW*, vi.

85 "After the twelfth century the growth of the library depended almost wholly upon chance: the tastes or needs of an abbot or an individual monk; the demands of teachers or scholars when the monks began to frequent the universities; bequests of all kinds; the changing devotional practices of the community. . . . The monastic library, even the greatest, had something of the appearance of a heap even though the nucleus was an ordered whole; at the best, it was the sum of many collections, great and small, rather than a planned, articulated unit"; D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), 2:332.

86 Neil Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain*, 2nd ed. (London: Royal Historical Society, 1964), 140–41; Ker, *Medieval Libraries of Great Britain: Supplement to the Second Edition* (hereafter *Supplement*), ed. Andrew G. Watson (London: Royal Historical Society, 1987), 52. See also *CBMLC*, vol. 6: *The Libraries of the Augustinian Canons*, ed. T. Webber and A. G. Watson (London: British Library, 1998), 403–5. David Postles has written an in-depth analysis of the Oseney holdings, focusing on religious texts; "The Learning of Austin Canons: The Case of Oseney Abbey," *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 29 (1985): 38–40.

87 Digby 23 contains a twelfth-century copy of the Calcidius translation of Plato's *Timaeus*, followed by *Roland* (also from the twelfth century). It is on fol. [2]r of the *Timaeus* that a late thirteenth-century or early fourteenth-century hand records the donation of the volume to Oseney. The last page of *Roland* (fol. [72]r) features the word *Chalcidius* in what Charles Samaran believed to be a thirteenth-century hand, suggesting that the two parts of the manu-

idea of just how fragmentary these remnants may be, the library at the Augustinian house Leicester Abbey, for which we have a late-medieval catalogue, held over nine hundred volumes.⁸⁸ Though the great majority of these are in Latin, including a copy of *Pseudo-Turpin*, the cataloguer has taken care to specify that a small group of manuscripts is “in gallico,” including a history of the Trojan War and a copy of *Beuz de Hampton*.⁸⁹ The evidence from Leicester helps us imagine a library that included vernacular texts not usually associated with religious life.

Going back to our three booklets, none would be an unprecedented holding for a religious foundation; many different orders retain records of similar texts. The Benedictine monastery St. Augustine’s, Canterbury, held at least four copies of *Gui* in French.⁹⁰ At St. Albans, a fragment of *Gui* appears in a manuscript alongside records related to the abbey itself; it seems clear that this manuscript was meant to stay in the abbey.⁹¹ The Premonstratensians of Titchfield owned two copies of *Gui* “in quaterno,” that is, in booklet format.⁹² *Pseudo-Turpin*, as a historical text, would have been a typical holding for a foundation’s library. Leicester Abbey kept “Karolus Magnus,” a *Pseudo-Turpin* in Latin, in the stalls of their reference library; the Premonstratensians of Titchfield had three Charlemagne-related texts.⁹³ Lastly, this is the only extant copy of the *Guillaume*, and the bizarre versification—more than 40 of the lines are hypermetric or

script were bound together by the thirteenth century; Charles Samaran, introduction to the facsimile edition, *La Chanson de Roland: Reproduction phototypique du manuscrit Digby 23 de la Bodleian Library d’Oxford* (Paris: Société d’anciens textes français, 1932), 26–27, 24. For a thorough discussion of the relationship of the two parts of Digby 23, see Andrew Taylor, *Textual Situations: Three Medieval Manuscripts and Their Readers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002), 36–43, 57–59.

88 CBMLC 6:104–399 (§A20).

89 Mandach, *Naissance et développement*, vol. 1, 261–62.

90 André de Mandach, *Naissance et développement de la chanson de geste en Europe*, vol. 1: *La Geste de Charlemagne et de Roland* (Geneva: Droz, 1961), 261–62.

91 Ailes, “*Gui de Warewic* in Its Manuscript Context,” 16–17.

92 CBMLC 3:248–53 (nos. 216a and 223).

93 Leicester in CBMLC 6:236 (no. 635); Titchfield in CBMLC 3:248–53 (nos. 217r, 224a, and 224c).

incomplete—and questions of textual unity have led experts to consider this a “degraded” copy.⁹⁴ From another perspective, *Guillaume*’s very difficulty as a witness to the text may provide a clue about its destination. Considering that *Gui* and *Pseudo-Turpin* are much less “degraded” and were copied by the same scribe, perhaps the corruption of *Guillaume* is in fact evidence of faithful copying of a flawed exemplar.⁹⁵ This is one indication that may tip the scales toward a religious context for this codex. A corrupted text like *Guillaume* seems of greater interest to scholarly clerics than to nobles seeking entertainment. Perhaps learned monks or canons would have taken the opportunity to retain the manuscript that passed through their hands, despite its faults, for their own archive.⁹⁶ The residence of the “Oxford Roland” at Oseney provides corroborating evidence for religious interest in *chansons de geste*.⁹⁷

Even fragmentary library evidence demonstrates that canons or monks could well have owned the codex composed of our three booklets, yet it would be remiss to overlook religious criticisms of similar texts. Brother Angier—a writer contemporary to our booklets, if not using the same scriptorium—crankily railed against the popular taste that adored Charlemagne and Arthur while disdaining the Gospels in the prologue to his *Dialogues*.

Plus est hui icest ior oï
 cil qui enseigne vanité,
 mençonge e fable e falseté,
 que cil qui enseigne le voir,
 moralité, sen e savoir,
 car vanité est escoutee

94 See, e.g., Howard Robertson, *La Chanson de Willame: A Critical Study* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967), 15.

95 See Careri, “Membra disiecta,” 218–28, for suggestions about editing *Guillaume* based on copying practices of the scribe.

96 Taylor, *Textual Situations*; Andrew Taylor, “Was There a Song of Roland?” *Speculum* 76 (2001): 28–65; Taylor, “Can an Englishman?”

97 For an analysis of religious interest in *chansons de geste* and potential clerical use of them, see Taylor, *Textual Situations*, 39–41, 59–64.

e verité est reboutee.

Les fables d'Artur de Bretaigne

e les chançons de Charlemaigne

plus sont cheries e meins viles

que ne soient les Evangiles;

plus est escouté li jugliere

que ne soit saint Pol ou saint Piere,

e plus est hui cest jor li fol

oïz qe saint Pierre ou saint Pol. (*Dialogues*, 93–108)⁹⁸

[Those who teach vanity, lies, fabulous stories, and falsehoods are heard more often nowadays than those who teach truth, morality, sense, and wisdom, because vanity is listened to and truth is rejected. The stories of Arthur of Brittany and the songs of Charlemagne are more cherished and less reviled than the Gospels. The *jongleur* is heard more often than Saint Paul or Saint Peter. And nowadays, a crazy man is more often heard than Saint Peter or Saint Paul.]

Angier clearly perceives a dichotomy between his project and frivolous literature, which is destined for a seemingly voracious audience of foolish people. He directs his wrath at the entertainment industry of his day. Using the frame around the chiasm formed by the names of Paul and Peter in verses 105 to 108, Angier associates *jugliere* with *li fol* by their positions at the end of the line, thereby undermining the authority of performers and scolding their audience for their misplaced trust. When we picture *jongleurs* and their audiences, an image of baronial entertainment springs to mind. It is easy to assume that Angier shared this vision, but as Jocelyn Wogan-Browne calls to our attention, his criticisms are “standard *topoi* illustrative of overlap rather than separation in the texts of lay and clerical audiences.”⁹⁹ The fools who disdain the Gospels, in other words, could as easily be fellow

98 Orenge, *Dialogues*, 2:31.

99 Wogan-Browne, “Time to Read,” 73.

canons as laypeople. He specifically criticizes popular interest in texts with historical subjects, citing stories of Arthur and Charlemagne as paradigms of vanity spouted by mad bards. While none of our texts deal with Arthur, *Gui* operates in the same sphere, though its action occurs in England under Athelstan's reign.¹⁰⁰ *Guillaume* and *Pseudo-Turpin* fall directly into Angier's zone of censure, referring to the remote past of Charlemagne and his son Louis. Angier distances himself from these troublesome narratives, aligning his text instead with the Gospels of saints Peter and Paul.

His prologue displays only one opinion on the matter—one not necessarily shared by other religious people. As a point of contrast, to explain the usefulness of his *Vita Wulfstani*, William of Malmesbury noted, “Natura porro hunc quibusdam ingenerauit animum, ut quamuis utraque sciant necessaria, magis tamen exemplorum quam exhortationum eos prolectet auditus” (Now nature has so formed some people that, though they know both to be vital, they are more inclined to listen to examples than to exhortations).¹⁰¹ Though Angier devoted himself to translating Gregory—choosing William of Malmesbury's *exhortationes* as his communication strategy—other canons or monks may have been drawn to *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and *Pseudo-Turpin* as *exempla* with similar usefulness as William's *Vita* of a recent saint.

So, what would a religious person do with this codex? The evidence assembled here points to three possibilities. First, a monk or canon—perhaps from an aristocratic background—may have simply enjoyed these texts as truth-based diversions, an alternative way to use the time appointed for books while still directing his thoughts toward being a good Christian.¹⁰² Second, the book could have been used as a source for readings at mealtimes

100 Cf. William of Nassington, who in the fourteenth century explicitly condemns *Gui* along with other romances; Bodleian Library MS 48, fol. 47, cited in James Halliwell, ed., *The Thornton Romances*, Camden Society 30 (London, 1844), xx. Also from the fourteenth century, see *Cursor Mundi*, ed. Richard Morris, EETS, o.s. 57, I (London, 1874), vv. 1–26.

101 William of Malmesbury, *Saints' Lives: Lives of SS. Wulfstan, Dunstan, Patrick, Benignus and Indract*, ed. and trans. M. Winterbottom and R. M. Thomson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002), 10–11. Translation taken from Sønnesyn's adaptation of Winterbottom; Sønnesyn, *William of Malmesbury*, 93–94.

102 Taylor, “Can an Englishman?”

outside of the conventual refectory, for which the annual cycle of readings was more prescribed. The final option is more enticing. Not only did those in the religious life potentially enjoy these texts, but they may also have been found useful for pastoral care in their depiction of acceptable modes of martial lay Christianity. Though Angier bemoaned lay preferences for tales of adventure, others could have exploited this weakness as a tool to reach constituents. Certain episodes of *Gui*, *Guillaume*, or *Pseudo-Turpin* could have been incorporated into vernacular sermons; perhaps the examples in these stories were used to set aristocratic patrons on a more devout path. Such a suggestion breaks down the conventional barrier between texts used for lay entertainment and texts used for religious purposes.

Modern generic classifications of medieval texts too often pigeonhole them into narrowly imagined spheres of use and enjoyment. While Taylor and others have wisely encouraged alternative views of canonical texts and their genres, it is not always the case that an entire genre requires reframing. Rather, considering a codex holistically and in its historical context might reveal unexpected destinations for the texts within it. In the case of the three booklets from the Edwardes manuscript, the texts' shared concern with acceptable Christian conduct along with their tentative link to a religious milieu has led to the proposal that they were used for pastoral care. Though the three booklets *Gui*, *Guillaume*, and the *Pseudo-Turpin* seem firmly rooted in the secular, lay sphere, putting their medieval codex in a plausible sociocultural context hints at the possibility of a broader spectrum of use.

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