

# MANUSCRIPT STUDIES

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# Moralizing the Mass in the Butler Hours

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KATHRYN A. SMITH  
New York University

THE ENGLISH BUTLER HOURS (ca. 1340–45) is best known for an imposing full-page miniature depicting the Butler family attending Mass in a setting suggestive of a private chapel (fig. 1).<sup>1</sup> A

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1 Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, Stockholm, Nationalmuseum MSS B. 1726–27, and Unidentified Private Collection. Important bibliography on the manuscript includes T. Taylor, through J. T. Micklethwaite, “Antiquities and Works of Art Exhibited,” *Archaeological Journal* 36 (1879): 103–4; *A Catalogue of Bibles, Liturgies, Church History and Theology, Including a Number of Illuminated Manuscripts and Books from Celebrated Presses* (London: Bernard Quaritch, 1910), 97–99, no. 226; Claire Baker, “The Early Development of the Illustrated Book of Hours in England c. 1240–1350,” 2 parts (Ph.D. dissertation, University of East Anglia, 1981), 1:104, 128–9, 132, 134 and 2:382–89, no. 24; Lucy Freeman Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1285–1385*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in the British Isles 5, gen. ed. J. J. G. Alexander, 2 vols. (London: Harvey Miller, 1986), 2:130–31, no. 117; *Age of Chivalry: Art in Plantagenet England, 1200–1400*, ed. J. J. G. Alexander and Paul Binski (London: Royal Academy of Arts, 1987), 255, no. 152; Roger S. Wieck, *Time Sanctified: The Book of Hours in Medieval Art and Life* (New York: George Braziller, 1988), 73, pl. 13, 116, and 222, no. 112; Martina Bagnoli, Holger A. Klein, C. Griffith Mann, and James Robinson, eds., *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics, and Devotion in Medieval Europe* (Baltimore: The Trustees of the Walters Art Gallery; Cleveland: The Cleveland Museum of Art; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2010), 188–89, no. 102; Nigel Morgan, “English Books of Hours c. 1240–c. 1480,” in *Books of Hours Reconsidered*, ed. Sandra Hindman and James H. Marrow (London: Harvey Miller, 2013), 77, 78, 84, 87, and 94; and Nigel Morgan, “The Holy Face as Icon and Vision in Fourteenth-Century England,” in *Tributes to Adelaide Bennett Hagens:*

kneeling, elegantly attired Baron William le Boteler or Botiller of Wem (or Wemme, in Shropshire) and two women, one only partly visible at the picture's left edge, clasp their hands in prayer and train their gazes on the consecrated Host held aloft by the celebrant at a draped altar. In this idealized depiction of the Elevation of the Eucharist and privileged lay participation in the liturgical rite, the Butlers' ability to see the Host is ensured by a kneeling deacon, who holds a tall green taper in one hand while lifting the hem of the priest's chasuble with the other.

Typically the sole miniature in the manuscript reproduced and discussed at any length, the Butler family "portrait" is notable for its capacity to signify both as a particularized representation of specific Butler family members and, simultaneously, as a generalized evocation of the Butler baronial lineage through multiple generations. The manuscript is assigned to Butler ownership on the basis of the presence of the family's coat-of-arms, *gules, a fess compony argent and sable between six crosses patees fitchées or*, painted in the bottom border of the first page of Matins of the Virgin (fol. 17r).<sup>2</sup> The devotees in the Mass picture have been tentatively identified as William, later third Lord Boteler (ca. 1331–69), his wife Elizabeth, and their daughter and

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*Manuscripts, Iconography, and the Late Medieval Viewer*, ed. Pamela A. Patton and Judith K. Golden (London: Harvey Miller, 2017), 149–65 at 153–55. For the Stockholm portion of the manuscript, see Carl Nordenfalk, *Bokmålningar från medeltid och renässans i National-Musei Samlingar* (Stockholm: Rabén & Sjögren, 1979), 56–57, no. 11, figs. 4 and 46; and Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, *Gyllene böcker: Nyförvärv och nyupptäckter* (Stockholm: Nationalmuseum, 1987), 45, no. 41. For the single leaf in a private collection, see *The Medieval World, 800 AD–1450 AD* (Newton, MA: The Rendells, 1979), 178–79.

A revised collation of the manuscript, including the leaves in the prefatory series, was devised in January 2013 by Abigail Quandt and William Noel of the Walters Art Museum. This collation informs the new proposed order of the prefatory leaves provided in the Appendix; the folio numbers given for the leaves in the Butler Hours used in this essay are the ones assigned to them in the previous, twentieth-century collation of the manuscript.

2 Baltimore, WAM MS 105, fol. 17r, [http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/W105/data/W.105/sap/W105\\_000033\\_sap.jpg](http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/W105/data/W.105/sap/W105_000033_sap.jpg), accessed 14 October 2018. For versions of the family's arms, see John W. Papworth and Alfred W. Morant, *Ordinary of British Armorial*, 2 vols. (London: T. Richards, 1858–74), 2:705.



FIGURE 1. *Butler Family at Mass*, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 15r. Photo: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

heir Elizabeth, born in 1345.<sup>3</sup> Yet these figures also may evoke, and more likely represent, William, de jure second Lord Boteler (1298–1361), and two of his female kin, probably his first wife Margaret, née Fitzalan, and perhaps Ela, née de Herdeburgh, second wife and widow of the first William Lord Boteler (d. 1334); Ela was still alive in July 1343. Subsequent generations of the family might even have read the image as a memorial “portrait” of the first Lord William and his two wives, Beatrice (d. before February 1315/16) and Ela.<sup>4</sup> Equally pertinent to the present study, the Mass picture figures prominently in accounts of several interrelated developments in later medieval Christian art and spirituality, including changes in the understanding of the nature of vision and the perception of images; the expansion of book- and image-centered devotion among the affluent, aspirant laity; and the potential roles of the cult of the Eucharist and of depictions of this sacrament in the formation and affirmation of the Christian self and community.<sup>5</sup>

The vividness of this picture belies the fact that the Butler Hours is now a fragment to which time has not been kind. The bulk of its surviving contents, sixty-one leaves, are in the Walters Art Museum, another two are in the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, a single leaf is in an unknown

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3 Baker, “Early Development,” 2:382; Bagnoli et al., *Treasures of Heaven*, 188; and Alixe Bovey, “Communion and Community: Eucharistic Narratives and their Audience in the Smithfield Decretals,” in *The Social Life of Illumination: Manuscripts, Images, and Communities in the Late Middle Ages*, ed. Joyce Coleman, Mark Cruse, and Kathryn A. Smith (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), 53–82 at 58–59 and n. 7.

4 G[eorge] E[dward] Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain, and the United Kingdom: Extant, Extinct, or Dormant*, 2nd ed., 14 vols. (vol. 2, London: St. Catherine Press, 1912), 2:231–33.

5 Michael Camille, *The Gothic Idol: Ideology and Image-Making in Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 215–19 and fig. 115; Claire Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and Theatricality in Late Medieval England* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 132–34 and fig. 6; Aden Kumler, *Translating Truth: Ambitious Images and Religious Knowledge in Late Medieval France and England* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 117–18 and fig. 31; Kathryn A. Smith, *The Taymouth Hours: Stories and the Construction of the Self in Late Medieval England* (London: British Library; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 67–69 and fig. 19; Bovey, “Communion and Community,” 58–59 and fig. 8; Alexa Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation in Late Medieval Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 255–60 and fig. 85.



private collection, and many more are lost.<sup>6</sup> In its original state, the volume is thought to have contained over 100 folios. The surviving leaves measure circa 5 11/16" × 8 1/2" (ca. 14.5 cm × 21 cm), trimmed, and a few historiated initials have been excised or retouched, with the last of these interventions apparently undertaken in order to mitigate extensive water damage that occurred in 1846, when the manuscript was owned by the collector John Boykett Jarman (ca. 1782–1864).<sup>7</sup> While it may never be possible to reconstitute the Butler Hours in its original, mid-fourteenth-century form, the evidence supplied by a foliation of ca. 1800, written in ink at upper left on most rectos, a succinct description of the manuscript published in 1879, and the efforts of Walters curators and conservators, past and present, all help to suggest the book's contents and their order as of the early nineteenth century.<sup>8</sup>

The manuscript opened with a series of prefatory pictures and texts, now missing several folios (see the Appendix). This material introduced an unillustrated calendar based on Sarum Use and a group of standard Latin offices, some richly embellished with historiated initials. These texts included the mixed Hours of the Virgin with illustrated *memoriae* in Lauds and the Short Office of the Cross, both now incomplete; the Seven Penitential Psalms, now substantially missing; and the Litany and Fifteen Gradual Psalms, both missing in their entirety. The manuscript was illuminated by two artists who collaborated on the painting of another contemporary book of hours of uncertain ownership, apparently working with the same scribe, and on a single folio in the famous Luttrell Psalter, made on the

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6 For bibliography on the various parts of the manuscript, see n. 1.

7 For the manuscript's conservation, see Abigail B. Quandt, "The Butler Hours: The Conservation and Rebinding of a Fourteenth Century English Book of Hours," in *The Institute of Paper Conservation Conference Papers*, ed. Sheila Fairbrass (n.p.: Institute of Paper Conservation, 1992), 171–77. For John Boykett Jarman's ownership, I have consulted an unpublished description by Peter Kidd prepared for Sam Fogg (28 September 1994) of five leaves from the Butler Hours that were rediscovered in 1994, and which the Walters acquired that year, discussed further in Elizabeth Burin, "Of Pigs and Parchment: Reassembling Dismembered Manuscripts," *Walters Art Gallery Bulletin* 49, no. 1 (1996): 4–5.

8 For the contents of the book before it was broken up, probably in the early twentieth century, see Taylor, through Micklethwaite, "Antiquities and Works of Art."

order of the Lincolnshire baron Geoffrey Luttrell.<sup>9</sup> It is uncertain where the Butler Hours was made, although both Oxford and Cambridge have been put forward tentatively as places of production.<sup>10</sup>

As the foregoing description of the Butler Hours makes clear, the Mass picture is by no means a standalone element of the volume's visual program. It is a key component of the series of prefatory leaves displaying a diverse selection of Christological, Marian, devotional, and moralizing themes, miniatures of standing saints, and illustrated suffrages and other texts. This material is now accessible thanks to the manuscript's digitization, undertaken by the Walters Art Museum in the context of its *Parchment to Pixel* initiative (2008–14) with the support of Preservation and Access grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities and additional funding from an anonymous donor.<sup>11</sup> Among the most intriguing components of the prefatory series is a little-studied Tree of Vices (fig. 2). This picture, and the miniatures of the Crucifixion and the Holy Face (figs. 3 and 4),

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9 The book of hours is Dublin, Trinity College MS 94 (F.5.21), for which see Sandler, *Gothic Manuscripts*, 2:131–32, no. 118. Michael A. Michael identified the work of these two artists on fol. 215r of the Luttrell Psalter (London, British Library, MS Add. 43120) in an unpublished lecture, “From Princeton to San Marino: A Personal Survey of English Gothic Illuminated Manuscripts in American Collections,” delivered at the conference “*Manuscripta Illuminata*: Approaches to Understanding Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts,” Index of Christian Art, Princeton University, 26 October 2013; for this folio, see [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add\\_ms\\_42130\\_f215r](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=add_ms_42130_f215r), accessed 21 November 2018. Lynda Dennison convincingly assigned to the artist of the Mass picture the illumination of London, British Library (BL) MS Royal 10 E VII, a copy of the *Lectura in quinque libros Decretalium* of Hostiensis (Henry of Segusio); see Lynda Dennison, “The Fitzwarin Psalter and Its Allies’: A Reappraisal,” in *England in the Fourteenth Century. Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 1986), 60n90; and for the manuscript, see the British Library’s Digital Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts, at <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/record.asp?MSID=5405&CollID=16&NStart=100507>, accessed 21 November 2018. I believe this same artist contributed one surviving initial and border (on fol. 85r) in Oxford, Corpus Christi College MS 70, a composite manuscript containing the *Commentary on the Clementines* of Jesselin de Cassagnes, etc., for which see R. M. Thomson, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Medieval Manuscripts of Corpus Christi College, Oxford* (Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2011), 35–36, no. 70, and plate 14.

10 Dennison, “Fitzwarin Psalter,” 61–62.

11 For the manuscript, see <http://www.thedigitalwalters.org/Data/WaltersManuscripts/html/W105/>, accessed 14 October 2018. A digital catalog entry is under way.





FIGURE 2. *Tree of Vices*, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 9v. Photo: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.





FIGURE 3. *The Crucifixion, with the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist*, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 10r. Photo: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.



FIGURE 4. *Holy Face with Evangelist Symbols and Tree of Life*, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 10v. Photo: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.



along with the Mass image (see fig. 1) and at least two pages containing text alone (see figs. 13 and 14), appear to form a thematically linked subset within the prefatory program.

Scholarly reticence concerning the Tree of Vices is likely due to its deteriorated condition. The water damage that the book suffered has muddied or obscured some of its visual details and several of the inscriptions that punctuate the image. These inscriptions are written in Anglo-Norman French, or “insular French,” England’s principal vernacular of learning, culture, law, record, devotion, and religious instruction from the Norman Conquest through the early fifteenth century.<sup>12</sup> Yet the Tree of Vices was carefully designed, and its imagery and texts offer a pointed pendant to the Mass picture and its message. The Tree’s apparent breadth of pictorial reference, its complex, carefully calibrated visual and verbal rhetoric, and its semantic resonances and devotional functions in its larger manuscript context are principal subjects of this essay. The larger goal of this study is to demonstrate the ingenuity with which pictures, texts, and prayers in this group of prefatory leaves moralized the Mass for their Butler beholders.

### *The Tree of Vices: Design, Imagery, Texts, Operations*

Like other types of medieval *schemata*, tree diagrams were valued not only for their capacity to structure and communicate information, but also for their power to activate memory, support instruction, and stimulate and shape thought, imagination, and religious experience.<sup>13</sup> A component of

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12 For the question of nomenclature with respect to Anglo-Norman French, see Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, “General Introduction: What’s in a Name: The ‘French’ of ‘England,’” in *Language and Culture in Medieval Britain: The French of England, c. 1100–c. 1500*, ed. Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, with Carolyn Collette, Maryanne Kowaleski, Linne Mooney, Ad Putter, and David Trotter (York: York Medieval Press, 2009), 1–13.

13 For diagrams, including tree diagrams and tree imagery, see Fritz Saxl, “A Spiritual Encyclopaedia of the Later Middle Ages,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 5 (1942): 82–142, esp. 107–15; Anna C. Esmeijer, *Divina quaternitas: A Preliminary Study in the Method and Application of Visual Exegesis* (Amsterdam: Van Gorcum, 1978); Michael W. Evans, “The

monastic manuscripts of learning and pedagogy from the early Middle Ages, diagrams of all varieties appear in religious and devotional volumes made for affluent lay owners from the thirteenth century forward. Their inclusion in these artifacts registers expanding lay aspiration to clerical forms of literate and spiritual practice and knowledge, and the concomitant pastoral efforts of the mendicant orders and the institutional Church.<sup>14</sup> As vehicles for the explication of moral theology—human ethics and conduct—Trees of Virtues and Vices purport to present in systematic form the range of human qualities and behavior, positive and negative. The visual form and organization of Trees of Virtues and Vices are grounded in Christ's statement that "Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and the evil tree bringeth forth evil fruit" (Matt. 7:17), and in Gregory the Great's (d. 604) assertion that pride is the "root of all evil" (*Moralia in Job*,

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Geometry of the Mind," *Architectural Association Quarterly* 12, no. 4 (1980): 32–55, esp. 36–39; Jennifer O'Reilly, "The Trees of Eden in Mediaeval Iconography," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyer, *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament*, Supplement Series 136 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 167–205; and *The Tree: Symbol, Allegory, and Mnemonic Device in Medieval Art and Thought*, ed. Pippa Salonijs and Andrea Worm (Turnhout: Brepols, 2014). My thinking about diagrams has been enriched by the essays in the forthcoming collection *The Visualization of Knowledge in Medieval and Early Modern Europe*, ed. Marcia Kupfer, Adam S. Cohen, J. H. Chajes, and Andrea Worm, *Studies in the Visual Cultures of the Middle Ages* 16 (Turnhout: Brepols).

14 For illuminated manuscripts containing diagrams made for lay owners that have been set in this context, see Lucy Freeman Sandler, *The Psalter of Robert de Lisle in the British Library* ([1983]; rev. ed. London: Harvey Miller, 1999); Adelaide Bennett, "A Book Designed for a Noblewoman: An Illustrated *Manuel des Péchés* of the Thirteenth Century," in *Medieval Book Production: Assessing the Evidence*, ed. L. L. Brownrigg (Los Altos Hills, CA: Red Gull, 1988), 163–81; Lynn Ransom, "Innovation and Identity: A Franciscan Program of Illumination in the *Verger de soulas* (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, MS fr. 9220)," in *Insights and Interpretations: Studies in the Celebration of the Eighty-Fifth Anniversary of the Index of Christian Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002), 85–105; Kathryn A. Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion in Fourteenth-Century England: Three Women and Their Books of Hours* (London: British Library; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003), 119–25; Kumler, *Translating Truth*, 63–68; and Lucy Freeman Sandler, "Religious Instruction and Devotional Study: The Pictorial and the Textual in Gothic Diagrams," in Kupfer et al., *Visualization of Knowledge*.

XXXI.45).<sup>15</sup> Paired Trees of Virtues and Vices flourished from the early twelfth century, appearing, for example, in copies of two well-known representatives of the “literature of spiritual formation,” the treatise *De fructibus carnis et spiritus* (ca. 1130), and the *Speculum virginum*, intended for the religious instruction of female monastics.<sup>16</sup>

The author of *De fructibus carnis et spiritus* names and explicates the sources, parts, and fruits of the two trees. In addition, in his prologue, he extols the advantages of tree diagrams as teaching tools:

It is good to represent the fruits of humility and pride as a kind of visual image so that anyone studying to improve himself can clearly see what things will result from them. Therefore, we show the novices and untutored men two little trees, differing in fruits and in size, each displaying the characteristics of virtues and vices, so that people may understand the products of each and choose which of the trees they would establish in themselves.<sup>17</sup>

As his sentiments make clear, the author of *De fructibus carnis et spiritus* viewed the effectiveness of the “two little trees” (*duas arbusculas*) as residing in their status as pictorial images, and in their “power . . . to prompt moral

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15 Evans, “Geometry of the Mind,” 38. All translations from the Vulgate are from the Douay-Rheims version, at [www.drbo.org](http://www.drbo.org).

16 Hugo de S. Victore, *De fructibus carnis et spiritus*, in J. P. Migne, *PL* 176, col. 997–1006; for the tree diagrams in the treatise, see Cheryl Gohdes Goggin, “Copying Manuscript Illuminations: The Trees of Vices and Virtues,” *Visual Resources* 20 (2004): 179–98. For the *Speculum virginum* and its illustrations, see the essays in *Listen Daughter: The “Speculum Virginum” and the Formation of Religious Women in the Middle Ages*, ed. Constant J. Mews (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), here quoting Mews’s introduction at 11; and Morgan Powell, “*Paradisum speculatorium in picturam ponere*: Developing a Picture Program as the ‘Mirror of Virgins,’” 123–56 plus illustrations, in *Diagramm und Text: Diagrammatische Strukturen und die Dynamisierung von Wissen und Erfahrung. Überstorfer Colloquium 2012*, ed. Eckart Conrad Lutz, Vera Jerjen, and Christine Putzo (Wiesbaden: Reichert, 2014).

17 *De fructibus et carnis spiritus*, col. 997; English translation in Miriam Gill, “The Role of Images in Monastic Education: The Evidence from Wall Painting in Late Medieval England,” in *Medieval Monastic Education*, ed. George Ferzoco and Carolyn Muessig (London: Leicester University Press, 2000), 117–35 at 122.

and spiritual development by presenting choices and engaging the emotions,” as Miriam Gill put it.<sup>18</sup> These comments also pertain to late medieval diagrams, and to compositions and images grounded in long-standing traditions of diagrammatic representation. In these works, including the Butler Hours miniature (see fig. 2), the diagrammatic scaffolding may be enriched or overlaid with motifs, details, and imagery drawn from the broader representational repertoire.<sup>19</sup> In the Butler Hours Tree, as in many late medieval Virtue-Vice schemes, the Vices are figured in terms of “everyday” human protagonists and their actions.<sup>20</sup>

A dense collage of color, form, and text, the Butler Hours Tree of Vices was designed with care, although this may not be immediately apparent to the modern eye (see fig. 2). To appreciate the subtlety of its pictorial construction, one may begin at the bottom of the framed miniature, at the Tree’s base. There, two weasel-like beasts—one with dark fur, the other, light—gnaw at the trunk, while immediately behind the darker animal sits a unicorn. As Francis Klingender recognized, the presence of these creatures reveals that the Tree of Vices in the Butlers’ *horae* doubles as the Tree of Man’s Life of the so-called unicorn parable, an allegory on the themes of mortality and *contemptus mundi* whose origins lie in the ancient Barlaam and Josaphat legend.<sup>21</sup> Of Buddhist origin, and circulating in Arabic, Georgian, and Greek by the early eleventh century, the Barlaam and Josaphat story was first translated into Latin in 1047/8.<sup>22</sup> A focus of the legend in its

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18 Gill, “Role of Images,” 122.

19 For a lucid discussion of the “spectrum” of diagrammatic representation, see Adam S. Cohen, “Diagramming the Diagrammatic: Twelfth-Century Europe,” in Kupfer et al., *Visualization of Knowledge*.

20 On the pictorial traditions of the Virtues and Vices, see Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Medieval Art from Early Christian Times to the Thirteenth Century* ([1939]; rpt. Toronto: University of Toronto Press/Medieval Academy of America, 1989); Jennifer O’Reilly, *Studies in the Virtues and Vices in the Middle Ages* (New York: Garland, 1988); and *Virtue & Vice: The Personifications of the Index of Christian Art*, ed. Colum Hourihane (Princeton, NJ: Index of Christian Art/Princeton University Press, 2000).

21 Francis Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought to the End of the Middle Ages*, ed. Evelyn Antal and John Harthan (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1971), 431–32, fig. 263.

22 For the legend in its broader literary and artistic contexts, see most recently *Barlaam und Josaphat: Neue Perspektiven auf ein europäisches Phänomen*, ed. Constanza Cordoni and Matthias

Christianized form is the efforts of the hermit Barlaam to convert the Indian prince Josaphat to Christianity and to teach him the fundamentals of the faith through the use of fables or parables. These twin emphases, conversion and education, and the legend's considerable dramatic qualities, help to explain its appeal to later medieval authorities, including the compilers of collections of sermon *exempla* and the authors of religious literature and vernacular romance. The Dominicans Vincent of Beauvais (d. 1264?) and Jacobus de Voragine (d. 1298) incorporated the tale into their respective, widely circulating works, the *Speculum historiale* and the *Legenda aurea*.

As the version of the unicorn parable in the *Legenda aurea* relates, a young man is pursued by a fierce unicorn, and, while fleeing, falls into an abyss. Although the man succeeds in gaining a foothold by grabbing the branches of a nearby bush or "little tree" (*arbuscula*), he is still in grave danger: at the bottom of the abyss is a fire-breathing dragon bent on devouring him, while at the base of the tree are two mice or rats gnawing at its roots, intent on felling it. Yet despite these and other threats, the man becomes distracted from his peril by the sweet honey that he finds in the tree's branches. As Jacobus de Voragine explains, the unicorn "is a figure of death that constantly pursues men and seeks to lay hold of them." The abyss and the honey signify the world full of "evils" and "deceptive pleasures": the bush or tree is human life, which is steadily "eaten away" by the rodents, and the dragon, the mouth of Hell, "yawning to devour all men."<sup>23</sup>

The broad appeal of the unicorn parable is affirmed by its depiction throughout the later medieval world in a range of mediums, from portal and tomb sculpture to stained glass, frescoes, and illuminated manuscripts.<sup>24</sup>

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Meyer (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2015); and Cecily J. Hilsdale, "Worldliness in Byzantium and Beyond: Reassessing the Visual Networks of Barlaam and Ioasaph," in *Reassessing the Global Turn in Medieval Art History*, ed. Christina Normore, special issue of *The Medieval Globe* 3, no. 2 (2017): 57–96.

23 Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints*, trans. William Granger Ryan, 2 vols. (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1993), 2:355–66 at 360.

24 Karen Gould, *The Psalter and Hours of Yolande of Soissons* (Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1978), 76–81; Dorothy F. Glass, "The Sculpture of the Baptistry of Parma: Context and Meaning," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Instituts in Florenz* 57 (2015): 255–91 at 276–80; Kristin B. Aavitsland, *Imagining the Human Condition in Medieval*



But as Kristin B. Aavitsland demonstrated, the most relevant analog of the Butler Hours Tree of Vices is the depiction of the parable in the late thirteenth-century north French Psalter-Hours “of Yolande of Soissons” (fig. 5).<sup>25</sup> Here, as in numerous depictions of the story, a centrally placed tree dominates the composition, and the enticing succulence of its leaves and fruit are emphasized through their buoyant stylization. The young man in the tree smiles as he reaches to pluck a piece of fruit, oblivious to the threats on the ground below. The dragon in the abyss in the parable has been transformed in the Psalter-Hours into a ravening Hellmouth, as in Jacobus’s explication of the allegory—an apposite choice, as Karen Gould observed, in view of this picture’s role as a visual preface to the Office of the Dead.<sup>26</sup> The maker(s) of the Butler Hours picture replaced the Hellmouth or dragon with a seated lion (see fig. 2); I will return to the lion and unicorn later in this study.

But of course, unlike the tree in the north French Psalter-Hours, the boughs of the Butler Hours Tree of Vices host not one man but seven, and it is the personification of Pride, portrayed as a nattily dressed youth admiring himself in a mirror and crowning himself with a chaplet, that occupies the uppermost branches (see fig. 2). In so deftly synthesizing the visual traditions of the Tree of Vices and the Tree of Man’s Life, the maker(s) of the Butler Hours inverted the traditional organization of Trees of Vices, in which Pride is located not at the tree’s top but at its “root,” to reprise Gregory the Great’s formulation. In the elegantly painted Tree of Vices in

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Rome: *The Cistercian Fresco Cycle at Abbazia delle Tre Fontane* ([2012]; rpt. London and New York: Routledge, 2016), 107–39; Hilsdale, “Worldliness in Byzantium.”

25 New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M.729; Aavitsland, *Imagining the Human Condition*, 114–16, 124–27 and fig. 4:13. For the argument that the book was begun for the widowed Comtesse de la Table, Dame de Coeuvres, and finished for Yolande of Soissons and Bernard V de Moreuil, see Alison Stones, “The Full-Page Miniatures of the Psalter-Hours New York Morgan Library, M.729: Programme and Patron,” in *The Illuminated Psalter: Studies in the Content, Purpose and Placement of its Images*, ed. F. O. Büttner (Turnhout: Brepols, 2004), 281–307; and Alison Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1260–1320*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in France 2, ed. François Avril, J. J. G. Alexander, and Christian Heck (London: Harvey Miller, 2013), Part I, vol. 2, 230–39, no. III-333.

26 Gould, *Psalter and Hours*, 81.



FIGURE 5. *The Tree of Man's Life*, Psalter-Hours "of Yolande of Soissons," N. France, late thirteenth century. New York, Morgan Library & Museum MS M. 729, fol. 354v. Photo: The Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

the now-fragmentary, early fourteenth-century English Psalter of Robert de Lisle—an image derived from the Franciscan collection known as the *Speculum theologie*—the admonition that Pride is the root of the vices (*Radix vitiorum Superbia*) is inscribed beneath the Tree's trunk, where it serves as a stage on which Adam and Eve enact the Fall (fig. 6).<sup>27</sup> In the De Lisle Psalter picture, as is typical of Trees of Vices, the branches and fruits bearing secondary vices droop downward toward Hell. In the Butler Hours miniature, by contrast, the branches and leaves of the Tree grow *upward*, as in Trees of *Virtues*, and as in the Tree of Man's Life in the north French Psalter-Hours (see fig. 5). This astute design decision lends the Butler Hours Tree an enticing luxuriance, and the Vices it hosts a disconcerting allure.

Situating the Butler Hours Tree of Vices within a broader matrix of moralizing pictorial and diagrammatic traditions aids in illuminating the picture's multiple resonances and visual operations. The Vices are all portrayed as laymen sporting knee-length gowns and boots or fashionably pointed shoes. Pride's mirror, emblematic of self-absorption and immoderate concern with one's appearance, is a frequent attribute of Pride and its closest relatives, Vainglory, Vanity, and Luxury: at the top of the Tree of Vices from the now-dismembered Burckhardt-Wildt Apocalypse, thought to have been made in late thirteenth-century Lorraine, a female mirror-gazer labeled *Luxure* raises her hand to touch her hair.<sup>28</sup> While the chaplet with which Pride crowns himself is more unusual, the pairing of

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27 For the Tree of Vices in the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, see Sandler, *Psalter of Robert de Lisle*, 50–51, pl. 8. For the *Speculum theologie* and its tree diagrams in a variety of manuscript, pastoral, literary, and imaginative contexts, see Sandler, *Psalter of Robert de Lisle*; Ransom, "Image and Identity"; Lynn Ransom, "The *Speculum theologie* and Its Readership: Considering the Manuscript Evidence," *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America* 13 (1999): 461–73; Katharine Breen, "Reading Step by Step: Pictorial Allegory and Pastoral Care in *Piers Plowman*," in *Taxonomies of Knowledge: Information and Order in Medieval Manuscripts*, ed. Emily Steiner and Lynn Ransom (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), 90–135; and Sandler, "Religious Instruction and Devotional Study."

28 For the Burckhardt-Wildt Apocalypse Tree of Vices (Sotheby's, sale catalogue, London, 25 April 1983, lot 32b; now Oxfordshire, Wormsley Library, fol. 5v), see Michael Camille, "Him Whom You Have Ardently Desired You May See': Cistercian Exegesis and the Prefatory Pictures in a French Apocalypse," in *Studies in Cistercian Art and Architecture*, vol. 3, ed.



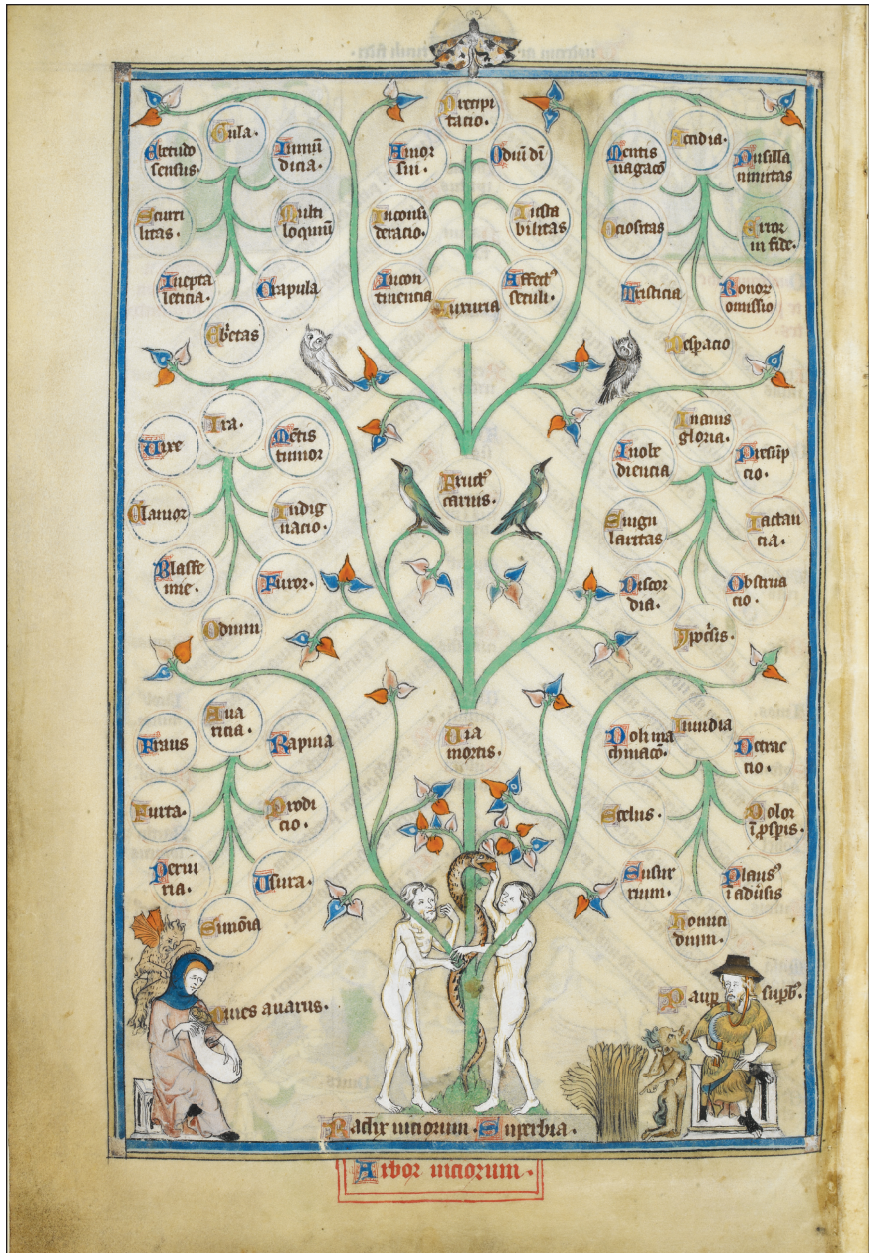


FIGURE 6. *Tree of Vices*, Psalter of Robert de Lisle, England, ca. 1310–40. London, British Library MS Arundel 83 II, fol. 128v. Photo: © The British Library Board.

mirror and chaplet is not without precedent in a moralizing devotional context. At Terce of the Virgin in the *officiolum* designed circa 1304–9 by the lawyer and poet Francesco da Barberino (d. 1348), a personification of *Pueritia*, or Childhood, a stage of life characterized by self-absorption, gazes into a mirror and crowns herself with a garland or chaplet.<sup>29</sup>

In the Butler Hours Tree, Pride's empty attainments are the object of Envy or Covetousness, seated at upper left, who looks up and observes darkly as handsome Pride crowns himself. More typically in manuscript examples of the Tree of Vices, Envy surveils the Vice depicted directly *across* from him or her, on the other side of the tree trunk. The Trees of Vices in the Burckhardt-Wildt Apocalypse and the early fourteenth-century Kremsmünster *Speculum humanae salvationis*, the latter volume produced for the Premonstratensian abbey of Weissenau (Swabia), offer examples of this arrangement: in the Kremsmünster Tree, *Invidia* at lower left tries to lure to her own lap the pet dog of *Vana Gloria*, seated directly across from *Invidia* at lower right (fig. 7).<sup>30</sup> In the Butler Hours Tree, the twisted form and upward gaze of Covetousness constitute a parodic inversion of Hope's graceful reach for the crown of spiritual reward in some Virtue-Vice schemes, such as the ones on the sculpted façade of the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Amiens (ca. 1240), and in the illusionistic dado in Giotto's Scrovegni Chapel (ca. 1305) (fig. 8). Directly beneath Covetousness, Wrath stabs himself; seated opposite Covetousness, Avarice locks away his wealth in a chest, while just below Avarice, Gluttony turns away from a richly laid table and vomits up his meal. All of these vignettes are conventional, with the latter two finding among their closest parallels in late thirteenth-century illuminated French manuscripts of Frère Lorens of Orléans's *Somme le roi* (1279), the catechetical treatise intended to prepare penitents for

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Meredith Parsons Lillich (Kalamazoo, MI: Cistercian Publications, 1987), 137–60 plus plates, at 151–52.

29 Private Collection, fol. 44v; Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion*, 66–68, 80, and 162–63, fig. 75; and for the manuscript, see Kay Sutton, "The Lost 'Officiolum' of Francesco da Barberino Rediscovered," *Burlington Magazine* 147, no. 1224 (2005): 152–64.

30 For the Kremsmünster manuscript, see Susanne Wittekind, "Visualizing Salvation: The Role of Arboreal Imagery in the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (Kremsmünster, Library of the Convent, Cod. 243)," in *The Tree* (as in n. 13), 117–42.



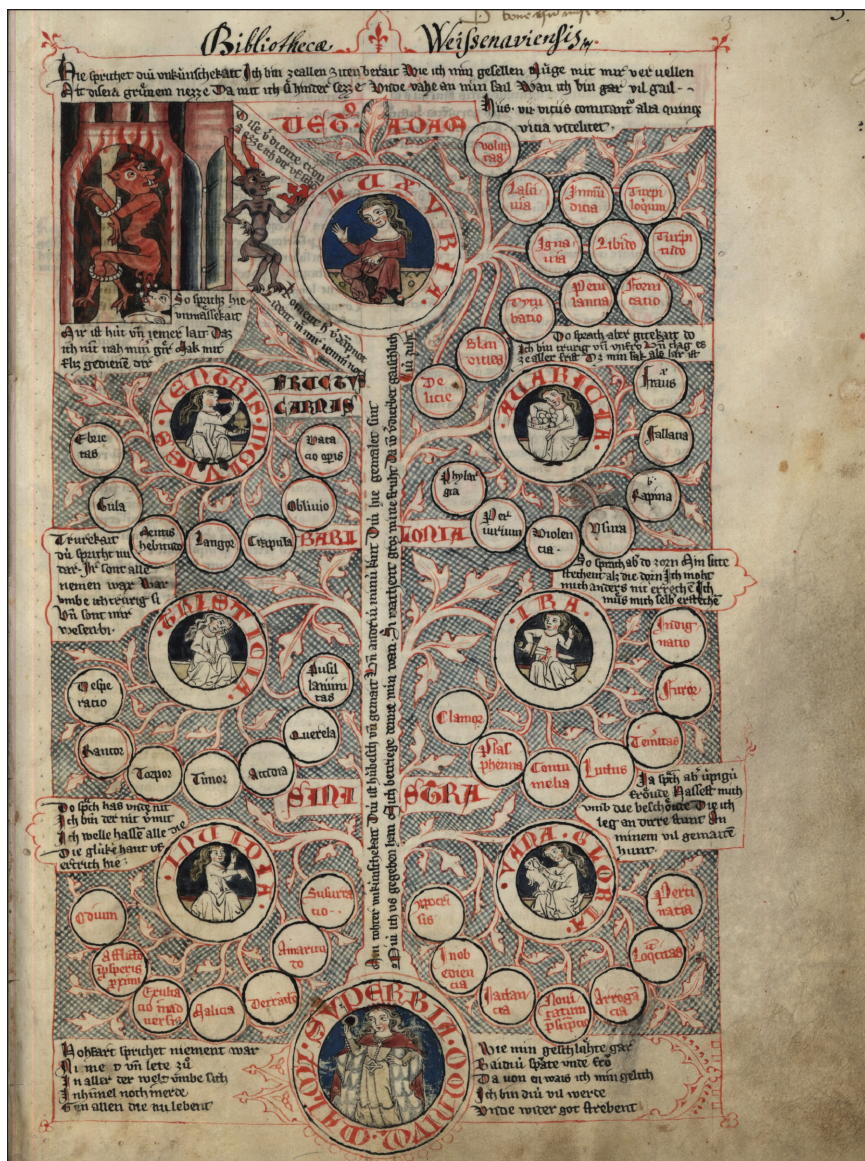


FIGURE 7. *Tree of Vices, Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, Swabia, ca. 1325–30. Austria, Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster, CC 243, fol. 3r. Photo: Stiftsbibliothek Kremsmünster, Austria.





FIGURE 8. Giotto di Bondone and workshop, *Hope*, Scrovegni Chapel, Padua, Italy, ca. 1305. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, Inc.

confession.<sup>31</sup> Lust at the center of the Tree is a couple entwined in an illicit embrace, a *topos* of sensuality that was a staple of Romanesque corbel sculpture and the Virtue-Vice schemes on Gothic cathedral façades.

Yet the Butler Hours Tree speaks not solely through images but also through texts (see fig. 2). The personifications perform the Vices to an audience of birds perched amid the leaves, and both the Vices themselves and their avian observers hold or view banderoles containing the Anglo-Norman French couplets noted earlier in this essay, verses that offer pithy comment on each Vice and its consequences. Although the nineteenth-century water damage has obscured the couplets associated with Avarice, Gluttony, and Lust (named *Lecherie* in the faded inscription), digitization of the manuscript has facilitated decipherment of the others.

The four birds holding scrolls at the top of the picture urge Pride, or *Orguyl*, to look beyond the self and the moral trap of the mirror: “When all the world matters to you, your pride will abate,” they sing.<sup>32</sup> “I am named the covetous one; always I covet more and more,” announces an insatiable Covetousness (*li Cuveytous*).<sup>33</sup> His sentiments are condemned by a nearby bird, which pipes, “On your death you will lose everything, you will languish forever in Hell.”<sup>34</sup> Arrogant Wrath (*Ire Superbie*) states somewhat pedantically, “[This] prideful anger is [also] named ‘*Superbie*’: I kill myself and this is a sin,”<sup>35</sup> while a bird at his shoulder explains, “Whoever kills himself out of wickedness will never have the joy of Heaven.”<sup>36</sup>

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31 For Avarice in London, BL MS Add. 28162, fol. 9v, and Gluttony in London, BL MS Add. 54180, fol. 188v, see the British Library’s “Digitised Manuscripts” site at [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_28162&index=0](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_28162&index=0), and [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add\\_MS\\_54180&index=2](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Add_MS_54180&index=2), both accessed 14 October 2018; and Alison M. Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts, 1260–1320*, A Survey of Manuscripts Illuminated in France 2, ed. François Avril, J. J. G. Alexander, and Christian Heck (London: Harvey Miller, 2015), Part II, 98–103, no. IV-20b (for MS Add. 28162) and (2013), 96–99, part I, no. I-45 (for MS Add. 54180).

32 *Quant tuht le mund tey caudra / tun orguyl abatra.*

33 *Nomé suy li cuveytous. Touz / jours cuveyte plus e plus.*

34 *A tun fin tuht perderas / En enferne en perdureras.*

35 *Ire superbie par noun nommé / Jeo me tue ceo fet pecché.*

36 *Ky ke se tue par felunie / la joy de cel ne avera mie.*



Even the birds themselves, insofar as they can be identified with any confidence, seem to have significance within the visual program. The four birds at the top of the picture appear to be goldfinches, frequent inhabitants of the borders of English Gothic manuscripts. According to legend, the bird earned its red face and markings and hence a connection to the Passion when, during Christ's walk to Calvary carrying the Cross, the bird swooped down to pluck a thorn from the crown of thorns and Christ's blood stained its plumage.<sup>37</sup> The goldfinch's link with the crown of thorns may have inspired its association with Pride in the Butler Hours Tree of Vices, in which Pride dons his own "crown" as he admires his reflection. Perched near Avarice is what is probably a night owl (*noctua*). Among its meanings in the bestiary, this bird signifies both the vigilant, righteous man and Christ himself. As does the night owl, which "shuns" the light, Christ in his humility "shuns the vanity of worldly glory."<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the nocturnal flights of the night owl in search of food were held to signify Christ's quest to convert sinners by preaching—an apt allegory in respect to the Butler Hours Tree, in which this bird, like its fellows, proffers a (now illegible) admonitory couplet. "Attention-grabbing" rhymes or "jingles" in both Latin and vernacular languages were staples of late medieval preaching on the Virtues and Vices, as Kimberly Rivers has recently affirmed.<sup>39</sup>

But it is the Vice at the bottom of the Butler Hours Tree—*Peresce*, or Sloth—that is most noteworthy, and that links the Tree of Vices most forcefully to the Butler family "portrait" (see fig. 1). Sloth is a frequent denizen of the bottom of the picture in *another* medieval diagrammatic tradition: the wheel diagram. Typically composed of concentric rings as well as radii and segments containing text and perhaps imagery, wheel diagrams operate via two types of motion and directionality: movement from the

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37 Brunson Yapp, *Birds in Medieval Manuscripts* (London: British Library, 1981), 58–61; Herbert Friedmann, *The Symbolic Goldfinch: Its History and Significance in European Devotional Art* (1946; rpt. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968).

38 Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen MS 24, fols. 35v–36r; translation taken from "The Aberdeen Bestiary—MS 24," <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f35v> and <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f36r>, accessed 14 October 2018.

39 Kimberly A. Rivers, *Preaching the Memory of Virtue and Vice: Memory, Images, and Preaching in the Late Middle Ages* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2010), esp. 187–207, 227–33.

outermost ring to the center (and back), and clockwise motion. In the wheel diagrams that were integral to Hugh of Fouillooy's (d. ca. 1172) treatise on the monastic virtues and vices, *De rota verae et falsae religionis*, the false, hypocritical abbot, puffed up with pride, sits at the top of the *rota*, which is turned clockwise by the prior at left. Just below the Wheel is a monk in a literal and figurative slump, one in whom idleness and grief have bred indifference, negligence, and sloth, among other vices.<sup>40</sup>

More relevant to the Butler Hours Tree of Vices is the *rota* of apparent late twelfth- or early thirteenth-century origin known as the *Septenarium Pictum*, or Wheel of Sevens.<sup>41</sup> In this wheel diagram, the Vices populate the outermost ring. By following the rings inward through meditation on a succession of "sevens," including the Petitions of the Pater Noster, the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, the Virtues, and the Beatitudes, the beholder approaches Christ, often portrayed at the Wheel's center. Conversely, the beholder might work his or her way outward from Christ at the center, achieving the means to combat the Vices in the outer ring by taking up and mobilizing the Virtues, Gifts, and prayers in the inner rings.<sup>42</sup> Several surviving examples of this *rota* are found in rolls or codices of Peter of Poitiers's (d. 1205) "condensed version of biblical history," the *Compendium historiae*

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40 See, for example, Oxford, Bodl. MS Lyell 71, fol. 34v, the *rota* in a copy of Hugh's treatise made ca. 1300 in northern Italy, <http://bodley30.bodley.ox.ac.uk:8180/luna/servlet/detail/ODLodl-1-1-47853-118278:Liber-de-rota-verae-et-falsae-relig>, accessed 14 October 2018. For this manuscript, see Carlo de Clercq, "Le rôle de l'image dans un manuscrit médiéval (Bodleian, Lyell 71)," *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* (1962): 23–30.

41 For the origins, contexts, and examples of this wheel diagram as well as the possible sources of its texts, see Ulrich Rehm, *Bebilderte Vaterunser-Erklärungen des Mittelalters*, Saecula spiritalia 28 (Baden-Baden: Verlag Valentin Koerner, 1994), 62–106; Laura Cleaver, "Past, Present and Future for Thirteenth-Century Wales: Two Diagrams in British Library, Cotton Roll XIV.12," *electronic British Library Journal (eBLJ)* art. 13 (2013): 1–26, <http://www.bl.uk/ebj/2013/articles/pdf/ebjarticle132013.pdf>, at 8–16, whose nomenclature for the diagram I follow here; and Marco Rainini, "Symbolic Representations and Diagrams of the Lord's Prayer in the Twelfth Century," in *Le Pater Noster Au XIII<sup>e</sup> Siècle: Lectures et Usages*, ed. F. Siri (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 157–86 at 167–86.

42 Cleaver, "Past, Present and Future," 11–16.

in *genealogia Christi*.<sup>43</sup> The Wheel of Sevens in a late thirteenth-century English roll of the *Compendium* now in the Free Library of Philadelphia, its rich painting and gilding a likely marker of lay ownership, compares suggestively with the Tree of Vices in the Butlers' *horae* (fig. 9).<sup>44</sup> The Vices are arranged in the order conventional for this diagram. Moving clockwise from upper right: Vanity admires his reflection in a mirror; Envy gazes over a shoulder at the veiled woman in the center roundel, thought to represent Virtue; Anger stabs himself; Sloth sleeps at bottom; Avarice sits at a table laden with coins and holds up a bulging moneybag; Gluttony vomits into a bowl; and at upper left, Lust grabs a veiled woman by the wrist and delivers a lewd "chin-chuck." Pride, given "pride of place" at the Wheel's top, gestures as if preening or crowning himself, although no crown or chaplet appears ever to have been executed.

Sloth as portrayed in the Butler Hours Tree of Vices is neither a lazy lie-abed, asleep between soft sheets as in the Wheel of Sevens in the Peter of Poitiers roll (see fig. 9), nor a shiftless peasant, his plow and team sitting idle, as in French manuscripts of the *Somme le roi*.<sup>45</sup> Nestled in the cradle of the Tree's boughs, one arm serving as his pillow, slumbering Sloth shirks not labor but the Mass, celebrated by a priest on a neighboring branch (see fig. 2). As his sentiments in the banderole at his shoulder affirm, Sloth has no compunction about skipping the service at every opportunity: "I will sleep," so says Sloth, "When I am alone hearing Mass."<sup>46</sup> A pert bird at left urges a different course of action: "God promises you much more than this: take and drink, in true faith."<sup>47</sup>

It is fruitful to compare the Butler Hours Tree of Vices to another moralizing image in which the tree and wheel forms appear to converge: the

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43 *Leaves of Gold: Manuscript Illuminations from Philadelphia Collections*, ed. James R. Tanis and Jennifer A. Thompson (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2001), quoting 196.

44 See the entry for this manuscript by Jennifer A. Thompson in Tanis and Thompson, *Leaves of Gold*, 196–98, no. 68.

45 Jonathan Alexander, "Labeur and Paresse: Ideological Representations of Medieval Peasant Labor," *Art Bulletin* 72 (1990): 449, fig. 19.

46 *Jeo [d]ormiray ceo diit peresce / Quant suy sul de oyer messe.*

47 *Dé ben for ceo te prometh / Pr[e]n se beis, in belle feht.*

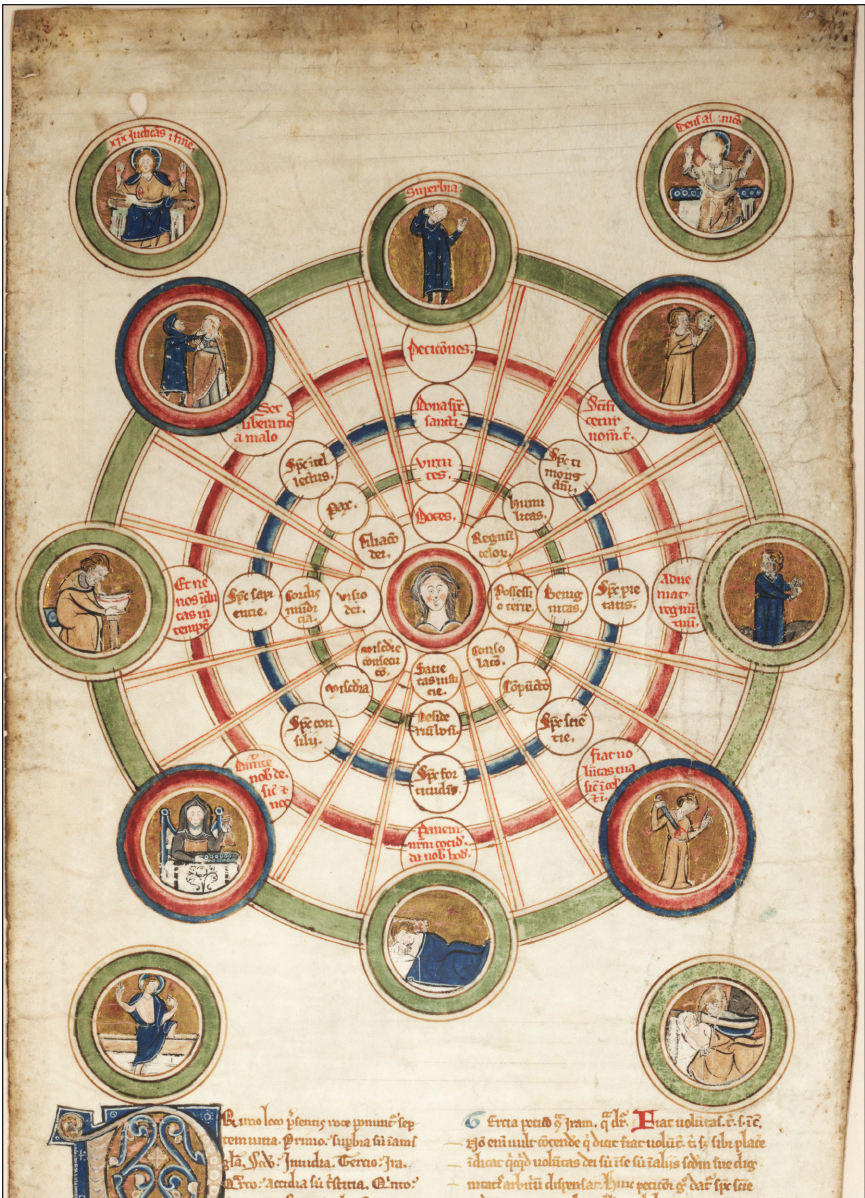


FIGURE 9. *Wheel of Sevens*. Membrane from a roll of Peter of Poitiers, *Compendium historiae in genealogia Christi*, S. England, ca. 1280. Philadelphia, The Free Library of Philadelphia, Rare Book Department, Lewis E. 249 b. Photo: Free Library of Philadelphia, Rare Book Department.



Mirror of Life and Death, a text-enriched (Latin and French) reformulation of the Old French moralizing poem *Le Miroir de Vie et de Mort* (1266) by Robert de l'Omme. The Mirror of Life and Death is extant in two lavishly illuminated manuscripts: a philosophical, moral, and scientific compendium made in 1277 in Théroutanne or Saint-Omer (figs. 10 and 11) and the *Vrigiet de Solas* (*Orchard of Solace*), a compilation possibly made circa 1290–1310 in Saint-Omer or Arras.<sup>48</sup> In both versions of this image, within the circular frame of the mirror-picture, in the upper half of the composition, a crowned Life (*Vie*) seated in the boughs of a tree is serenaded by four birds and two human musicians (fig. 10). Their music distracts Life from the approach of Death (*Mors*), who, clad in white and carrying the lid of a tomb, ascends the tree via a ladder. The tree in the Mirror of Life and Death is also a Tree of Vices, as the details of its lower half make plain (fig. 11). Its roots are arranged radially, like the “spokes” of a wheel diagram, and they are figured as serpents whose heads (or tails?) morph into female personifications, their attributes and actions both vivid and familiar. Two devils crown Pride (*Superbie*) and hand her a scepter. The Queen of the Vices and Life’s virtual “mirror-image,” Pride terminates the deepest root and shares the vertical axis with Life. In the tree in the Mirror of Life and Death, Pride is the principal “root of all evil.” In the Butler Hours Tree of Vices it is Sloth, and specifically, the impulse to dodge the salvific service, that is the basest of the vices (see fig. 2).

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48 Paris, Bibl. Sainte-Geneviève MS 2200, fol. 166r; and Paris, Bibl. nationale de France, fr. 9220, fol. 10r. For Robert de l'Omme's poem, and for the manuscripts and the images, see Arthur Långfors, “*Le Miroir de vie et de mort*, par Robert de l'Omme (1266), modèle d'une moralité wallonne du XVe siècle (deuxième et dernier article),” *Romania* 47 (1921): 511–31, and 50 (1924): 14–53, at 18–20, using the version in MS 2200 as the base text; Arthur Långfors, “Notice du manuscrit français 9220 de la Bibliothèque nationale,” *Romania* 54 (1928): 413–26 at 422–26; “Robert de l'Omme,” ARLIMA: Archives de Littérature du Moyen Âge, at [https://www.arlima.net/qt/robert\\_de\\_lomme.html](https://www.arlima.net/qt/robert_de_lomme.html), accessed 23 February 2019; Hélène Bouget, “*Le Miroir de vie et de mort*: Une enluminure du *Vrigiet de Solas*,” in *Miroirs et jeux de miroirs dans la littérature médiévale*, ed. Fabienne Pomel (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2003), 109–24; Kumler, *Translating Truth*, 63–68 and fig. 9; and Stones, *Gothic Manuscripts* 2, Part 1, 507–12, no. III-116, and 191–97, no. III-19, with extensive bibliography.



FIGURE 10. *Tree of Life and Death*, in a philosophical, moral, and scientific miscellany, Théroutanne or Saint-Omer, 1277. Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève MS 2200, fol. 166r. Photo: Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Paris, cliché IRHT.





FIGURE 11. *Tree of Life and Death* (detail), in a philosophical, moral, and scientific miscellany, Théroutanne or Saint-Omer, 1277. Paris, Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève MS 2200, fol. 166r (detail). Photo: Bibliothèque Sainte-Geneviève, Paris, cliché IRHT.

Terminating the second root from right in the *Mirror of Life and Death* is *Accidie*, or *Acedia*—apathy, negligence, or indifference, Sloth’s closest relative among the vices (fig. 11, and see below). In Robert de l’Omme’s poem, this vice embraces a range of impious attitudes and acts, including skipping Mass by “sleeping in.”<sup>49</sup> As reformulated pictorially in the *Mirror of Life and Death* miniature, *Accidie* is neither lazy nor apathetic: rather, an apparently despairing *Accidie*, hands clasped before her, turns away from an altar, on which sit a draped chalice and Host (see fig. 11).<sup>50</sup>

49 *Maement or as cretiens / Destorne jou a faire biens, / Car quant devoient messe öir, / Dont les faic en lor lis gesir*; as transcribed in Långfors, “*Miroir de vie et de mort*” (1921), 523, lines 333–36.

50 In BnF fr. 9220, fol. 10r, the version of this picture in the *Vrigiet de solas*, the Latin inscription associated with *Accidie* is *Me Deus audi, vis, si non vis, nulla michi vis*; transcribed in Långfors, “Notice du manuscrit français 9220,” 425, and reprinted here with minor alteration. For analysis of the vignette and the inscription, see Bouget, “Le *Miroir de vie et de mort*,” 118.

Closer examination reveals that the Butler Hours Tree of Vices is itself wheel-like not only in form but also in “movement” (see fig. 2). The placement of the figures, and the curving boughs terminating in clusters of leaves, lead the eye around the Wheel-Tree’s circumference, as well as centripetally and centrifugally, both toward and away from Lust at its center. The inscriptions seem calibrated to create a competing *ductus*, or “flow,” however, and their presence in the composition is crucial to its effectiveness as a signifying vehicle.<sup>51</sup> Most of the inscriptions are read from lower left to upper right. Thus, they *arrest* the Wheel-Tree’s clockwise and pulsating momentums. Indeed, in contemplating the picture and reading the couplets, the beholder “puts a spoke in” the Wheel-Tree of Vices.

### *The Tree of Vices in Its Manuscript Context: Moralizing the Mass in the Butler Hours*

In their complementary studies, Morton Bloomfield and Siegfried Wenzel explicated the early development and nature of the “monastic vice of the spirit” called *Acedia*, its twelfth-century elaboration as a mental or psychological condition of “torpor,” and its frequent articulation in the context of the thirteenth-century “laicization” of the vices as Sloth—negligence, or “laziness in performing one’s duties to God in such matters as church attendance.”<sup>52</sup> For Chaucer and his contemporaries, as Stanford Lyman noted, *Acedia* and Sloth encompassed a broad range of cognitive, emotional, and physical states, including alienation, idleness, sluggishness,

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51 Mary Carruthers, “The Concept of *Ductus*: Or Journeying Through a Work of Art,” Ch. 8 in *Rhetoric Beyond Words: Delight and Persuasion in the Arts of the Middle Ages*, ed. Mary Carruthers, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 78 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 190–213, esp. 195.

52 Morton W. Bloomfield, *The Seven Deadly Sins: An Introduction to the History of a Religious Concept, with Special Reference to Medieval English Literature* (East Lansing, MI: State College Press, 1952), 96; Siegfried Wenzel, “‘Acedia’ 700–1200,” *Traditio* 22 (1966): 73–102 at 90, 92, 97, and 101–2.



and motionlessness as well as somnolence.<sup>53</sup> *Acedia* thwarts “the labor of the sinful man, to which he is compelled in expiation of his sins; and the arduousness of the seeker after grace, who performs works of penitence.”<sup>54</sup> Sloth “subverts the livelihood of the body,” “slows down the mind,” and “hinders man in his righteous undertakings,” thus becoming a “source of man’s undoing.”<sup>55</sup>

All of these meanings appear to inform the depiction of Sloth-*Peresce* in the Butler Hours Tree of Vices (see fig. 2), and they animate that picture’s resonances with its closest relatives in the prefatory series. The Butlers at Mass, upright, alert, and ardent, present a devout inversion of Sloth’s slumped, slumbering form (see fig. 1). Their left-to-right orientation as they behold the Elevation reverses the action of the Sloth-Elevation vignette in the Tree of Vices. Moreover, if the tall green taper ensures the Butlers’ view of the Host and their access to God and salvation, and the green Cross of the Crucifixion miniature, the Tree of Life, guarantees them eternal life (see fig. 3), the green trunk of the Tree of Vices—interposed between Sloth and the Elevation, and a sign of Sloth’s blindness—forecloses Sloth’s access to the Eucharist and the blessings that attended its viewing.

On closer inspection, it appears that the unicorn and lion contemplate neither the Tree nor any of the Vices, but rather the priest elevating the consecrated wafer (see fig. 2). Although the unicorn parable and its visual tradition may have provided the initial impetus for these animals’ inclusion in the picture, their polyvalence may have informed this decision as well. The unicorn and lion were known for their ferocity, and the lion was a long-standing figure of evil and the devil. In Psalm 21:22, the psalmist cries, “Save me from the lion’s mouth; and my lowness from the horns of

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53 Stanford W. Lyman, *The Seven Deadly Sins: Society and Evil* (rev. ed. Lanham, MD: General Hall, 2000), 2–3; and for Sloth as somnolence and avoidance of church attendance, see also “Pars V De Accidia / “Part V Sloth,” in *Fasciculus Morum: A Fourteenth-Century Preacher’s Handbook*, ed. and trans. Siegfried Wenzel (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1989), 402–3.

54 Lyman, *Seven Deadly Sins*, 2–3.

55 Lyman, *Seven Deadly Sins*, 3.

the unicorns.”<sup>56</sup> Yet both creatures also were held to stand for courage, strength, and Christ in Scripture and the bestiary, among other contexts. Thus, whether as harbingers of death or symbols of the Savior, the unicorn and lion may have functioned in the Tree of Vices as guides or pointers, their purpose being to direct the beholder’s gaze toward the vignette of the Eucharistic rite.

In the Crucifixion miniature (see fig. 3), the effects of the Vices are writ large on Christ’s body, which is stippled with wounds—a reminder of the ideas, current in sermons and religious literature, that the contemporary Christian re-wounded Jesus each day when he or she followed the vices, and that Christ Crucified was a remedy for all vice or sin.<sup>57</sup> The Butlers’ finery in the Mass picture, so carefully limned, may have functioned as an “affirmation of the identity that indulgence in a luxury manuscript provides,” and as a declaration of the “excellence” of the Butlers’ devotion (see fig. 1).<sup>58</sup> If read against Christ’s half-naked, wounded body, the Butlers’ rich attire also may have constituted a sartorial prompt to penitent self-scrutiny. This idea is supported by resonant details in the Tree of Vices and Mass pictures. The garb of some of the Vices echoes in simplified form both Lord William’s attire in the Butler family “portrait,” and the garments of the praying youth in the initial for a prayer in Lauds of the Virgin (fig. 12). Pride’s floral chaplet, dotted with red blossoms, is refigured in the jeweled circlet worn by Lord William’s principal female companion (compare figs. 2 and 1).

The miniature showing the Holy Face brings together a cluster of themes and motifs common in medieval art by the mid-fourteenth century, yet it arranges these elements in a striking manner (see fig. 4). The Lord is figured in three different forms: as the Holy Face in a quatrefoil frame, as the Word, signified by the Evangelist symbols, and in the three lush oak

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56 Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 432.

57 Smith, “Neville of Hornby Hours,” 78–80; Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion*, 159–61; Miriam Gill, “Preaching and Image: Sermons and Wall Painting in Late Medieval England,” in *Preacher, Sermon, and Audience in the Middle Ages* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 93–118 at 176.

58 Ashby Kinch, *Imago Mortis: Mediating Images of Death in Late Medieval Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 129; Kumler, *Translating Truth*, 117.



FIGURE 12. *Youthful layman at Prayer*, historiated initial for a prayer in Lauds of the Virgin, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 43r. Photo: The Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

branches that grow from the frame's top, forming a Tree of Life.<sup>59</sup> Images of the Holy Face have been read as the goal of devout vision, as mirrors of self-examination via *imitatio Christi*, as analogs of the Eucharist, and as reminders of the Lord's omniscience—all interpretations of potential relevance to this image in the Butlers' *horae*.<sup>60</sup> Oak is connected to Christ in

59 Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 413, 432; Baker, "Early Development," part 1, 134.

60 Gould, *Psalter and Hours*, 81–94; Lucy Freeman Sandler, "Face to Face with God: A Pictorial Image of the Beatific Vision," in *England in the Fourteenth Century*, Proceedings of the 1985 Harlaxton Symposium, ed. W. M. Ormrod (Woodbridge, UK: Boydell, 1986), 224–35; Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence: A History of the Image Before the Era of Art*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 208–24, 541–44; Suzanne Lewis, *Reading Images: Narrative Discourse and Reception in the Thirteenth-Century Illuminated Apocalypse* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 293–96; the essays in *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation: Papers from a Colloquium at the Bibliotheca Hertziana, Rome and the Villa Spelman, Florence*, ed. Gerhard Wolf and Herbert Kessler (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1998); Jeffrey F. Hamburger, "Vision and the Veronica," in Hamburger, *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany* (New York: Zone Books, 1998), 317–82; Kumler, *Translating Truth*, 87–90; Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 27–83. For the English material, see the studies by Nigel Morgan, "The Holy Face as Icon" (as in n. 1), and Nigel Morgan, "'Veronica' Images and the Office of

numerous contemporary English illuminated manuscripts. In the Tree of Life and Crucifixion miniatures in the Psalter of Robert de Lisle, for example, the Pelican in her Piety atop the green Cross feeds blood from her breast to her young from within a nest of oak leaves.<sup>61</sup>

The oak tree in the Butler Hours miniature hosts seven birds (see fig. 4), the traditional number of both the principal Vices and the Virtues, among them a goldfinch in the upper right corner. The owl in this picture is not the night owl, however, but rather the *bubo*. A “filthy,” “miserable” denizen of caves and tombs in Hugh of Fouilloy’s influential treatise on birds, *De avibus*, as well as in the bestiary, this species “signifies wicked sinners” of all kinds. “Weighed down with its plumage, as the sinner is with an excess of carnal pleasure and with fickleness of mind,” the *bubo* is “hindered by the weight of its idleness and sloth, as sinners are lazy and slothful in acting virtuously”<sup>62</sup>—sentiments resonant with Sloth’s slumped portrayal in the Tree of Vices (see fig. 2).

Two skewbald magpies mob the owl, a trope of both bestiary and psalter illustration.<sup>63</sup> As the bestiary account of the *bubo* explains,

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the Holy Face in Thirteenth-Century England,” in *The European Fortune of the Roman Veronica in the Middle Ages*, Convivium Supplementum 2, ed. Amanda Murphy, Herbert L. Kessler, Guido Milanese, Eamon Duffy, Marco Petoletti, and Veronika Tvrzníková (Turnhout: Brepols, 2018), 1–17.

61 Julian Luxford, “Out of the Wilderness: A Fourteenth-Century English Drawing of John the Baptist,” *Gesta* 49 (2010): 137–50 at 142. For the De Lisle Psalter miniatures (London, BL MS Arundel 83 II, fols. 125v and 132r), see the British Library’s Digital Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts at <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMINBig.ASP?size=big&IllID=7111>, and <https://www.bl.uk/catalogues/illuminatedmanuscripts/ILLUMINBig.ASP?size=big&IllID=15672>, both accessed 14 October 2018.

62 Willene B. Clark, *The Medieval Book of Birds: Hugh of Fouilloy’s “De avibus”* (Binghamton, NY: Medieval & Renaissance Texts & Studies, 1992), 216–19; Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen MS 24, fols. 50r–50v, at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f50r> and <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f50v>, accessed 14 October 2018.

63 See, for example, two early thirteenth-century bestiaries, London, BL MS Harley 4571, fol. 47r, and Oxford, Bodl. MS Bodley 764, fol. 73v; and the Ormesby and Queen Mary Psalters (Oxford, Bodl. MS Douce 366, fol. 38r, ca. 1300; and London, BL MS Royal 2 B VII, fol. 128v; early fourteenth century).



When other birds see the owl, they signal its presence with loud cries and harass it with fierce assaults. In the same way, if a sinner comes into the light of understanding, he becomes an object of derision to the virtuous. And when he is caught openly in the act of sinning, his ears are filled with their reproaches. As the birds pull out the owl's feathers and tear at it with their beaks, the virtuous censure the carnal acts of the sinner and condemn his excesses.<sup>64</sup>

At first blush, the magpie may seem an unlikely avatar of "the virtuous." The bird is commonly associated with thievery, gluttony, vanity, laziness, and uncomprehending, imitative chatter. In *Mon in the mone stond ant strit* (The man in the moon stands and strides), a Middle English poem contained in the trilingual verse miscellany known as the Harley Lyrics, the man in the moon, imagined as a lazy, thieving peasant, is described as a "magpie in stockings" (hosedde pye).<sup>65</sup> For the poet Wolfram von Eschenbach, however, in the opening lines of his *Parzival* (ca. 1210), the magpie signifies the man, who, in his quest for perfection, contains the potential for both vice and virtue. "Blame and praise alike befall when a dauntless man's spirit is black-and-white-mixed, like the magpie's plumage. Yet he may see blessedness after all, for both colors have a share in him."<sup>66</sup> Perhaps, then, both the owl and the magpies in the Tree of Life signify frail humanity. The owl, weighed down by sin, is yet capable of "com[ing] to the light of understanding." The magpie, apparently among the virtuous, is nonetheless sus-

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64 Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen MS 24, fol. 50v (as in n. 59); Klingender, *Animals in Art and Thought*, 412, fig. 245, and 413.

65 "Art. 81, Mon in the mone stond ant strit," in *The Complete Harley 2253 Manuscript*, vol. 3, ed. and trans. Susanna Greer Fein (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2015), at <http://d.lib.rochester.edu/teams/text/fein-harley2253-volume-3-article-81>, accessed 21 November 2018. London, BL MS Harley 2253, is fully digitized; see [http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley\\_MS\\_2253](http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/FullDisplay.aspx?ref=Harley_MS_2253), accessed 21 November 2018. For the chattering magpie in the bestiary, see, e.g., Aberdeen, University of Aberdeen MS 24, fol. 36v, at <https://www.abdn.ac.uk/bestiary/ms24/f36v>, accessed 21 November 2018.

66 Wolfram Von Eschenbach, *Parzival*, trans. Helen M. Mustard and Charles E. Passage (New York: Vintage, 1961), 3.

ceptible to vice on account of its piebald nature, though it “may see blessedness after all.”

As this analysis demonstrates, the Butler Hours should be added to the diverse corpus of English religious and devotional manuscripts in which a deftly designed visual program and moralizing vernacular texts frame and enrich Latinate personal devotion.<sup>67</sup> The various offices listed at the beginning of this essay are not the only Latin devotions that the Butlers’ manuscript once contained, however: the prefatory sequence includes the (now fragmentary) Office of the Holy Face. This office comprises several texts, including a cluster of psalm verses linked by their mutual reference to the light of God’s visage, important prayers or their *incipits*, and the prayer *Deus qui nobis signatus lumine vultus tui*, ascribed to Pope Innocent III, who allegedly composed it in honor of the Veronica, the cloth that preserved the miraculously imprinted image of Christ’s face.<sup>68</sup>

Like several other prayer books produced from the late thirteenth century forward that contain this office, the Butler Hours includes an indulgence in the form of a rubric granting forty days’ pardon for recitation of the prayer.<sup>69</sup> The Anglo-Norman French rubric reads, “Pope Innocent made this prayer to save and deliver sinners from punishment, and at the time he granted by mouth and confirmed to all who would say this prayer devoutly, forty days of pardon. And for the week this will amount to two hundred and eighty days, and this pardon will last for as long as the world exists” (fig. 13).<sup>70</sup> Following the rubric is Psalm 4:7, *Signatum est super nos lumen*

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67 See, for example, the De Lisle Hours (New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, MS G. 50 (originally ca. 1320–25); analyzed in Smith, *Art, Identity and Devotion*, esp. 58–81 and 152–67, whose image program for the Hours of the Virgin juxtaposes Passion scenes with an Ages of Man cycle equipped with moralizing Anglo-Norman French couplets; illuminated pages viewable via CORSAIR at <http://ica.themorgan.org/manuscript/thumbs/76993>, accessed 14 October 2018.

68 Solange Corbin, “Les offices de la Sainte Face,” *Bulletin des études portugaises et de l’Institut français au Portugal*, n.s. 11 (1947): 1–62.

69 Morgan, “Holy Face as Icon,” 150.

70 *Ly apostoile Inocent fist cest oresoun pur pecchurs sauver et diliverer de p[er]line, si ad graunté et de sa bouche confirmé a touz qe cest orison devotement dirount. xl jors de pardone. et ceo amountra la simag[n]e C.C. jours et xxiiii et cest pardoun durra taunt cum la secle dure*; Baltimore, WAM MS W. 105, fol. 14v. This transcription differs slightly from the one by Nigel

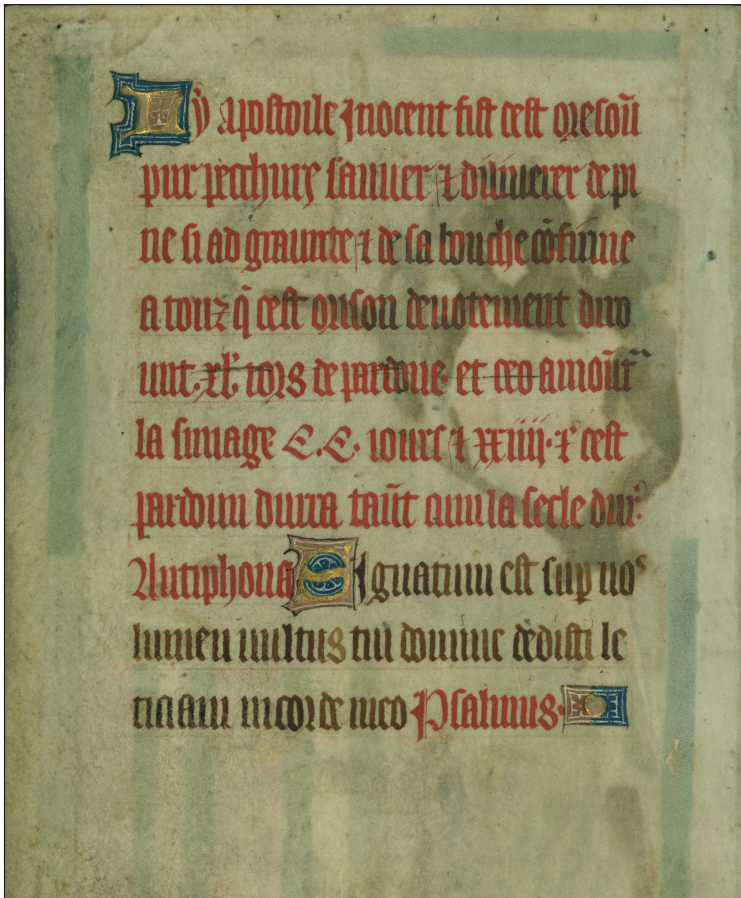


FIGURE 13. Anglo-Norman French rubric with an indulgence of Pope Innocent III; Psalm 4:7, Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 14v. Photo: Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

*vultus tui domine dedisti leticiam in corde meo*, “The light of thy countenance,

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Morgan and Daron Burrows in Morgan, “Holy Face as Icon,” 153–54. Burrows maintains convincingly that *simage* should be *simag[n]e*, or *simaine*—“week”—in this and several other surviving rubrics. As Delbert Russell has observed, *C.C. et xxiiii* should be *C.C. et .iiii. xx*—that is, *deux cent quatre vingts*, or 280 (personal correspondence with author, 9 October 2018).

Lord, is signed upon us: thou hast given gladness in my heart”—a staple of this office, and a potent expression of the desire to be “signed’ with the light of Christ’s face.”<sup>71</sup>

Immediately following this psalm verse is the rubric *Psalmus*. The facing page may have contained not a psalm, but rather the miniature showing the Butlers at Mass (see fig. 1). Thus, the Mass picture constituted a pictorial rubric, one that directed its noble beholders to recite the indulgenced Office of the Holy Face at the Elevation of the Eucharist.<sup>72</sup> One might even interpret the word *Psalmus* on the verso and the Mass picture on the recto as two parts of a single, rebus-like rubric—the first part *verbal*, and imbued with the timeless authority of Latin and Scripture, the second part *pictorial*, strongly personalized, and of the Butlers’ “moment.” More likely, the folios showing the Tree of Vices (see fig. 2) and the Crucifixion and Holy Face (see figs. 3 and 4) came between the indulgenced rubric and the Mass picture, in order to more effectively aid the book owner in preparing for the service. Taken together, richly painted miniatures and Latin and vernacular prayers and texts make plain the connection between devout contemplation of an image of the Holy Face and devout viewing of the consecrated Host. Indeed, if one viewed the Eucharist at the moment of consecration in the context of ocular communion, the divine grace that streamed into the eyes was held to “empty the soul of vice and refill it with virtue,” as Peter the Venerable (d. 1156) put it, a process both stimulated and given visual, material form by these prefatory leaves in the Butlers’ manuscript.<sup>73</sup>

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71 Sand, *Vision, Devotion, and Self-Representation*, 46.

72 For additional French and English manuscripts containing this indulgence in which the book owner is directed to recite the Office of the Holy Face during the Mass, see most recently Sand, *Vision, Devotion and Self-Representation*, 54–58; and Morgan, “Holy Face as Icon,” 153–55.

73 Peter the Venerable, *Contra Petrobrusianos*, 201; this translation from David F. Appleby, “The Priority of Sight According to Peter the Venerable,” *Mediaeval Studies* 60 (1998): 123–57 at 130. For ocular or spiritual communion, see Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 150; and Suzannah Biernoff, *Sight and Embodiment in the Middle Ages* (Houndmills, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 133–64. For ocular or spiritual communion as supported by imagery and texts in illuminated religious and devotional manuscripts, see Kumler, *Translating Truth*, 122–46; Smith,



The *psalmus* announced by the verbal-visual rubric, and written on the verso of the Mass picture, is Psalm 66, *Deus misereatur* (fig. 14). In numerous manuscripts containing the Office of the Holy Face, including several English volumes, this psalm is included in *incipit* form.<sup>74</sup> In the Butler Hours, by contrast, it is written out in its entirety. The page contains the text through the first two and a half words of verse 7; presumably the succeeding folio, now lost, contained the conclusion of this short psalm, as well as other texts or their *incipits* and the final prayer in the Office of the Holy Face, *Deus qui nobis signatus lumine vultus tui*. Psalm 66 reads as follows:

May God have mercy on us, and bless us: may he cause the light  
of his countenance to shine upon us, and may he have mercy on us.  
That we may know thy way upon earth: thy salvation in all nations.  
Let people confess to thee, O God: let all people give praise to thee.  
Let the nations be glad and rejoice: for thou judgest the people with  
justice, and directest the nations upon earth.  
Let the people, O God, confess to thee: let all the people give praise  
to thee:  
the earth hath yielded [her fruit. May God, our God bless us,  
may God bless us: and all the ends of the earth fear him.]  
(Psalm 66:2–7)

The central themes of Psalm 66—light, the sight of the Lord’s “shin[ing]” “countenance,” confession to and praise of God, and the Lord’s mercy toward his people—are echoed and complemented in the prefatory pictures and texts analyzed in this essay (see figs. 1–4). “Light” finds its most resonant pictorial analogs in the shimmering gilding that surrounds Christ’s visage in the Holy Face miniature, and in the tall lit taper that ensures the Butlers’ ability to see the elevated Eucharist in the Mass picture. The birds in the Tree of Vices ventriloquize both the sentiments of the Vices and the moral teachings of a chaplain or priest, addressing their audience in

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*Taymouth Hours*, 61–70; and Morgan, “Holy Face as Icon,” esp. 157–58, with additional bibliography.

74 Morgan, “Veronica’ Images”; Morgan, “Holy Face as Icon.”



FIGURE 14. Psalm 66, verses 2–7 (part), Butler Hours, England, ca. 1340–45. Baltimore, Walters Art Museum MS W. 105, fol. 15v. Photo: Walters Art Museum, Baltimore.

mid-fourteenth-century England's principal vernacular of religious instruction and devotional reading, and in the rhyming verse of much homiletic and didactic literature. Indeed, it is the voice of the priest, portrayed in identical vestments in the Tree of Vices and the Mass picture, which the book artisans appear to have materialized through the vivid images and vernacular texts on these prefatory leaves in the Butler Hours.

These images and texts explicate the nature and consequences of the Vices and the means of their remedy. They urged their Butler beholders toward penitent self-scrutiny, and, simultaneously, presented them to themselves as exemplars of devout comportment and virtuous sacramental viewing. Whether the Butlers contemplated these pictures and recited the Office of the Holy Face during the Mass, or at home in the context of personal devotion, they were reminded of the spiritual perils of sleeping through the service, and of the spiritual rewards of prayerful attention during its celebration.<sup>75</sup> If, as suggested at the beginning of this essay, it is William, second Lord Boteler, and Margaret Fitzalan who are represented in the Mass picture (see fig. 1), then the manuscript was likely originally designed in part to train the gaze, voice, conscience, and devout comportment and imagination of the praying youth portrayed in the initial in Lauds (see fig. 12), a figure probably intended to represent their son William, the future third baron.<sup>76</sup> The use of birds and animals as “teachers” in the prefatory series and the male gendering of the Vices support this idea.

Finally, it is worth noting here that, perhaps a generation or two after the making of the Butlers’ manuscript, the message of these pictures found vivid, if less personalized expression in the monumental, public medium of wall painting. In the later fourteenth-century Wheel of the Seven Deadly Sins in the church of St. Mary and St. Edmund, Ingatestone (Essex), Sloth has slept through the service, as confirmed by the presence of a devil and a church window behind his bed; while in the contemporary Wheel at St. George, Trotton (Sussex), Sloth dozes on a couch and has dropped his prayer book and rosary.<sup>77</sup>

These prefatory pages in their book of hours offered the Butlers the choice of several “little trees” that one might “establish in” oneself, to reprise the author of *De fructibus carnis et spiritus*. Perhaps a Tree of Virtues was portrayed on one of the folios missing from the sequence. Whether or

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75 For prayers at the Elevation and the varied contexts of their recitation by the laity, see Smith, *Taymouth Hours*, 64–65 and n26, with additional bibliography.

76 These identifications of the figures accord with the style-generated dating of the manuscript to ca. 1340–43 proposed in Dennison, “Fitzwarin Psalter,” 65.

77 E. W. Tristram, *English Wall Painting of the Fourteenth Century* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1955), 105, 185–86, 259.

not this was the case, it is clear that the program of the Butlers' *horae* operated not solely via binaries of good and evil, but also by means of a more subtle rhetoric, one that concedes human frailty and encourages personal aspiration to virtue, as well as acknowledging both the vices' perils and their perilous allure. Finally, as these deftly designed pictures and their allied texts affirm, the path to salvation is closed to the slothful.



## Appendix: The Prefatory Series in the Butler Hours

The order of the surviving folios given here reflects their possible order as of the early fourteenth century, as suggested by examination of the leaves with Abigail Quandt, 10/3/19. The folio numbers in parentheses are the ones assigned to these leaves in the later twentieth-century foliation of the manuscript. I am indebted to Abigail Quandt and Will Noel for sharing their earlier collation of the prefatory leaves, produced in January 2013.

- Resurrected Christ flanked by two “towers” containing heads representing the religious and lay hierarchies and pairs of laypeople (r) / Annunciation (v) (fol. 7)
- Annunciation to the Shepherds (r) / Journey of the Magi (v) (fol. 8)
- [Folio missing]
- [Folio missing]
- Sts. Peter and Paul (r) / Latin suffrage to St. Thomas à Becket (v) (fol. 11)
- Martyrdom of St. Thomas à Becket (r) / Anglo-Norman French rubric with an indulgence of Pope Innocent and Psalm 4:7 (v) (fol. 14)
- Dormition of the Virgin (r) / Tree of Vices (v) (fol. 9)
- Crucifixion, with the Virgin Mary and St. John the Evangelist (r) / Holy Face with Evangelist symbols and birds on three oak branches (v) (fol. 10)
- Butler family at Mass (r) / Psalm 66, part (v) (fol. 15)
- [Folio missing]
- Sts. John the Baptist and John the Evangelist (r) / Latin suffrage to Thomas, earl of Lancaster (d. 1322) (v) (fol. 13)
- [Folio missing]
- [Folio missing]
- Sts. Helena and Mary Magdalene (r) / Blank (v) (fol. 12)

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I dedicate this article to the memory of three early supporters and teachers, Ruth J. Dean (d. 2003), Brian J. Levy (d. 2004) and Claire Donovan (d. 2019). I remain humbly grateful for their intellectual generosity and their interest in and encouragement of my work on the Anglo-Norman French texts and vernacular theology in English illuminated religious and devotional manuscripts.

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