

CHRISTIANIZING CHRISTENDOM: ODO OF CHERITON'S SPANISH SERMONS

By

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To Megan – my bride and Samuel’s beautiful Mommy

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Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
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In the thirteenth century, the multicultural context of Castile-Leon posed significant challenges to understandings of what it actually meant to be a Christian. Churches were often made out of converted mosques, while Arabic still held considerable linguistic influence. In addition, clerical corruption was widespread enough to elicit dissatisfaction in contemporary documents. These circumstances were likely disconcerting to Christians who had relocated from southern France or had been repatriated from Visigothic Arian Christianity. The sermons of Odo of Cheriton, a preacher and doctor of theology who taught in the Spanish cities of Palencia and Salamanca during the 1220s, show an attempt to address these issues. Though he had a doctorate from the University of Paris, Odo's treatments of Islam and clerical corruption were not loftily detached doctrines pronounced as from a Parisian classroom, but were attempts tempered by interactions with local people to address the question of what constituted Christianity in the unique context of thirteenth-century Spain.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In the cities of thirteenth-century Castile-Leon in central Spain, mosques often housed Christian sanctuaries and church bells signaling the beginning of mass rang from minarets whence muezzins once called.¹ As a consequence, Christian Gothic architecture was sometimes absent in major cities conquered by the *Reconquista* for well over a century.² Even the churches that were not simply converted mosques frequently imitated Islamic art styles.³ Characteristically Islamic architecture, called *mudejar* after the term for Muslims living under Christian rule, appeared in the Chapel of Talavera in Salamanca where services took place underneath a *qubba*, or Arabic-styled dome. The *mudejar* style was also used in Jewish synagogues, creating a space in which Jewish, Muslim, and Christian religious structures had such structural similarity as to be ostensibly indistinct.⁴

¹ The primary example of a minaret turned into a bell tower in Castile is in Toledo at the church of Santiago del Arrabal. For an introduction to the significance of Mudejar art in Castile-Leon and the unique Spanish identity it came to symbolize, see Gonzalo M. Borrás Gualis, "Mudejar: An Alternative Architectural System in the Castillian Urban Repopulation Model," *Medieval Encounters* 12 (2006): 329-340. Gualis, 334 discusses several churches, primarily in Toledo, that were once mosques and retained their characteristically Muslim architecture, such as the churches of San Salvador, San Sebastián, and San Lucas. John Tolan provides a fine background to the angst caused by aural symbols of each religion (the call to prayer and the bell tower) that coexisted in Spanish cities in *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), 147-160.

² Construction on Toledo's Gothic cathedral did not begin until 1226, nearly 150 years after Christian government assumed rule in 1085. See Gualis, 334.

³ This is the case in the interior of the Hospital del Rey built in Burgos by Alfonso VIII for pilgrims traveling to Santiago de Compostela, which had Mudejar capitals and thirteenth-century Arabic inscriptions. Albert F. Calvert, *Leon, Burgos, and Salamanca: A Historical and Descriptive Account*, (New, York: John Lane Company, 1908), 77.

⁴ Examples of synagogues converted into churches include the Toledan Synagogue Nuestra Señora del Transito and the Ibn Shoshan synagogue, which became the church of Santa Maria la Blanca in 1405, and contained wall decorations that, according to Richard Ettinghausen, "could have adorned a Muslim building." See Richard Ettinghausen, et al., *Islamic Art and Architecture, 650-1250*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 300. It is noteworthy that *Mudejar* art likely became a ubiquitous reminder of the Muslim military success that brought it to Spain. Islamic influence might also have reminded Christians of their Visigothic antecedents whose sins were thought by some to have incurred the Muslim invasion.

The liturgies performed inside these buildings also reveal diverse exemplars. The Mozarabic rite, a liturgy practiced by Christians who remained in Iberia under Muslim rule, continued in some parts of Iberia until the sixteenth century.⁵ Consequently, prayers and antiphons surviving from Arian Visigothic Christianity were crystallized from before the Muslim conquest and not updated with a Roman liturgy until the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.⁶ Evidence of religious practices that predate even Visigothic Christianity is evident in accounts of soldiers consulting the flight of birds after hearing mass prior to battle.⁷ Such confluence of traditions also produced situations in which Saint Ginés de la Jara performed miracles for both Christians and Muslims, the latter sometimes crossing into Christian Murcia to visit Saint Gines' sanctuary.⁸

Examples of this include the *Prophetic Chronicle*, which laments how Spain was lost because of the sins of its Christian inhabitants, and the *Chronicle of Alfonso III*, which described Visigothic kings such as Witiza as disgraceful and reprobate, preventing councils from convening and forcing clergy to take wives, becoming "the cause of Spain's ruin." Kenneth Baxter Wolf, translator, *Conquerors and Chroniclers of Early Medieval Spain*, (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1999), 164. See also Joseph O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2003), 5.

⁵ Lynette Bosch, *Art, Liturgy, and Legend in Renaissance Toledo: The Mendoza and the Iglesia Primada*, (University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 2000), 59-60.

⁶ For a discussion of how texts like the *Ceremonial of Cardeña* eventually replaced Visigothic prayer books, see O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 186. Roger Collins documents a manuscript containing the Mozarabic liturgy whose musical notations were updated to the Roman version in "Continuity and Loss in Medieval Spanish Culture: The Evidence of MS Silos, Archivo Monástico 4," in *Medieval Spain: Culture, Conflict, and Coexistence: Studies in Honor of Angus Mackay*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 12-13. Other Visigothic liturgical practices that distinguished Christianity in Spain included burning incense to welcome the king to mass before battle and carrying a cross before the army into battle, a custom Visigoths inherited from Christian Roman Emperors (most famously, Constantine). These practices are described in the Visigothic *Liber Ordinum*. See O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 185 for a more complete discussion of the changes that took place in liturgical preparations for battle.

⁷ O'Callaghan, 190 describes how this happened with the militia of Ávila. See also the *Poem of the Cid*, which begins by describing "a bird of happy augury and...one of evil omen" as the Cid approaches Burgos: Lesley Bird Simpson, translator, *The Poem of the Cid*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 6.

⁸ See Angus MacKay, "Religion, Culture, and Ideology on the Late Medieval Castilian-Granadan Frontier," in *Medieval Frontier Societies*, Robert Bartlett and Angus MacKay, editors, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), 221.

Quotidian and legal language also evinced the heterogeneous situation where elements of Arabic survived well into the thirteenth century.⁹ In Castile, Alfonso VIII minted coinage in Arabic, communicating his power in local terms and describing the pope as the *imam* of Christianity.¹⁰ For settlers from France and Northern Spain who came to populate recently Christianized areas, the landscape, language, and culture of the city differed foundationally from the Christendom they knew.¹¹ This situation continued for several centuries so that the extreme ascetic and heretic, Fray Alonso de Mella,¹² fleeing to Granada in the mid-fifteenth century, could write to John II informing him of his discovery that the Muslims there were in fact Christians who worshipped the same God.¹³ The cultural markers of art and architecture, and even the religious doctrines that defined Christianity in much of Western Europe were replaced by the diversity of thirteenth-century Castile-Leon.

⁹ Romance language in legal records survives from the early thirteenth century with observable Arabic vocabulary influences as noted by Ray Harris Northall, "Aspects of Official Language Usage in Castile and León: Latin and the Vernacular in the Early Thirteenth Century," in *Medieval Iberia: Changing Societies and Cultures in Contact and Transition*, edited by Ivy A. Corfis and Ray Harris-Northall (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Tamesis 2007), 165-174. Secondary literature has perpetuated the idea that Alfonso X made a somewhat rapid transition for legal records from Latin to Romance. However, Harris-Northall convincingly challenges this paradigm with a study of early to mid- thirteenth-century legal records that evinces their original composition in a Romance dialect with Arabic influences. Daily language comes from legal documents in the early thirteenth century that were in fact Latinized. However, the sections that claim to recount someone's speech in the manner in which they said it immediately shift to Romance

¹⁰ Ettinghausen, et al., 300.

¹¹ For background on repopulation in al-Andalus, see Joseph F. O'Callaghan, "Reconquest and Repopulation" in *Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia*, ed. by Michael Gerli (New York: Routledge, 2003), 697-700.

¹² Henry Charles Lea writes it is likely that Alonso's heresy was similar to the *Fraticelli* movement that openly opposed the church in its clergy's personal acquisition of wealth. See Henry Charles Lea, *A History of the Inquisition of the Middle Ages*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 169; Norman Roth, *Conversos, Inquisition and the Expulsion of the Jews from Spain*, (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2002), 93.

¹³ MacKay, 222.

In this context where different religions might easily have appeared indistinct, what constituted Christianity? The sermons of Odo of Cheriton, a preacher and doctor of theology who taught in Palencia and Salamanca during the 1220s, reflect an attempt to address this question. Odo makes several references to Spanish Christianity that may be reiterations of French stereotypes, but nevertheless reveal an effort to define the limits of Christianity. As part of this milieu, the integration of Muslim and Christian language and art formed a challenging situation in which Odo perceived the need to distinguish between Christianity and Islam. In the works he wrote while in Spain, Odo put Islam inside a Christian framework, making it understandable to a real laity tasked with understanding the palpable military success and pervasive presence of Islam in Castile-Leon. Heretical movements like Catharism in southern France were definitively condemned as such by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.¹⁴ However, Odo was dealing with phenomena he perceived to be just as non-Christian that masqueraded as piety and wisdom. It was thus exceptionally important to define the parameters of Christendom in order to establish it within Arabicized territory.

While primary evidence shows that Odo served on the faculty of the universities in Palencia and Salamanca, this project is chiefly concerned with his sermons intended for a lay audience. Odo's pragmatic intentions are apparent from the fact that, as a highly educated doctor of theology, he did not exhort the laity using arguments constructed within the Parisian university mindset. Rather, he used quotidian examples that concerned contemporary Christians in Castile-Leon, referring, for instance, to the

¹⁴ Canon 3 condemns heresies of all names. The Fourth Lateran Council mainly reinforced legislation on heresy passed by the Third Lateran Council in 1179.

uselessness of learning the Arabic language, and his despair at how many theology students were abandoning their studies for Arabic wisdom.¹⁵

It is helpful to note that the stories and examples Odo gives do not necessarily provide a direct guide to everyday life in Palencia and Salamanca. We cannot know whence Odo obtained all of his examples and how accurately they were meant to reflect the conditions of the city.¹⁶ While Odo's sermons do provide helpful information and convey certain characteristics of his era, it is also necessary to treat his writings and his historical context as having more of a conversational relationship where each influenced the other. The historian studying medieval sermons and *exempla* is always at risk of taking the preacher at face value as a chronicler consciously trying to crystallize medieval life rather than as a spiritual shepherd trying to influence and encourage his flock. Odo was writing not simply a report of what he saw, but was attempting to affect his audience through the performance of his sermon in the ritual of the mass.¹⁷ He interacted with contemporary motivations and preconceptions in constructing his

¹⁵ A.C. Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work of Odo of Cheriton," DPhil thesis, (Oxford, 1936), 106.

¹⁶ There has been considerable historiographic debate on the nature of written sermons as primary sources and how much they convey about the act of worship or quotidian life in the Middle Ages. On the one hand, they seem to give an untainted view into what a preacher actually said and the precise issues he addressed and even local examples he chose to use. On the other hand, sermon manuscripts were usually heavily edited and not produced with the intent of preserving an historical moment, but of being useful to future preachers in as broad a context as possible. See *iter alia*, A. Lecoy de la Marche, *La Chaire Française au Moyen Age, Specialement au XIIIe siècle d'après les Manuscrits Contemporains*. (Paris, 1886); L.-J. Bataillon, "Approaches to the Study of Medieval Sermons," in *La Prédication au XIIIe siècle en France et Italie* (Aldershot, 1993), essay 1; D. L. d'Avray, *The Preaching of the Friars: Sermons Diffused from Paris before 1300*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985); Beverly Kienzle, editor, *The Sermon*, Typologie des Sources des Moyen Âge Occidental, Fascicules, 81–83, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2000). Most recently, Valentina Berardini has given a description of how elements of performance were a means of communicating to the audience through the sermon, much in the same way as through the theatre: Valentina Berardini, "Discovering Performance Indicators in Late Medieval Sermons," *Medieval Sermon Studies* 54 (2010), 75-86.

¹⁷ Berardini Valentina, "Discovering Performance Indicators in Late Medieval Sermons," *Medieval Sermon Studies* 54 (2010), 75-86; Beverly Kienzle, "Medieval Sermons and their Performance: Theory and Record," in *Preachers, Sermon and Society*, ed. by C. Muessig (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 89-123.

sermon and conveying it to his audience. Our conclusions must account for the presence of rhetoric and realize that the sermon as it survives in written form is not how the laity saw and heard it. Rather, we simply have what Odo edited and preserved as a tool for future clerics – a valuable and revealing resource in its own right when approached through these conditions. In any event, obtaining a picture of the laity in Castile-Leon via Odo's sermons is not the goal of this project. Its concern is instead the way Odo perceived his audience and their surroundings and the kinds of definitions and boundaries he thought it necessary to make for Spanish Christianity. Amidst cultural syntheses that blurred religious distinctions, Odo attempted to construct sharper borders for Spanish Christianity. He made it his goal to Christianize Christendom through homiletic references to Spanish culture, ecclesiastical customs, Islam, and Arabic in his sermons. His experiences in England and France were necessary components of the definitions he established. Thus, as a first step in this process, it is appropriate to trace Odo's own background as a foreigner to Spain.

CHAPTER 2 BACKGROUND AND SETTING

Odo of Cheriton's Background

Odo of Cheriton was born sometime in the 1180s to a wealthy family in Kent. His family took the name of Cheriton from their estate, which had existed since at least 1157 after they moved over from Normandy. Not much is recorded about Odo's early life other than that he earned a Master's degree in theology from Paris sometime before 1210. It is most likely that he preached at the small parish church of St. Martin's in Cheriton since Pipe Rolls from 1210 indicate that his father, William, paid a hawk for Odo to have custody of the church.¹ Contrary to assumptions in earlier scholarship, Odo was not a monk, but a member of the secular clergy as we can tell from his ownership of land in Kent.² Heir to a sizeable estate of five knights' fees (two and a half being in Cheriton), Odo had the financial resources to fund an education that culminated in his becoming a doctor of theology sometime before 1219.³ In 1220, Odo's name disappears from English records.

Enzo Franchini is the only scholar to illuminate this gap in the sources, which stretches over a twelve-year period from 1220 to 1232. Odo's principal modern biographer, A. C. Friend, suggests Odo likely spent at least some of these years in

¹ Franchini, 91; Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work of Odo of Cheriton," 41.

² Late nineteenth-century scholars such as Leopold Hervieux thought Odo was a Dominican, perhaps because of the time he spent in Toulouse, the city where Dominic founded the order: Léopold Hervieux, *Études de Cheriton et ses Dérivés*, (Firmin-Didot and Company, 1896), 587-713.

³ Prévostin of Cremona was likely his instructor at Paris since their dates align and Odo borrows from Prévostin in much of his early work. This is important in tracing Odo's hatred for useless philosophy, which we will encounter below. Prévostin criticized scholars and the cloistered religious for not contributing to the spiritual and intellectual development of their communities, but instead writing pointless works for fame or monetary profit. See Stephen Ferruolo, *The Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and their Critics 1100-1215*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), 231; Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work of Odo of Cheriton," 92.

Toulouse since he uses Matthew 24:27 in his sermon for the Invention of the Cross, a text only used in the south. However, Friend remarks in a footnote that he has not checked sacramentaries from Spain.⁴ As Franchini points out, these sacramentaries do indeed contain the verse, leaving open the possibility that Odo was in Spain at this time.⁵ Legal documents from cathedral archives in the Castilian city of Palencia and the Leonese city of Salamanca confirm this explanation for the lacuna in Friend's analysis of English sources. Shortly after Odo's disappearance from English tax records, his name appears in 1222 as a witness on a legal document from Palencia as "*magistri Odonis, canonici palentini*."⁶ He subsequently signed a document in Palencia with the seal of the Bishop of Tello, founder of the *Studium Generale* there, suggesting Odo had become an influential member of the scholastic and theological community in Iberia.⁷ One and a half years later, Odo's name appears as canon on another legal document signed in Palencia in 1223. After this year, Odo does not appear in Palencian documents. However, a Salamancan bill of sale on a house that Odo purchased in 1225 indicates his presence there. In 1229, Odo bought a few more houses (being from a wealthy Norman family). As soon as his father died in 1232, leaving Odo his entire estate, a receipt of Odo's sale of these houses marks his permanent departure from Spain. This same year, Odo's name reappears in English tax documents.

⁴ Franchini, 98.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid, 105.

⁷ According to Julio Gonzalez, foreign preachers gained a high level of social capital. Julio González, *El Reino de Castilla en la Época de Alfonso VIII*, 3 vols., (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1960), 633.

Franchini's timeline of Odo's residence aligns with significant events in the history of Spanish Universities. In 1220, while the young University at Palencia was financially struggling, Pope Honorius III ordered that a portion of tithes be used to pay for its teachers' salaries over the next five years. The order indicated that four new faculty should be hired – a logician, lawyer, grammarian, and theologian. Since primary evidence of Odo's life in England disappears in this year, Franchini argues Odo was the theologian hired at Palencia. Since Odo earned his doctorate at the University of Paris, Franchini's theory is congruent with the fact that Palencia recruited from Paris in an effort to replicate its emphasis on the liberal arts. The failure to receive papal support five years later in 1225 contributed to the university's decline and eventual close sometime before the end of the thirteenth century.⁸

Franchini suggests that Odo left Palencia in 1225 for the University at Salamanca, which also had an emphasis on the liberal arts as it absorbed many of the students and faculty from Palencia. However, the document that shows Odo moved from Palencia to Salamanca mentions his house there in 1222, a few years too early for Franchini's theory. Franchini explains this by noting that this entry in the Archives of the Salamanca Cathedral is the only one for 1222 that uses Arabic instead of Roman numerals, and was most likely changed by a later copyist. Additionally, the date format runs year, day, month, while that order is reversed in most other entries. The fact that the copyist wrote the date over a part of the parchment that had been scratched off confirms his theory of a later correction, suggesting this contradiction to Franchini's theory is most likely a scribal error.

⁸ An attempt to revive the university in 1263 met with failure and was probably the last effort of its kind. See E. Michael Gerli, editor, *Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia*, (New York: Routledge, 2003) 818.

According to legal sources, Odo was a canon in both Palencia and Salamanca; the charter of Odo's sale of some houses in 1232 is in the Cathedral of Salamanca archives and refers to Odo simply as *canonigo*. This makes it seem that he undertook a canonship at Salamanca after serving the same office in Palencia. If the Salamancan document was referring to his canonship in Palencia, one would expect it to specify that, rather than simply calling him *canonigo*. After returning to England in 1232 to attend to legal matters of inheritance and look after his estate, Odo did not produce any new writings, but most likely edited the sermon collections he had already written. No documents besides tax records suggest any further activity until his death in 1246-7 when his younger brother, Waleran, declared to be his heir.⁹

While Odo's presence in Castile is evident, Bella Millet has also found evidence of Odo's familiarity with Provençal lyrics. Commonly known as *chansons de femme*, these lyrics appear in Odo's collection of *Sermones de Festis*, which he composed between 1225 and 1230. His familiarity with verse from southern France during these years may indicate that Odo continued to travel while he was in Iberia, most likely for preaching purposes. At the very least, it suggests Odo was familiar enough with cultural items like popular music that migrated from southern France to manipulate them in his sermons. This is significant for our understanding of the extent to which Odo was able to engage with contemporary culture in his preaching, a topic we will address below.

⁹ Odo's continued legacy in Spain also suggests his involvement there. A fourteenth-century manuscript of an exposition on *Canticles* from the library of the Cathedral of Burgo de Osma identifies Odo as its author and is the only extant copy of this exposition. See Franchini, 64. The specific location of its ascription to Odo is codex 176 fol. 11b. That this work survived in Spain and not in France or England testifies to his extensive work there.

Odo's Historical Setting

It is worth situating Odo's work in relation to this context of Dominican preaching. Odo wrote and delivered his sermons on the cusp of the surge of Franciscan and Dominican preaching that followed the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. The milieu in Paris when Odo received his education there is detectable in this council's emphasis on reforming the clergy and distinguishing boundaries between Christians and non-Christians.¹⁰ Despite the ban on the creation of new orders enacted at the Fourth Lateran, the Pope officially recognized the Dominicans and Franciscans shortly thereafter as a means of carrying out this goal. Odo's work closely resembles that of these preaching orders, since he intended his edited collections for their use. His sermons are full of illustrations and references to local happenings. One example where a priest steps into a fire and remains unburned is not material historians can take at face value, but nevertheless reveals his desire to provide his preaching with an accessible, local flavor that is common in Dominican preaching. In the words of A.C. Friend,

“[Odo] was ready to welcome a new order of simple preachers, who would help the poor and despised. In all his writing this is the only note of hope which he expresses, and his sermons rude and simple, abounding in homely illustrations, made ready the way for the popular style of preaching which we associate with the early Dominicans.”¹¹

¹⁰ The Fourth Lateran Council made efforts to weed corruption out of its own ranks. Canon 31 outlawed transferring a canonship to the son of someone who was already a canon. Canon 63 and 64 declared it simony to charge money for ordaining bishops, abbots, and clerics and receiving nuns into convents. As mentioned above, Canon 3 gave guidelines on dealing with heresy. Canon 68 required Jews and Muslims to wear clothing that distinguished them from Christians and forbade them from appearing in public on the last three days of Holy Week and Easter Sunday. Canons 67 and 69-70 treat Christian relations with Jews.

¹¹ Friend, *Odo of Cheriton*, 119.

Robin Vose has convincingly dispelled the idea that Dominicans had a conscious goal of preaching to the infidel. While written documents like the order's constitution may idealize conversion, examples of Dominicans actually preaching to non-Christians are rare. Instead, Vose argues that Dominicans concentrated on buttressing Catholic doctrine among the laity and preserving their faith by denouncing heresies.¹² Thus, instead of breaking down walls between Christians, Muslims, and Jews, Dominicans were concerned with reinforcing the partitions that gave definition to the uniqueness of Christianity.

A principle way of doing this was to incite Christians to crusade against or repopulate Muslim territory, inspiring a myriad of sermons devoted to anti-Islamic rhetoric. These sermons proclaimed the immense riches obtainable from retaking Muslim territory that merely reflected the spiritual blessing of martyrdom and eternal reward in heaven.¹³ Indeed, Paschal II and Archbishop Juan of Toledo extended to Spanish soldiers the remission of all sins that Urban II had proclaimed for those crusading in the Holy Land. Theological arguments against Islam and laments over the tragedy of Christian land being taken by the infidel were characteristic of these sermons, which were quite successful at accomplishing their purpose of mobilizing Christian military forces. The Mendicant preachers, highly noted for their enthusiasm in preaching crusade, began to be influential on a wide level around the end of the 1220s, shortly after Odo preached and composed his sermons.¹⁴

¹² Robin Vose, *Dominicans, Muslims, and Jews in the Medieval Crown of Aragon*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 54.

¹³ See Joseph F. O'Callaghan, *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 270, note 3.

¹⁴ See Christoph Maier, *Preaching the Crusades: Mendicant Friars and the Cross in the Thirteenth Century*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 20. Maier notes that "Plans to use the

These contextual elements help considerably in understanding the purpose of Odo's work and its importance to the historian. The references Odo makes to Islam and Spain show different goals that are concerned with engaging Christians intellectually and theologically concerning the nature of their religion.¹⁵ More importantly, Odo's treatments of Islam and clerical corruption were not loftily detached doctrines pronounced as from a Parisian classroom, but were tempered by interactions with local people. His comments on corrupt bishops, such as those who neglect their flocks, but are eager to acquire more responsibility when asked to hurry to Toledo, were reactions to conditions he encountered on the ground in Castile-Leon. In his complaint about the number of people leaving theological pursuits to study the *lex Sarracenorum*, one may perceive Odo's participation in local events that motivated him to craft responses to Islam fitted for his community. These concerns based on local experiences emerge from broader anxieties for the state of Christendom in Iberia. While Mendicants carried out the mission to strengthen Spanish Christendom by motivating the conquest of Muslim territory, Odo did so by buttressing the faith of individuals in his community.

mendicant orders as preachers of the cross in a systematic manner could not have been made until the late 1220s, when the two orders had become established throughout the whole of Christendom; in addition, Pope Gregory IX does not seem to have been convinced of the friars' usefulness and reliability as papal agents until after they had shown themselves to be faithful followers of the papacy during the struggles between the pope and the emperor in Italy at the end of the 1220s."

¹⁵ These goals were both preventative in keeping Christians from the sway of Islam and reformatory by interacting with Visigothic Christians who had lived in Castile-Leon for generations. It is important to consider that the Roman church was tasked not only with taking and populating Muslim territory, but educating the pre-Islamic, Arian population. It is not likely that Arian theology was pervasive or perhaps even detectable at this time, but the liturgical traditions that had survived through the Muslim conquest are of interest to us here. Several elements of liturgy and theology had either changed or were inconsonant with Roman Christianity, such that repatriating old Christians to bring their beliefs in line with those of Rome became a significant task. See, for example, O'Callaghan's description of the change in liturgy from the Mozarabic (Christians living under Muslim rule) church to the Roman one in *Reconquest and Crusade in Medieval Spain*, 186.

In trying to understand Odo's intentions with his work, it is important to root our analysis in the context in which Odo was writing – early thirteenth-century Castile-Leon. While I have already attempted to set the scene of interacting religions, languages, and cultures in thirteenth-century Spain, another pervasive element of this context was the relationship between ecclesiastical and political power. In addition to the Christians who had lived under Muslim rule for several centuries, Christians in Northern Iberia came to Southern Castile-Leon as part of consistent repopulation efforts.

Medieval Spanish Christians, a people always living on a frontier, developed a pioneer psychology through the Reconquest and seemed prepared at any time to move from the more peaceful and settled areas of the north in the expectation of finding a better life in the south.¹⁶

In 1228, John of Abbeville, whom Pope Gregory IX had sent to Spain as a legate, described Castile as a “virgin territory untouched by the spirit of the Fourth Lateran Council.”¹⁷ Peter Linehan's work on this topic expands the description by claiming the situation remained that way until John of Abbeville's “spiritual heir,” Pedro de Albalat, arrived.¹⁸ While it is true that the Castilian diocese abstained from meeting for yearly local councils as required by Lateran IV, extrapolating that Castile was untouched territory for as long as Linehan does is problematic. Franchini notes that his work on university faculty has significant implications on our understanding of the richness of the intellectual climate in Castile and concludes that it is misguided to understand Castile as

¹⁶ O'Callaghan, “Reconquest and Repopulation,” 700.

¹⁷ Linehan discusses Abbeville's impressions of and work in Castile in detail: Peter Linehan, “Councils and Synods in Thirteenth-Century Castile and Aragon,” in *Councils and Assemblies: Papers Read at the Eighth Summer Meeting and the Ninth Winter Meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, edited by G. J. Cuming and Derek Baker, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1971), 101-112.

¹⁸ Pedro would be the last papal legate sent to Spain for this purpose for the rest of the thirteenth century. See Linehan, 101.

free of the reform propagated at the Fourth Lateran Council.¹⁹ Matthew Bentley also gives a more holistic depiction of Castile after Lateran IV as a region that had to establish “a completely new Christian church” and probably struggled to sustain regular diocesan councils and synods.²⁰ It is in the context of this need to establish the church and sustain its activity that Odo’s work makes the most sense and holds considerable value for revealing what Christian leaders saw as the nuclei of the faith.

¹⁹ Franchini, 113.

²⁰ Matthew Bentley, “Lateran Reforms” in *Medieval Iberia: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Michael Gerli, (New York: Routledge, 2003), 463. Bentley argues that, in the foundation of new schools, universities, and religious orders, the effects of the reforms required by Lateran IV, “were as evident in Castile as they were elsewhere.”

CHAPTER 4 REFERENCES TO SPANISH LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Having looked at Odo's life, we will now consider the works he composed in Spain, particularly the *exempla* within the context of their sermons. These sermons not only reveal what he wanted to reinforce, but what he thought were nonessential components in the Spanish Christianization effort. Odo would have been familiar with enforcing royal and ecclesial legislation since his father was one of three people sent by King John to investigate discord that had caused damage to church property in Kent.¹ In the somewhat similar situation in Spain, Odo's task lay in reconciling the diversity of Castile-Leon with the new supremacy of Christendom there. Here, we can see him doing the theological work for his congregation, negotiating what was important and what was nonessential for the definition and boundaries of Christianity.

Linguistic References

Though his ownership of land indicates that he was not a member of a preaching order, Odo nonetheless traveled and preached in Spain and southern France shortly after he gained the degree of doctor.² This is evident from the references to Spanish language and culture *Sermones in Epistolas* (1224), the *Sermones de Festis* (after 1225), and the *Fables* (after 1225), which we will analyze further below. Considering the fact that Odo talks about his own experience on a pilgrimage and also mentions the Roncesvalles hospital, it is likely that he followed the standard route to Santiago de

¹ Friend, 39.

² We know he was a doctor by 1219 because it was then that he finished his first set of sermons, the *Sermones Dominicales*, in which he humbly refers to himself as "Ego Odo de Ciretonia, doctor ecclesiae minimus" (preserved in Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.15.22, folio 12).

Compostela.³ With this in mind, we might note that his background was deeply rooted in travel across all of Western Europe. The references he makes to Spanish culture, then, were as an outsider who spent enough time in Spain to become familiar with the religious setting there.

Odo refers to Spanish customs and language mostly in the fables interspersed throughout his sermons, the collection of which was finished after 1225. Several of these references are simply to situations around him that one would expect from someone living in Castile-Leon. He mentions the Spanish name for a certain bird (St. Martin's⁴), the presence of Dominican friars in Spain,⁵ a popular Spanish name (Poncia⁶), and a sermon text for the Invention of the Cross only used south of the Loire.⁷ The more pertinent of these observations, for our purposes, have to do with the nature of interactions between clergy and laity. For instance, Odo characterizes the Navarrese city of Roncesvalles (a popular stop on the standard pilgrimage route to Santiago de Compostela that Odo's audience would have likely known firsthand) as a place whence corrupt pardoners set out to extort laypeople's money for their own use.⁸ In the *Sermones in Epistolas*, he mentions how some priests neglect their flock while at home, but will eagerly rise to the occasion when their bishop calls them to "hurry to Rome, go

³ Franchini, 96.

⁴ John C. Jacobs, *The Fables of Odo of Cheriton*, Syracuse (Syracuse University Press, 1985), 68-69.

⁵ Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 66.

⁶ Odo of Cheriton, *Fabulae*, 16506 fol. 265, Latin Manuscript Collection, National Library of France, Paris. Cited in Friend, 65.

⁷ Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 66.

⁸ Friend, *Analogues*, 387.

to Toledo.”⁹ Again, Odo tells of how a canon resigned from his post, saying that if he had the chance to wish any evil upon his worst enemy, he would wish him to be a canon. In these comments, Odo mirrors the zeal of the Fourth Lateran Council for ridding the ecclesiastical ranks of corruption.¹⁰ Reform was a central part of Odo’s preaching in Spain. The notion of what was central to conceptions of Christian identity arises again here in that Odo was willing to call for change not only on the part of clerics, but even on certain theological points as well.

Spanish Ecclesiastical Custom

One of the more revealing comments about Spanish Christianity comes when Odo explains that, “In Spain, it is necessary to kiss the hand of the bishops,” though he advises against such a practice, “lest they [the priests] be tempted in this way.”¹¹ In the next sentence, Odo advises bishops not to desire honor through ascendancy, but to “receive the obedience of men with fear.”¹² As we have seen, clerical corruption is a common theme throughout Odo’s writing and it is no surprise to encounter it here. However, this example describes a religious practice between clergy and laity that had significant connotations in Spanish culture. Here, it is important to keep in mind the public, symbolic nature of the mass ritual. Its enactment was a process that attempted to enforce categories and boundaries. It is likely that kissing the Bishop’s hands became part of this enactment that enforced social demarcations. The symbolic

⁹ Lincoln Cathedral, MS 11, fol. 75.

¹⁰ See, for example, canons 31 and 63.

¹¹ “In Hispania necesse est osculari manus episcopi, qui forsitan quandoque fuit in aliquo loco ad presens tacendo nisi sic fiat scandalizantur.” Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.15.22, fol. 195, col. 1. Translation mine.

¹² “set cum timore obsequium hominum recipere.” Ibid.

practice of a vassal kissing the lord's mouth and placing his hand within those of the lord's even existed in French kinship rituals. Importantly for this project, David Hanlon documents how, in western Iberian practice, these two acts "are conflated into a kissing of the hands, rendering the 'vassal's gesture of humility...much more pronounced."¹³ While a symbolic ceremony between two people in a social relationship of vassal and lord was one thing, importing the practice, with all of its connotations of servitude, to a religious context likely alarmed Odo. Whether we can truly trace these practices to Muslim influence, Odo perhaps perceived as much in the unfamiliarity it had to him as an English Christian trained in Paris. The symbolism of subjection to the bishop was also an undesirable picture for Odo's campaign against clerical corruption.¹⁴

This *exemplum* finds a counterpart in the first story in Odo's collection of fables that discusses the gravity of a bishopric. Here, he relates an exemplum wherein the trees elect a king, each type of tree being reluctant to accept the weighty responsibility. It is finally the dry and unqualified thorn bush that accepts the offer, only to consume the trees that had entrusted themselves to him when he finally burns to ash. Odo's practical application of this tale is that ecclesiastical positions, particularly the bishopric, should be considered carefully. In a connected story (similar to that of the canon of Toro mentioned above), Odo relates how a canon of Toledo refused a bishopric when it

¹³ David Hanlon, "Islam and Stereotypical Discourse in Medieval Castile and León," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 30 (2000), 486.

¹⁴ Though it occurs several years later, a fifteenth-century public ritual of vassalage in Aragon differentiates between the actions of representatives from the Christian and *mudejar* communities. While Christians pledged vassalage with the hands and mouth, the *mudejar* did so by kissing the lord's shoulder. The difference between Christian and Muslim rituals in this context may suggest the Islamic origin of kissing the hands as a sign of servitude in this particular context. In cataloging several of these vassalage rituals, both Jacques Le Goff and Michael Harney believe Muslim influence to be the case. See Jacques Le Goff, "The Symbolic Ritual of Vassalage," in *Time, Work, and culture in the Middle Ages* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 242; Michael Harney, *Kinship and Polity in the "Poema de mio Cid,"* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Purdue University Press, 1993) 224-228.

was offered to him because, if he had counted himself among the bishops, he would have considered himself “counted among the damned.”¹⁵ Perhaps Odo had the custom of kissing the bishop’s hand in mind when he wrote “The Trees Elect a King.”¹⁶ In any event, one can see how the office of bishop held great significance in Odo’s opinion, not only in its hierarchical position, but in serving the bishopric and setting an example of humility.

However, not all of Odo’s strategies for reinforcing Christian boundaries followed orthodox doctrine. For example, he dismissed the story of the Sudarium, which Catholic tradition claimed Christ had used to wipe his face during the procession to Calvary, miraculously marking it with his image. “But,” Odo declared in one of the sermons he chose to edit and preserve, “I think it more likely that Veronica had the face of Jesus painted upon her cloth.”¹⁷ Odo’s position on this miracle is not insignificant since the Veronica cloth held particular value for proof of the Catholic doctrine regarding Christ’s human nature. The historical context indicates that Odo was directly contradicting the command of Pope Innocent III, who carried the Veronica cloth in a procession in 1216 and prescribed remembering in a specific prayer.¹⁸ In another instance, Odo departed from Catholic doctrine in declaring that the preaching of the word was more important

¹⁵ Jacobs, 69. “Si fuissem de numero episcoporum, fuissem de numero dampnandorum.” From Léopold Hervieux, *Les Fabulistes Latins*, (Firmin-Didot and Company, 1896) 176.

¹⁶ “The Trees Elect a King” was part of the *exempla* collection he later revised and compiled for the benefit of preachers. Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 68.

¹⁷ *Set uerius credo quod similitudinem [Ihesus] presentis predicta mulier eius figuram in telam fecit depingi.* In *Sermones de Festis*, MS Egerton 2890, fol. 196. Translation by A.C. Friend in “Life and Unpublished Work,” 82.

¹⁸ Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 82.

than the service of mass, which included the performance of the Eucharist.¹⁹ The centrality of the sermon would become controversial during the Reformation for similar reasons to what Odo is emphasizing here: Christian education. Odo's elevation of the sermon above the rest of the mass emphasized its importance as a ritual that superseded even sacraments. In doing so, his central concern was to show how education was at the center of what constituted Christianity.²⁰ These religious practices and rituals were the means by which Odo's audience experienced Christianity and, in prioritizing them, Odo intimated the foundational aspects of how Christianity should function. Odo's emphasis on the importance of the bishopric and the insignificance of certain relics like the Veronica cloth reveal his efforts to expel corruption from Spanish Christendom. However his work did not stop at internal Christian doctrines. He continued to express these values when he addressed the topic of Islam.

¹⁹ Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 73.

²⁰ Odo was doing nothing unexpected in a high valuation of Christian education. At around the same time, Mendicant orders were putting the same emphasis on preaching. Later Spanish Christians would stress the importance of education in preventing the conversion of the laity to Islam. See, for instance, John Tolan's study of Pedro Pascual's polemic against Islam: John Tolan, "Walls of Hatred and Contempt: The Anti-Muslim Polemics of Pedro Pascual," in *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages*, (Gainesville, University Press of Florida, 2008), 133-146.

CHAPTER 5 ODO'S USE OF ARABIC IN A LENTEN SERMON

We have seen how Odo was comfortable using Spanish cultural and linguistic references to level specific accusations against a clergy that had attained a reputation for immorality. However, the clergy were not Odo's only counter-examples against which he defined Christian behavior. The military engagements of the *reconquista*, such as Alfonso VIII's victory at the Battle of the *Navas de Tolosa* in 1212, provided the backdrop for thirteenth-century Castile-Leon. In engaging with his audience, Odo consequently fitted biblical language and imagery to this militaristic context. Of course, the object of his interpretations was the standard enemy of Christians in Spain: Islam.¹

At least some of Odo's audience was familiar with the arguments against Islam as is evident from the few Christian writings that survive from Islamic Spain. The twelfth-century anonymous author of the *Tathlīth al-wahdānīyah* or *Trinitizing the Unity of God* shows intimate familiarity with Islamic tradition, particularly the practice of citing a lineage of authorities when quoting *hadith* (anecdotal stories used to perpetuate Islamic rules, prophecies, and other religious knowledge). In addition, Petrus Alfonsi's

¹ For a standard treatment of how Muslims were viewed in Christian Spain, see John Tolan, *Saracens: Islam in the Medieval European Imagination*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002) and John Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael: Muslims through European Eyes in the Middle Ages*, (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2008), particularly 133-146 where he discusses the relationship between Christian theological treatments of Islam and legal and social attitudes toward Muslims. It is helpful to note that the examples upon which I will concentrate describe Spain and Islam without revealing much about them. As Karen Sullivan has noted about other medieval churchmen like Bernard of Clairvaux, his anti-heretical works do not tell us much about heresy, but about Bernard himself. Similarly, Odo's comments on Islam tell us much more about Spanish Christendom as it appeared to a leading scholar and preacher in Castile-Leon. (Sullivan, 32) I will be examining these examples not for the light they shed on Spanish Muslims, but on the value and importance Odo saw in buttressing the Christian beliefs of the Spanish lay population. In the same way, I do not seek to address how corrupt the Christian clergy actually was at this point, but how Odo perceived and described its corruption. Though depictions of the clergy that we receive from people like Odo are quite negative, it is important to incorporate information from sources other than their critics in forming our understanding of them. For an example of how this has been done on the so called "crisis" of twelfth-century Cenobitism, see John Van Engen, "The 'Crisis of Cenobitism' Reconsidered: Benedictine Monasticism in the Years 1050-1150," *Speculum* 61 (1986), 269-304.

Disciplina Clericalis had become quite popular by the thirteenth century.² The sermon illustrations, influenced by the Arabic literature around which Alfonsi had been raised, promoted some level of familiarity with the Muslim intellectual tradition among preachers.

David Hanlon has described how Islam in Castile was “as much a matter of internal demographic control as an external threat.”³ This description is evident in Odo’s distress over how clerks, canons, and others “receive with the greatest eagerness the books of the Saracens, whose souls are buried in Hell,” while “laymen delight in talking of rumors of pretty women, of fields and vineyards. The Lord shall embarrass them before the angels.”⁴ Odo denounces the wisdom of the Saracens in the same sentence as the worldliness of gossip, lust, and earthly possessions.⁵ Practitioners of both are subject to shame and occupy the position of worldliness. On the other hand, Odo encourages theologians and students of theology to persevere through the mundane accusations of clergy and laity who encourage them to take up law in order to make money, or medicine to be able to care for the body. For Odo, a dichotomy exists between powerless, worldly knowledge and the salvific knowledge of theology. Odo is not unique in this assessment and was by no means the first to give it.

² Tolan, *Petrus Alfonsi*, 139.

³ Hanlon, 479. For the frontier territory in Iberian Christendom, Hanlon applies colonial theory from Homi Bhabha that understands *mudejars* (Muslims living under Christian rule) simultaneously as subjects of colonial othering (to justify conquest) and sameness (to allow surveillance). While Hanlon’s is a potentially useful rubric, the situation seems to be much simpler in the case of Odo’s writing. Rather than occupying a dichotomized existence of “same” and “other,” Muslims represented worldliness and lack of faith that permeated even their scholasticism and required constant vigilance to avoid.

⁴ Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 87. Taken from the *Sermones de Festis* in MS Egerton 2890, fol. 232b. Translation by A.C. Friend.

⁵ While he intends to demean Islam as not even a viable alternative to Christianity, Odo’s treatment of it is not persecuting or inquisitorial. He wrote during the 1220’s before inquisitorial action began anywhere near Iberia with Pope Gregory IX’s commissioning of Dominicans as inquisitors in Provençal in 1233.

What is noteworthy is his description of Islam in biblical terms that he tailored to the local situation.

The Arabic Reference

One reference to an Arabic speaker in Odo's *Sermones Epistolas* plays a specific role in the work of the sermon that reveals much about Christian understandings of the Other. Without referring by name to Arabs or *Saraceni*, Odo describes the reaction of a watchman who sees stones being hurled at his city. His only course of action is to warn those around him and cry out for help from the walls:

When a storm comes, men seek refuge in order to be protected from rain and hail. Likewise, when a city or castle is besieged by enemies and the watchman sees rocks coming from a siege machine, he cries 'watch out, watch out, *alagaritha, agala, alagaritha* [Arabic for help, fortress, help]⁶

Transliterating Arabic into Latin was commonplace in polemical tracts of this period. The famous Jewish convert from Islam to Christianity, Petrus Alfonsi, did so in the twelfth century, as did the Dominican polemicist, Ramón Martí, in the thirteenth. Arabic transliterations are unusual, though, in the less scholastic context of a sermon. Furthermore, Christian authors often made their knowledge of Arabic a central buttress for arguments against Islam since it gave them access to the Qur'an and *hadith*. However, Odo uses Arabic here without building a substantial argument around it. Several practical reasons may explain why.

It is possible that he did not have the linguistic knowledge to pursue a thorough investigation of Arabic sources. While traveling and preaching in Toulouse, Odo may

⁶ Quando tempestas obit homines petunt refugium ut a pluua et a grandine pertegant. Item quando civitas utrius castrum ab hostibus obsidet, et speculatos vide lapidem a machura vementem clamat cavete cavete, alagaritha, agala, alagaritha. Taken from Lincoln Cathedral MS 11, fol. 47 col. 1, translation mine. In preaching to the laity, Odo almost certainly would have used the vernacular, in this case probably Leonese or Castilian Spanish, while preserving the sermon in Latin for future clerical use. Lincoln Cathedral MS 11 transliterates the phrase as Odo intended future preachers to read it.

have learned enough Arabic from southern French language schools like the one in Toulouse to enable short quotations, but little else.⁷ His audience may not have known enough Arabic to understand the reference, though perhaps he gave a translation that the manuscript does not record when he was actually preaching the sermon. What is certain is that Odo's Arabic quote was still effective because of the theologically weighty references that follow it. Since these references had specific significance for his Spanish audience, Odo could briefly use an Arabic phrase that may or may not have been intelligible to his listeners while still communicating a great deal of information. The following sections elucidate the layers of meaning that Odo's audience most likely would have understood in the Arabic reference.

The Sermon's Context

The context of this sermon is particularly revealing of the Arabic quotation's significance. The sermon text is preserved in the *Sermones Epistolae*, a collection of Sunday sermons intended for preaching to the laity at mass. This particular piece was a Lenten sermon based on 1 Corinthians 13:1, "If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal." Odo's Arabic reference comes eight lines after his quotation of the sermon text, suggesting its place as the framework for the rest of the sermon. Odo's juxtaposition of this passage with the Arabic transliteration suggests that the Arabic language itself exemplifies the passage's description of noisy, clanging speech.

The cultural context of thirteenth-century Iberia was certainly ripe for explanations of Christianity's superiority to Islam. Mark Johnston has written about the importance to

⁷ See Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 63-68 for a discussion of Odo's travels.

high medieval preachers of using *exempla* relevant to local circumstances.⁸ This is also one reason scholars have been reluctant to draw knowledge of quotidian conditions from *exempla*; the comparatively few that deal with daily life are quite localized. While it is not substantial evidence of the ubiquity of Arabic in Palencia or Salamanca, it is most likely that Odo intentionally selected this Arabic quote with his audience in mind.

The scholastic situation of Odo's time was somewhat exceptional, with the bulk of Aristotle's works arriving in Western Europe via Muslim scholars. In 1210, around the time that Odo was at the University of Paris,⁹ the provincial synod of Sens banned Aristotle's physical treatises from the city because of their several conflicts with Christian doctrines (such as creation, which Aristotle took to be eternal).¹⁰ In the middle of the thirteenth century, while interacting with Aristotle's work on reason, Thomas Aquinas concluded that Christianity could not be proven by reason alone, but required faith.¹¹ One could use rational argument to bolster Christian arguments and undermine the doctrines of other religions, but Christianity was ultimately a religion based on belief. This characterization of Christianity as a religion of faith and Islam as a mundane religion whose wisdom provided no spiritual benefit forms the crux of Odo's logic. As the transmitters of Aristotle's works, Muslims were often characterized as overindulged

⁸ Mark Johnston, "Do *Exempla* Illustrate Everyday Life?" (paper presented at the annual meeting for the Modern Language Association, Chicago, Illinois, November 13, 1994).

⁹ See Friend, 40-41 for a discussion of the dates of Odo's education. Friend concludes that Odo had become Master by 1210-1211 and Doctor by 1219.

¹⁰ H. Denifle and E. Chatelain, eds., *Chartularium Universitatis Parisiensis*, Volume I, (Paris: Delalaine, 1891), 70.

¹¹ See John Tolan, *Saracens*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 242-245 for a discussion of rationality as Christian scholars applied it to Judaism and Islam.

in scholastic learning and lacking in faith and charity.¹² In the latter half of the thirteenth century, the Christian polemicist Pedro Pascual was imprisoned in Muslim Granada whence he wrote an anti-Islamic tract that addressed how Muslim philosophy could be so erudite. While Muslim in name, Islamic philosophers were outcasts of their own religion. Since they knew Mohammad was illiterate, Pascual writes, “the wise men of his own law mock Mohammad.”¹³

To Odo, books of Muslim wisdom are to be avoided, not because he thinks they are heretical among Muslims, but because they are spiritually and intellectually useless. As we have already noted, Odo discouraged students of theology from taking up the study of Arabic because of its futility. Muslim scholars were also well known for their expertise in astronomy, which Odo compared to an old woman who, by pure chance, sometimes predicts things correctly and sometimes not. When his predictions come true, the astronomer basks in his glory, but when he is wrong he cites a miscalculation. Odo contrasts the whole premise of this science with a theological understanding of the future from the book of Acts: “But the truth says, in whom I faithfully put my trust: ‘It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.’ When therefore they claim to know the future, it’s all a cheat.”¹⁴

Odo considers Christians who study Arabic literature and science to be seeking a key to useless knowledge instead of pursuing a faithful understanding of God through

¹² This stereotype would later change with writers such as William of Rubruck and Riccoldo de Montecroce who depicted Muslims as unfit for intellectual conversation since rational beings should all be able to recognize the truth of Christianity. See Tolan, *Saracens*, 276-278.

¹³ Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 145.

¹⁴ Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 88. Taken from the *Sermones Epistolae* in Lincoln MS 11, fol. 22 col. 2. Translation by A.C. Friend.

study of theology. The single place that he does acknowledge some use in knowing Arabic is to limit its utility to the mundane world.

As men who know Arabic sell to the Saracens those who are ignorant of the language, and Isaiah tells why this happens, “Therefore are my people gone into captivity because they have no knowledge,” so many go to Hell because they are ignorant.¹⁵

Despite the respectable tradition of Arabic philosophy and its preservation of the foundational Greek philosophers, Arabic is only useful in avoiding being sold into slavery by those who speak it. The dichotomy of the spiritual benefit of theology and the worldly utility of Arabic continues through the *Sermones in Epistolas*.

Later in this sermon collection, Odo defends theologians from people who would rather have the financial advantages of more lawyers or the health benefits of more doctors in their communities. Odo says the theologian gains real benefits, while doctors and rich men gain only earthly ones. Even monastic orders were guilty of this simple-minded view of money, accepting donations from usurers who had extorted it from the poor.¹⁶ To Odo, these three desires (wealth, good health, and useless knowledge) were equally destructive to the church. The correlation of usury, corruption, and the useless wisdom of Islam is clear from another reference Odo makes to Arabic in the sermon for the fifth Sunday after Easter. Here, he describes *Saraceni* as “fraudulent usurers who are friends of the devil” and “afflict the friends of Christ.”¹⁷ Friendship with the devil and usury were both emblematic of the worldliness Odo attributes to his Arabic speaker in

¹⁵ *Sermones Epistolas*, Lincoln MS 11, fol. 21b. Translation by A. C. Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 88.

¹⁶ Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 117.

¹⁷ *Saraceni, usurarii fraudulentos qui sunt amici diabolici, tales magis affligunt quem amici ihesu*. Lincoln MS 11, fol. 97, translation mine.

the earlier *exemplum*. Because Jesus described how the world hated his followers, friendship and hatred were often used as indicators of faithfulness.¹⁸ Thus continues the distinction between faithful and unfaithful, showing that Muslims embody what the Christian is not. For Odo, Arabic not only represents what is harmful, but also provides a counterexample to the positive trait of love.

Soon after his Arabic reference, Odo emphasizes the insufficiency of knowledge without love by inserting an *exemplum* about three theologians who come to a bishop for his blessing. Even though the third theologian had the most knowledge, the bishop blesses only the first two because of the good lives they had led. This theme continues throughout the sermon with illustrations like the Old Testament story of Balaam, who unjustly beat his donkey for running away from the angel of the Lord, showing what can happen even when one has the gift of prophecy, but not love.¹⁹ These references would most likely have been encouraging to Christians who grasped the high intellectual reputation of the neighboring Arabic community. They also strengthen the connection Odo makes between the noisy racket of speech that lacks love, described in his text from 1 Corinthians 13, and the Arabic language, quoted a few lines into the sermon.²⁰ The characterization of Muslims as lacking charity is congruent with contemporary issues surrounding the Christian fast of Lent.

¹⁸ John 17:14.

¹⁹ Lincoln MS, fol. 47.

²⁰ Records survive of Christians who lived in cities with mosques complaining about the noise of the muezzin. One account compares the Muslim call to prayer to the braying of a donkey. See John Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 147-161.

For communities containing Christians, Muslims, and Jews, the season of Lent was an exceptional time.²¹ The forty-day fast culminated in the observance of Holy Week, which included mourning on Good Friday in appropriate garb. If we are to believe the Fourth Lateran Council's portrayal of the situation, Muslims and Jews would frequently go out on Good Friday wearing exquisite clothing in mockery of Christian mourners.²² Several other ecclesiastical laws dating back to the sixth-century Synod of Macon joined Lateran IV in forbidding Muslims and Jews from going out in public on the last three days of Holy Week.²³ The frequency of this law suggests the possibility that everyday events were behind its claims. Whether or not such events actually occurred, it is relevant that the culmination of the church calendar in the weekend of Holy Week required protection for Christians in interfaith communities so that the council enacted legislation designed to keep them from vulnerable situations.

It is with this in mind that we should consider the lines after the Arabic reference, which describe how the faithful watchman responds to military danger with the words of Psalm 31:2: "Be a rock of refuge for me; a strong fortress to save me." Like the Arabic speaker, the watchman in this counterexample cries out (*clamat*), but it is not to his man-made structure; through the words of the Psalm, he entrusts his survival to God rather than the work of his hands. Importantly, Odo also places Psalm 31:2 at the beginning of the sermon just after the main text as an introduction to this section. After

²¹ Interfaith strife and violence during Lent has a lengthy history and was particularly vehement between Christian and Jewish communities on Good Friday. See David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence*, (Princeton University Press, 1998), 211-223.

²² Fourth Lateran Council, canon 68. <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.asp>. Accessed on November 23, 2011.

²³ Synod of Macon, canon 14.

hearing 1 Corinthians 13 (words without love are like a clanging cymbal) contrasted with the words of the faithful Psalmist, the audience would have seen this dichotomy mirrored in the practical illustration of the two watchmen. By noting the introduction's structure and context, it becomes clear that Odo intended his Iberian listeners to read the noisy gong as the Arabic language and, consequently, the wisdom literature associated with it. In contrast, Odo says the watchman who entrusts his safety to God is like a pigeon that finds a hole in a wall where it can hide from its enemies (*inimici*). That the two watchmen are in identical situations and see opposite outcomes relates to an idea that Odo's audience would likely have known. Like knowledge that has no efficacy when it is separated from charity, walls could only go so far in protecting a city on their own.

Human Fortification and God as a Fortress

As the walls of the faithful city in this *exemplum* illustrate, the idea that defensive structures functioned in unison with faith dates back to the time of the Psalm Odo quotes at the beginning of the sermon. The connection between human fortifications and divine protection likely held particular significance for Christians in thirteenth-century Iberia where military engagement with Muslims was frequent. The concept behind this connection is most apparent in the shared space of religiously significant buildings and defensive structures. The phenomenon of churches located in or by walls has not been investigated extensively. The most comprehensive study for Western Europe is José Suárez Otero's collation of archeological surveys from the nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries on the wall system surrounding the Sanctuary of St. James'

tomb at Santiago de Compostela.²⁴ When Viking invasions threatened from the Galician coast and al-Mansur's raid of 997 augmented local insecurities, a wall around St. James' relics was important to the site's survival and function in the minds of its visitors as a space set apart. As the most popular pilgrimage site in Western Europe, Santiago de Compostela and the wall surrounding it would have been familiar to most of Odo's audience.

Otero's analysis of the archeological evidence reveals that the wall around St. James' sanctuary served not only a military function, but also a spiritual one. The eleventh-century bishop of Santiago, Cresconius, built and dedicated chapels to Saints Benedict and Antonino that occupied both towers at the wall's Western gate.²⁵ Because this wall had relatively thin sections and foundations for a defensive structure, Otero concludes a different motive. The altars in these tower chapels indicate their efficacy in a religious sense for guarding St. James' relics. In this way, the physical wall provided protection on only one of multiple levels.

Occurrences of the association between defensive and religious purposes are not limited to Western Europe. In his *Ecclesiastical History*, the fifth-century church historian, Philostorgius, records Constantine's construction of the wall around Constantinople. According to the "oldest and most important sources," Constantine planned the outline of the city wall by walking along it. Incredulous at the magnitude of the demarcation, his attendants asked how long he would keep walking, to which

²⁴ José Suárez Otero, "Altaria Sancti Benedicti et Sancti Antonini fuerant in Turribus... Santiago de Compostela. Definición y Significado de la Puerta en un Santuario Fortificado." Proceedings from the meeting of Puertas de Ciudades Tipo Arquitectónico y Forma Artística, September 25-27, 2003.

²⁵ Ibid, 317-319.

Constantine replied “until the one who is in front of me stops.”²⁶ Philostorgius understands this to be an angel whose presence indicated God’s involvement in the defensive structure’s construction.²⁷

Several similar examples survive from the early medieval Balkans of churches built between the main city walls and *proteichisma* (outer wall).²⁸ Some of these sites were built without settlements or cemeteries around them, making the church’s normal societal functions impractical.²⁹ Why these churches were built in remote locations remains uncertain, but their defensive characteristics suggest a synthesis of religious and military functions. Their early medieval Eastern European origin suggests the universality of the same concept Otero has documented at Santiago.

In all of these examples, architects indicated God’s presence and supernatural protection by layering religious space onto defensive structures. God had exclusive power to sustain walls as at Santiago de Compostela or to level them as in crusader

²⁶ Philostorgius, *Church History*, ii.c.9. Translation by Philip R. Amadon, *Philostorgius: Church History*, (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2007), 25.

²⁷ The completed wall stretched from coastline to coastline with occasional fortifying towers. Importantly, on each extremity were the Church of St. Anthony of the Golden Horn at the north and the Church St. Mary of Rhabdos on the south. One of the city gates has become known as “The Ancient Gate of the Forerunner” because of the church dedicated to John the Baptist built into its wall. In the early fifth century, the Byzantine Emperor Theodosius II built an outside wall or *proteichisma*. The account of the triumphal entry of Basil I describes how this wall ran beside the church of St. Mary Peribleptos (all-seeing), one of the most important monastic houses in Constantinople. See Alexander Van Millingen, *Byzantine Constantinople: The Walls of the City and Adjoining Historical Sites*, (J. Murray, 1899), 19-20.

²⁸ Van Millingen, 19-20. Additionally, at Berkovina, a sixth-century fort in the Balkans, a basilica was built immediately next to the wall, while a second church has its apse incorporated into the northeastern rampart. See Florin Curta, *The Making of the Slavs: History and Archeology of the Lower Danube Region*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 161-162. Richard Krautheimer suggests a Justinian influence from churches in Constantinople in *Early Christian and Byzantine Architecture*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 252.

²⁹ Two solitary churches in Bulgaria from this period may be associated with this idea of religious space serving military purposes. At Dzhavar Tepe in Eastern Bulgaria, a cruciform basilica survives with north and south rooms in the form of large, defensive towers. In Western Bulgaria, the Stag’s basilica at Pirdop has four angled towers connected by massive walls. Its latest building phase replaced timber roofing with sturdy barrel vaults and domes. See Curta, 162.

rhetoric. When Odo describes the Arabic speaker calling out to a fortress for help, his Spanish audience likely would have read religious connotations into the illustration. Odo wrote this sermon sometime before 1224, not long after Alfonso VIII's crucial military triumph over the Almohads (a Muslim dynasty in North Africa) in 1212. Using a military reference to define the Christian relationship with God against the faithlessness of an Arabic speaker carried exceptional weight in this context. Odo's listeners would have understood the protection of their cities and the destruction of Almohad enemies as a tangible sign of the veracity of their religion.

More pragmatic explanations certainly exist for why religious spaces were built into defensive structures. Perhaps churches inhabited walls to facilitate the common practice of hearing mass before a leader left the city for battle. The unsubstantial walls at Santiago de Compostela may have existed to keep at bay the mass of pilgrims that visited every year. These explanations are possible and even likely true, but in no way preclude the more abstract spiritual level of understanding on which Odo communicated with his audience. While the concept has not been studied as substantially as it deserves, adding physical nodes of religious significance most likely imbued the fortification with another, probably more important, layer of protection. Understanding the physical world through spiritual means, as medieval preachers often did in the context of the sermon, concurs with the massive walls as a mere shadow of the divine protection and explains why only the faithful watchman in Odo's *exemplum* survives.³⁰

³⁰ Beyond Otero's research, I know of only a handful of references to this phenomenon. In the first crusade, Peter Desiderius claimed to have received a vision instructing him to have the crusaders march around the walls of Jerusalem barefoot, mimicking the battle of Jericho. See Christopher Tyerman, *God's War*, (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2006), 156. Additionally, Archbishop João of Braga blessed an assault tower before the Christian siege of Lisbon in 1147. See Meier, *Reconquest and Crusade*, 178-179. These examples reverse God's role as the real defender of a city to show he is also able to destroy enemy walls.

Translation and Linguistic Considerations

The relationship between divine protection and human fortification was probably familiar to Odo's audience, but what if they did not understand the Arabic phrase? One of the two manuscripts that preserves this particular sermon, Lincoln Cathedral 11, does not give a translation of it and we cannot know whether Odo's audience would have known enough Arabic to need one.³¹ However, for the work of the sermon, simply recognizing the language as Arabic was enough for the illustration to function. Nicole Bériou has written about how the French friar, Nicolas de Biard, considered it his duty to preach in the Romance language and explain to the laity what was written in Latin.³² Nicolas' sermon for All Saints' Day describes how the Court of Paradise contains (after martyrs, prophets, and others) the confessors of faith. These confessors entertain God and his court by using the vernacular to elucidate Latin scriptures.

Odo's use of Arabic in his sermon held a sophisticated meaning for those who understood it, but his listeners did not need to translate the language for the illustration to be effective. In the same way that he elucidates Latin scripture, Odo explains the Arabic phrase through the context in which he places it. We have seen Odo's negative attitude to Arabic wisdom and its manifestations such as astronomy and philosophy that he viewed as useless. While Latin was not as closely associated with Christianity as Arabic with Islam or Hebrew with Judaism since it was not the original language of Christian scriptures, the identification of Arabic with Islam made it an ideal target of

³¹ The other manuscript that contains the Arabic reference is in the National Library of Spain, MS Latin 9. I have not yet been able to look at it, but there is no reason to think it differs from Lincoln 11 and gives a translation.

³² Nicole Bériou, "Latin and the Vernacular: Some Remarks about Sermons Delivered on Good Friday during the Thirteenth Century," in *Die Deutsche Predigt im Mittelalter*, Proceedings of the Internationales Symposium am Fachbereich Germanistik der Freien Universität Berlin, (Tübingen: Niemayer, 1991), 268.

linguistic polemics against Muslims.³³ It is likely that Odo's *exemplum* was quite useful in delineating Arabic as the counterexample to Latin. By manipulating Arabic and taking a linguistic approach to proving the falsehood of Islam, Odo is following a formula set before him by several Christian polemicists such as Ramón Martí.

John Tolan has documented how Ramón Martí intended his biography of Muhammed, *De Seta Machometi*, to be a handbook for Christians on debating Muslims.³⁴ Martí used Arabic sources to recover the Muslim account of Muhammad's death in the arms of 'A'isha, his wife. Martí interprets the Muslim sources to produce a Christian reading of the event, casting Muhammad's final hours in a negative light. While a Christian's deathbed scene includes a priest administering communion and extreme unction, Muhammad died with "his head between 'A'isha's breast and her chin, and she mixed her saliva with that of Muhammad." To Martí, this is a "vile, unclean, and abominable" way to die that serves as a counterexample to the good Christian death. According to Tolan, 'A'isha's kisses replace the body of Christ received in communion, while her touch substitutes the anointing hand of the priest performing last rites.³⁵ Odo uses this same tactic to strengthen the separation of God's people from nonbelievers in the minds of his listeners by juxtaposing the different responses of Arabic and Christian watchmen.

³³ It is true, however, that Iberian Christians saw the preservation of Latin as important to Christianity's future and lamented the advent of Arabic translations of the Bible. For more on this topic, see Kassis, 136-155.

³⁴ Martí's main objective is to attack Muhammad as one of the false prophets promised in Matthew 7 and show him to be full of silly, unbelievable stories. For example, when a fly lands in one's food, Muhammad prescribes submerging it so that, in case one wing has poison and the other an antidote, both will get mixed into the dish. By scouring Arabic sources for these illustrations, Martí can characterize Muslim literature by saying "All these things seem more the words of an idiot or a scoffer than of a prophet or messenger of God." Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 39-40.

³⁵ Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 40.

The correlation between language and religion had strong precedent in Iberia. In the early days of the Muslim invasion, rulers used language as a claim to political authority. When first arriving in Iberia, Muslims minted their coins in Latin, realizing it to be the language of legal, religious, and high cultural activity.³⁶ Hanna Kassis has juxtaposed two coinage inscriptions from the period: the Muslim inscriptions read, “Whoso seeks a religion other than Islam, it shall not be accepted from him, and in the world to come he shall be among the losers.” Alfonso VIII responded by minting coinage containing a verse from Mark’s gospel, “In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, the One God; whoso believes and is baptized shall be saved.”³⁷

The linguistic situation soon became lamentable for Christians like Paul Alvar in Muslim Iberia. In 854, Alvar bemoaned the supersession of the Latin language in al-Andalus by Arabic, which he referred to as the language of the Chaldeans.³⁸ According to Mariá Gallego, Classical Arabic had become so closely associated with Islam by the tenth century that Arabic sources saw people who used a Latin Romance language as Christians, using the same word (*a’jami*) to refer to both “Christian” and someone who spoke a Romance language.³⁹ It is this close association between religion and language in Spain that enabled Odo to use language as a religious demarcation.⁴⁰

³⁶ Hanna Kassis, “The Arabicization and Islamization of the Christians of al-Andalus,” in *Languages of Power in Islamic Spain*, 136-155, edited by Ross Brann, (Bethesda, Maryland, CDL Press, 1997), 138-139.

³⁷ Ibid, 139.

³⁸ E. P. Colbert, *The Martyrs of Córdoba (850-59): A Study of the Sources* (Washington: The Catholic University of America, 1962), 301

³⁹ María Gallego, “The Languages of Medieval Iberia and Their Religious Dimension,” *Medieval Encounters* 9 (2003): 133.

⁴⁰ It is noteworthy that Odo does not use Latin as a positive religious marker. Odo’s Arabic speaker actually uses Latin (or a Romance version of it when the sermon was preached) to warn those around

Instead of using the terms “Arabs” or “Saracens,” Odo uses Arabic to identify Islam as a symbol of faithlessness against which he defines true Christian practice.

A final hermeneutic rubric to consider is the significance of Odo’s juxtaposition of the Arabic/Christian dichotomy with the Psalms. By describing the faithful watchman who quotes the Psalms in a moment of peril, Odo connects the words of Israel’s military king, David, to current, military circumstances in Spain. Consequently, Odo draws a connection between Israel’s enemies and local religious and political enemies. In the same way that Paul Alvar referred to Arabic as the language of the Chaldeans, Odo saw contemporary Muslims as the hermeneutic enemy of God’s people. Identifying Arabs with Israel’s Old Testament opponents was a common way of establishing Christian identity as the new Israel and placing Christianity in the feud between faithful and faithless that traced back to the discord between Abraham’s sons, Isaac and Ishmael. This trope existed in prominent places of Odo’s time such as illuminations of the extremely popular *Beatus* Manuscript, mentioned above for the great number of manuscripts in which it survives.⁴¹ Its illuminations show Muslim dress and architecture, such as the red and white arches from Cordoba’s Mosque, in depictions of negative stories from Hebrew Scriptures like the whore of Babylon and Baltassar’s feast.⁴² The *Beatus* illuminator’s visual juxtaposition does the same work as Odo’s sermon in connecting Islam, Christianity’s enemy, with Israel’s enemies in the Old Testament.

him before calling out in Arabic. The more neutral character of Latin makes Odo’s command of Arabic all the more valuable as a way of establishing Christian identity.

⁴¹ D. F. Ruggles, “Representation and Identity in Medieval Spain: *Beatus* Manuscripts and the Mudejar Churches of Teruel,” in *Languages of Power in Islamic Spain*, edited by Ross Bran (Bethesda, Maryland; CDL Press, 1997), 81.

⁴² *Ibid.*

Odo expounds this connection throughout the rest of the sermon. As moralizing tales, Odo's sermon illustrations normally came with allegoric interpretations. In the sentence after the Arabic quote, he describes how the city in which the Arabic speaker lives "is the world, which is besieged and attacked by the devil through vice."⁴³ The concept of the world (*mundus*) had multiple connotations for Christian exegetes. It was both the physical space that humans inhabited and the spiritual state of worldliness and carnality – characteristics that Christians often ascribed to Muslims.⁴⁴ In contrast, the Christian city survives by taking refuge in God. Thus Odo's description situates Islam within the ageless dichotomy between the world and God's people who have been set apart from it.

⁴³ Civitas est mundus qui a diabolo per victi obsidetur et impugnatur. Lincoln MS 11 f. 47, translation mine.

⁴⁴ See Tolan, *Sons of Ishmael*, 35-40 for several examples of polemical characterizations of Muslims as carnal.

CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSION

The multicultural context of Castile-Leon in the thirteenth century posed significant challenges to understandings of what it actually meant to be a Christian. Whether or not clerical corruption was as widespread as the dissatisfaction from preachers like Odo suggests, audiences would have at least heard about it in his sermons if they did not experience it firsthand in bishops detached from their congregations and clerics extorting money. Even assuming that such problems were not as serious as they appear in primary evidence, they were likely disconcerting to Christians who had relocated from the north. The confluence of surviving Arian Christian traditions and Islamic art and language likely raised questions for Christians of all ranks, as Odo's dismay at theologians abandoning their study for Arabic philosophy suggests. If Arabic was used alongside Romance languages and even Christian Latin, were not its traditions just as useful or accurate? While Islamic cities, architecture, and fortresses demonstrated how Muslims were blessed with military success, what observable blessings substantiated the truth of Christianity? Odo's association of the Muslim Other with trust in mundane, earthly fortifications emphasized their alienation from the divine connection enjoyed by Christians. The derogatory attitude he displays when referring to *Saraceni* later in this sermon collection applies to Arabic speakers and unbelievers more generally. By using context to identify the Arabic language with Islam, Odo made a sophisticated and subtle reference that encouraged his Christian audience by showing Muslims to be the same faithless opponents from which God had delivered his people for centuries. The military sense of this illustration carried significant weight for Iberian Christians who lived near Islamic kingdoms and were familiar with Muslim culture. Odo's

treatment of clerical corruption and Islam offers a sense of how medieval preachers tried to reinforce Christian doctrine and tailor their illustrations to fit local needs. In Odo's case, this meant navigating between dispensable legends and central tenets of Christianity in a fashion that was accessible for local and future audiences.

The same religious boundaries that the Fourth Lateran Council reinforced through requirements such as discriminatory dress for Muslims and Jews are detectable goals in Odo's sermons. His sermons also align with the Dominican mission, which Odo saw as the fulfillment of the work that Christ and the apostles began: "So Holy Church ought to thank God for having returned to her such judges who walk in the ways of the apostles, and how well this is Isaiah tells us saying: 'Afterward thou shalt be called the city of righteousness, the faithful city.'"¹ This prophetic language of the "faithful city" nuances the way we understand medieval views of Christendom – while it was the earthly manifestation of God's kingdom, Odo saw its essence as spiritual rather than physical.²

While papal reasoning saw Christendom as a universal world order with its capital in Rome,³ Odo gave no indication that his conception was set in such geographic terms. Instead of seeing the Pope as the rightful possessor of universal authority, Odo undermined papal pronouncements, claiming that "so many laws have now been made by the Pope and by the Councils, by prelates and abbots that we can hardly live without

¹ *Sermones in Epistolas*, Lincoln MS 11, fol. 41 col. 2. Translation by A. C. Friend.

² Brett Whalen rightly points out that notions of Christendom were more complex than a plain juxtaposition of "us and them." Christendom was both cosmic and earthly, enclosed and universal. Odo's conception emphasizes its spiritual, limitless nature. See Brett Whalen, *Dominion of God: Christendom and Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009).

³ Whalen, 125-148.

giving offense.”⁴ While the Pope traced the justification for his authority to the apostle Peter, Odo departed from this logic in his interpretation of Jeremiah and Isaiah.

‘From the prophet even unto the priest everyone dealeth falsely’ [Jeremiah 6:13]...Of Peter I dare to say that he sinned, but they say that it is a sacrilege to blame him who holds the holy see, for they say it is a sacrilege to discuss the acts of the high priest. And since nearly all are so corrupted, ‘I will restore thy judges as at first...’ [Isaiah 1:26], which means ‘I will make an Order of Preachers [the Dominicans] who will not be judges of chaff, but of sins, and they will make known the purpose of Jesus, nor will their care be fields nor vineyards, gold nor silver, but they will be busy with the care of souls.’⁵

By using Isaiah’s prophetic language, Odo indicates that he ultimately understood the boundaries he was enforcing to be spiritual rather than geographic. The center of Christendom lay not in a physical capital with a single earthly leader, but in the work of the itinerant Dominicans who would bring about the city of the righteous by resuming Christ’s work of caring for human souls. Through this interpretation, Odo reassured his congregation that even the success of the Muslim invasion and the corruption within the church played a part in the fulfillment of Christendom. Indeed, it is because “nearly all are so corrupted” that God “will restore thy judges as at first.” Reinterpreting these phenomena (which could seem ostensibly disastrous to Christendom) as part of a divine system was a way of reassuring the righteous. Emphasizing that the church was receiving the judges promised in Isaiah as a result of undesirable historical circumstances was a prophetic interpretation of these conditions that allowed Odo to strengthen the limits of Christendom against both the Muslims outside it and the corrupt clergy within it. By giving his audience the dichotomy of the faithful and the faithless

⁴ Taken from *Sermones Dominicales*, Biblitheque Nacional, Paris MS Lat. 16506, folio 140, col. 2. Translation by A. C. Friend.

⁵ *Sermones in Epistolas*, Lincoln MS 11, fol. 41 col. 2. Translation by A. C. Friend.

that encompassed both Christian-Muslim relations and interactions between the clergy and the laity, Odo was able to buttress the boundaries that distinguished Christians from the world and Christianize the residents of the faithful city.

APPENDIX HISTORIOGRAPHIC SKETCH

His Medieval Legacy

Odo's work occupies a unique place in the history of sermon studies and in understanding how Christians perceived other religions. The early date of Odo's work in relation to the rise of Mendicant preaching indicates his importance to the genre of model sermons and *exempla* collections (volumes of stories intended to provide preachers with didactic illustrations for their sermons). Odo was one of the first to incorporate moralizing illustrations of the Arabic animalistic style into Christian sermons. Slightly later preachers such as Jacques de Vitry and Étienne de Bourbon, who have received much more attention from scholars, used this style of illustration, or *exempla*, much of which they derived from Odo.¹ Odo's work can also be found in several of the most popular *exempla* collections, such as the late thirteenth-century Franciscan collection of stories, the *Speculum Laicorum*.²

About one hundred years before Odo began writing, the famed Jewish scholar, Petrus Alfonsi, who converted from Islam to Christianity in 1106, had finished his collection of moralizing stories, the *Disciplina Clericalis*. As the first major translation of Arabic tales into Latin, the *Disciplina* was a landmark in the introduction of Muslim literature and philosophy to Western Europe.³ Alfonsi's ability to navigate the logic and

¹ Étienne is sometimes confused as Odo's predecessor rather than follower. Cf. Wanda Kaufmann, *The Anthropology of wisdom Literature*, (Westport, Ct, Greenwood Publishing Group, 1996), 101, s who describes how Odo borrowed from Étienne de Bourbon. In fact, Étienne wrote after Odo and his monumental collection was influenced by Odo's, as noted by Albert Friend, "Analogues in Cheriton to the Pardoner and his Sermon," *The Journal of English and German Philology* 53, 1954: (383-388) 388; and Albert Lecoy de la Marche, *Anecdotes Historiques Legendes et Apologues: D'Étienne de Bourbon*, (Paris: La Société de l'Histoire de France, 1887), xvi.

² J.Th. Welter, *Le Speculum Laicorum*, (Paris, 1914) 158.

³ See Tolán, *Petrus Alfonsi*, 79 for a description of Alfonsi's sources.

tradition of Judaism and Islam was surely appealing to Odo, whose fables drew from broad bases including folk tales and local legends.

Odo edited this collection of fables, several of which came from his sermon illustrations or *exempla*, in 1225. After writing treatises on the Lord's Prayer and the Passion (before 1219) he composed three series of sermons. The *Sermones Dominicales* (1219) provided sermons for each Sunday of the calendar, the *Sermones in Epistolas* (1224) expounded on the New Testament letters, and the *Sermones de Festis* (after 1225) gave preaching material for feast days throughout the church calendar. His final work, a *Summa* on penitence, was finished somewhere between 1230 and 1243. Near the end of his life, Odo edited and revised the *Sermones Dominicales*, *Sermones de Festis*, and *Summa de Penitencia*. The edition of these three works along with his collection of fables comprise the vast majority of extant materials.

The wide influence of the style of preaching Odo and others propagated is apparent from contemporary authors.⁴ For example, by the mid-thirteenth century, inserting fables into sermons had become so popular that the master general of the Order of Preachers, Humbert de Romans, disparaged their use, especially by preachers.⁵ Odo's collection of sermons saw lasting popularity until the Reformation when preaching styles that relied on illustrations and extra-biblical examples lost

⁴ Odo's *exempla* were used by Étienne de Bourbon in his lengthy collection of sermon illustrations and the Franciscan collection, the *Speculum Laicorum*, ascribes thirty-nine entries to Odo. See A.C. Friend, "Analogues in Cheriton to the Pardoner and His Sermon," *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 53 (1954), 388. In this article, Friend traces stories that appear in Chaucer back to Odo as their original author. A translation of the *exempla* comprises the only book-length work dedicated to Odo in the last sixty years.

⁵ Humbert de Romans, *Treatise on Preaching* 7.XXXVIII.

popularity. The importance of his sermon collections in subsequent centuries is clear from the one hundred and twenty seven extant manuscripts that contain them, at least eight of which are from Spain.⁶ By comparison, one of the most well-preserved documents of Medieval Spain was the *Beatus* Manuscript, a commentary on the apocalypse, which survives in thirty-two manuscripts (more than the Bible).⁷ Odo's influence was also geographically widespread, several manuscripts originating from Italy, Spain, and southern France. His fable collection was used in several languages, being translated into French in the later thirteenth century, Welsh in 1247,⁸ and Spanish between 1350 and 1400 as the *Libro de los Gatos*.⁹ By the fifteenth century, Odo enjoyed, in the words of H. Leith Spencer, "a fresh vogue."¹⁰ Lollard preachers, in particular even had "a penchant for Odo of Cheriton and Nicholas de Aquevilla (although these tastes were more widely shared)."¹¹

Several excerpts used in this study are from the *Sermones in Epistolas* (1224) since Odo composed it while in Spain. He did not choose to edit this series and compile it with the others at the end of his life, perhaps because he saw its *exempla* as too

⁶ Friend, 323-363 documents forty-seven manuscripts. J.B. Schneyer, *Repertorium der Lateinischen Sermones des Mittelalters für die Zeit von 1150-1350*, XLIII.4, Aschendorfsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, (Münster/Westphalia, 1969-1990), 498-499 catalogues eighty additional manuscripts, sixty-nine of which contain one or more collections, eleven of which contain one sermon by Odo.

⁷ D. F. Ruggles, "Representation and Identity in Medieval Spain: Beatus Manuscripts and the Mudejar Churches of Teruel," in *Languages of Power in Islamic Spain*, edited by Ross Bran (Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 1997), 81.

⁸ The earliest Welsh translation survives from around 1400 in MS Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, Llanstephan 4. See John Thomas Koch, *Celtic Culture: A Historical Encyclopedia*, (Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2006), 436.

⁹ Enzo Franchini, "Magister Odo de Chérítón, Profesor de las Universidades de Palencia Y Salamanca?" *Revista de Poética Medieval* 2 (1998) 79-114, 99.

¹⁰ H. Leith Spencer, *English Preaching in the Late Middle Ages*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993), 319.

¹¹ *Ibid*, 317.

geographically tailored to Castile or Leon to serve the larger purposes of later preachers for whom he intended his edition. While it is impossible to know why he did not include it in the edited volume of his work, the fact that the *Sermones in Epistolas* did not circulate as widely does not bear significant consequence for the present work. If anything, a volume Odo saw as customized for a distinct locality may hold more potential for realizing the nature of Christendom in the places he lived. Alternatively, if he simply ran out of time and decided the other series were more helpful, the exclusion of the *Sermones in Epistolas* from his final edition is insignificant for our purposes.

Modern scholarship on Odo remains sparse – the most comprehensive work on Odo's life, written in 1936 by A.C. Friend, remains unpublished. Most modern study dates from the late nineteenth century when scholars were mainly interested in his fables' literary and religious value. Several of these scholars saw great value in Odo's writing, Leopold Hervieux even committed an entire volume of his *Les Fabulistes Latins* series to Odo's fables. By the mid-twentieth century, however, Odo had fallen out of study and did not receive any attention until a handful of articles and references in the nineteen-nineties.¹² What might have been the reason for Odo's decline in relevance after being somewhat in vogue in the late nineteenth century?

Late Nineteenth-Century Work

In 1868, Hermann Oesterly published the earliest modern treatment of Odo's work, *Die Narrationes des Odo de Ciringtonia*.¹³ Oesterly concentrated his analysis on Odo's

¹² For instance, Franchini, "Magister Odo"; Spencer, *English Preaching*; Bella Millett, "The Songs of Entertainers and the Song of the Angels: Vernacular Lyric Fragments in Odo of Cheriton's *Sermones de Festis*," *Medium Aevum* 64 (1995), 17-36.

¹³ Oesterly, Hermann, "Die Narrationes des Odo de Ciringtonia," in *Jahrbuch fur Romanische unde Englische Literatur*, (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhouse, 1871), 129-154.

collection of fables, some Aesopic, some Arabic, some indigenous, giving a basic outline and several transcriptions from manuscript Arundel 292. Though he erroneously identified Odo as a late twelfth-century Cistercian monk, Oesterly was the first to introduce modern scholars to his work.¹⁴ Ten years later in 1878, Ernst Voigt collated eleven manuscripts to enlarge Oesterly's collection of Odo's fables.

Odo entered the realm of scholarly debate in 1883 when Leopold Hervieux crafted a collection of Odo's fables in the context of his larger series on the ancient fabulist, Phedrus.¹⁵ In the 1885 edition of *Journal des Savants*, Gaston Paris criticized Hervieux's framing of Odo as Phedrus' "imitateur," arguing that Odo's work was unique enough to stand on its own.¹⁶ He also sparked debate about the place whence Odo came since Hervieux had entertained several different translations of the name found in most manuscripts, "*Ceringtonia*." Studies by Paul Meyer, writing in the journal *Romania*, and Lucy Toulmin Smith, writing in *Athenaeum*, helped determine that Odo was named for the small town of Cheriton in Kent.¹⁷

In 1896, Leopold Hervieux took all of this scholarship into consideration when he published the first entire volume dedicated to the study of Odo's writing, *Études de Cheriton et ses Dérivés*.¹⁸ The extent of Hervieux's study was exhaustive, devoting over one hundred pages to the significance, preservation, and transmission of Odo's

¹⁴ Oesterly, 129.

¹⁵ Hervieux, Léopold. "Phèdre et ses Anciens Imitateurs." in *Les Fabulistes Latins*. 587-713.

¹⁶ Gaston Paris, "Review of *Les Fabulistes Latins: Phèdre et ses Anciens Imitateurs*," *Journal des Savants* (1885), 47-48.

¹⁷ Paul Meyer, *Romania* 14, (1885), 388; Lucy Toulmin Smith, *Athenaeum* 93 (1890).

¹⁸ Leopold Hervieux, *Les Fabulistes Latins: Études de Cheriton et ses Dérivés*, (Firmin-Didot and Company, 1896).

fables and *exempla*, and nearly four hundred pages to Latin transcriptions of them.¹⁹ However, studying Odo's *exempla* without the context of the sermons in which he wrote them proved to be the principle criticism against Hervieux's work. The main source of this criticism was Jean-Barthélemy Hauréau, who reviewed Hervieux's book in *Journal des Savants*. The review noted Hervieux's omission of important elements of the sermons within the *Sermones Dominicales* collection from which Hervieux took fables.²⁰ It also argued that fables placed within sermons served a specific purpose that we squander by plucking them out of context. In addition, the lack of a critical apparatus magnified the difficulty for later scholars in retracing the precise manuscript folios whence Hervieux took his fables. Not only did this mean a loss of information about the sermon's use and role, but it ignored critical information about what the story actually meant in the context in which Odo placed it. Additionally, Hervieux omitted narrative elements that did not technically qualify as *exempla*, such as references to legends and bestiaries, causing him, in the words of A.C. Friend, to miss passages that "throw light on the times and circumstances for which the sermons were originally composed."²¹

Hervieux's approach was characteristic of a popular strand of late nineteenth-century scholarship that often concentrated on sermons without much historical analysis. Understanding the particular roles each illustration played in the overall sermon or placing the illustrations and sermons in their larger societal context was not a

¹⁹ This remained the state of the field for nearly three decades. J.A. Herbert mentioned Odo in the 1921 *Dictionary of National Biography* and Heinrich Dülks wrote an article in 1928 documenting Odo's influence on the Spanish fable collection, *Libro de los Gatos*, but the understanding of Odo's significance remained largely unchanged. J.A. Herbert, *Dictionary of National Biography* XIV, (1921) 873-4; Heinrich Dülks, "Der Einfluss der Fabeln Odo's von Cherington auf 'El Libro de los Gatos,'" Bonn, L. Neuendorff, 1928.

²⁰ Hauréau, B., "Review of 'Les Fabulistes Latins depuis le siècle d'August jusqu' a la Fin du Moyen Age,' by L. Hervieux," *Journal des Savants* (1896), 111-123. See Friend, 5-6

²¹ Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 5.

primary concern. This approach used a history of individual preachers and their sermons to depict what one might call the spirit of the age, but did little to explain why it was so or investigate why preachers wrote what they did. This is one of the late nineteenth-century methods, in Hayden White's words, "where one historian may take it as his task to reinvolve, in a lyrical or poetic manner, the 'spirit' of a past age."²² This was not only the case with historians of preaching. Karen Sullivan documents an example of this tendency in a treatment of the Spanish Inquisition by the late nineteenth-century historian Charles Henry Lea. Lea exemplified the nineteenth century approach that saw Inquisitors as individuals whose work merited study for their own sake.²³ This was followed in the twentieth century by historians such as R. I. Moore, who tended toward approaching Inquisitors as a group and sought to understand the role they played in the larger, shifting historical context.²⁴

This historiographic tendency to study the individual may be the reason that historians ceased study of Odo's work. As an individual figure, Odo provided an interesting case of a prolific writer whose collection of *exempla*, widely popular in the Middle Ages, begged for literary and historical analysis. As a secular clergyman, however, Odo did not easily fit into narratives like the rise of Dominican preaching and other broad frameworks that came to characterize early twentieth-century historiography. This much is evident in Friend's work during the nineteen-thirties when

²² Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 4.

²³ Karen Sullivan, *The Inner Lives of Medieval Inquisitors*, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 15.

²⁴ R. I. Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society: Power and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250*, (Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), 193-195. For a contextualization within the larger historiography of Moore's position on individuals and broader historical circumstances, see Sullivan 15-21.

work on Odo's life had largely ceased decades earlier. Friend laments how "critics are fond of applying such terms as 'progress' or 'development of civilization' with the implication that we have now reached a superior level in the world's history."²⁵ Despite his conclusion that Odo does not fit in this grand narrative, Friend obviously found historical significance in renewing study of Odo's life and work.

Albert C. Friend

Friend's unpublished DPhil thesis, *The Life and Work of Odo of Cheriton*, which he later published as an article in *Speculum*, constitutes the most thorough research on Odo to date.²⁶ For the previous seventy years of historiography, Odo was thought to have been a Cistercian monk writing before 1200. To correct this, Friend undertook an investigation of pipe rolls and tax and legal records for information on Odo's family and personal life. The discovery that Odo came from a wealthy family and owned land, according to tax records, eliminated the possibility of his membership in the Cistercian order and changes our perception of his societal role. In addition, the fact that his first works were finished just after the monumental Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 defines his religious context.

Inevitably, the questions Friend sought to answer nearly eighty years ago are substantially different from the questions of early twenty first-century academic thought. He devotes a chapter of over fifty pages to Odo's personal understanding of Christianity and internal struggles with human imperfection, a line of inquiry now usually relegated to microhistory. The vast majority of Friend's study, however, eruditely describes the

²⁵ Friend, "Life and Unpublished Work," 116.

²⁶ A.C. Friend, "Odo of Cheriton," *Speculum* 23 (1948), 641-658.

sermons, their prologues, their *exempla* in context, and their dating and influence. Friend noted the danger of studying the fables out of context, comparing it to “showing the ornaments of a style without the design.”²⁷ While earlier scholars had taken fables out of the context of the sermons in which Odo wrote them,²⁸ Friend enabled further study providing specific folio references within unpublished manuscripts and clarifying the details of Odo’s life. More importantly, he pointed out the danger of extracting sermon illustrations from their context within both Odo’s corpus and the overall cultural context that included Odo’s predecessors and followers.

The Last Twenty Years

After Friend’s thesis, work on Odo went largely unexamined for over fifty years. However, with the advent of sermon studies as a field of historical inquiry, a few scholars have resumed study of Odo’s corpus. In 1995, the esteemed scholar of sermon studies, Bella Millett traced an early fifteenth-century secular lyric to Odo’s *Sermones de Festis*.²⁹ According to Millett, Odo showed disapproval for secular song, but saw use for it in a religious context. The result was Odo’s simultaneous denouncement and exploitation of chosen aspects of popular culture. Instead of understanding the particular verse under consideration as a piece of secular love literature, Odo applied it to the love of the Virgin Mary in an act of converting profane entertainment.

In 1998, Enzo Franchini composed the most significant treatment of Odo’s life since Friend’s investigation. Franchini observed a gap of twelve years in Friend’s

²⁷ Friend, “Life and Unpublished Work,” 6.

²⁸ The chief example is Leopold Hervieux, whom Háureau criticized in his review for this very reason.

²⁹ Millett, “The Songs of Entertainers.”

account, which he proposed Odo spent in Spain. Since Friend only had access to British archives, he was unaware of the Spanish legal documents that show Odo's presence in Palencia and subsequently in Salamanca. These documents also record Odo's position as a secular canon in both cities, a respectable office in the community. Franchini proposes that information on the specific teachers at Spanish universities, such as what he has provided on Odo, can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the state of Spanish scholasticism in the early thirteenth century. As an example, he notes that legal records contain Odo's name as a canon of Palencia and as the owner of multiple houses, buttressing his thesis that foreign professors were well integrated into Castilian university communities and enjoyed high social prestige there.

These more recent historical works have attempted to access Odo's culture and background, investigating the way that his contexts function around him. This is, in many ways, the opposite approach from what nineteenth-century historians took.³⁰ In general, historians like Hervieux and Hauréau tended toward viewing Odo's sermons, particularly their fables, as glimpses into everyday life that revealed broader notions of what the age was like. While Odo's sermons and their *exempla* do provide helpful information and convey certain characteristics of his era, it is also necessary to treat his writings and his historical context as having more of a conversational relationship where each influenced the other. The historian studying medieval sermons and *exempla* is always at risk of taking the preacher at face value as a chronicler consciously trying to

³⁰ Hayden White contrasts his description of the historian who seeks to describe the spirit of the age with the one who takes it "as his task to penetrate behind the events in order to disclose the 'laws' or 'principles' of which a particular age's 'spirit' is only a manifestation of phenomenal form." Hayden White, *Metahistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe*, (London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 4.

crystallize medieval life rather than as a spiritual shepherd trying to influence and encourage his flock. Odo was writing not simply a report of what he saw, but was trying to affect his audience through the performance of his sermon in the ritual of mass. Consequently, contemporary motivations and preconceptions determined what Odo chose to emphasize and convey to his audience. Our conclusions must account for the presence of rhetoric and realize that the sermon as it survives in written form is not how the laity saw and heard it. Rather, we simply have what Odo edited and preserved as a tool for future clerics – a valuable and revealing resource in its own right when approached through these conditions.

The preceding chapters are intended to emulate Bella Millett's brief work that examined Odo's writing in his cultural context and geographical setting. A.C. Friend laid most of the groundwork for this study, though his comprehensive research halted at Odo's move to Spain. Franchini's work of filling this lacuna in the primary sources enables a continuation of the comprehensive approach taken by Friend and Millett. I have intended to expand on these studies by surveying Odo's references to Spain, specifically Christianity in the Spanish context. By doing so, we might observe what he saw as important for an audience interacting, if not with Muslims themselves, at least with the Muslim influence that had left an indelible mark on the religion, language, and culture of Castile-Leon.

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