

ARCHITECTURE IN THE DESIGN AND CONTENT OF THE ODBERT PSALTER (BOULOGNE-
SUR-MER, BIBLIOTHÈQUE MUNICIPALE, MS 20)

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by

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Abstract

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The Odbert Psalter, made c. 1000 at Saint-Bertin, opens with Davidic imagery and includes innovative historiated initials containing scenes from the life of Christ . That imagery and the texts of the Odbert Psalter are written, drawn, and painted according to the logic of a building and are replete with architectural themes. This thesis considers how and why Odbert and the other architects of the Psalter created this manuscript as a figurative building. That design is not only conducive to the devotional and educational uses of the Psalter, but also to expression of Christ's place at the heart of scripture. The psalter was the central devotional text in the monastic life, comprising the majority of the Divine Office and thus structuring the daily life of a monk. For the monks of Saint-Bertin, the Psalter was an ideal site to express the Christological doctrines central to their beliefs and practices.

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Finally, with all my heart:

“I thank you for you answered me;

you have been my savior.

The stone the builders rejected

has become the cornerstone.

By the Lord has this been done;

it is wonderful in our eyes...

You are my God, I give you thanks;

my God, I offer you praise.

Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,

his mercy endures forever.”

Psalm 118: 21-23, 28-29

CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION TO THE ODBERT PSALTER AND ITS ARCHITECTONIC FORM

“The Psalter is like a stately mansion that has only one key to the main entrance...Even though the great key to the grand entrance is the Holy Spirit, still each room without exception has its own smaller key. Should anyone accidentally confuse the keys and throw them out and then want to open one of the rooms, he could not do so until he found the right one. Similarly, the psalms are each like single cells, every one with its own proper key. The main entrance to the mansion of the Psalter is the first psalm...”¹

-Saint Jerome

The Odbert Psalter (Boulogne-sur-mer, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 20) is an impressive physical manifestation of the *magna domus* that Jerome describes. The manuscript embodies his description not simply because it contains the psalter text, but because it gives form to Jerome’s figurative characterization of the psalter as a building. The contents of the Odbert Psalter are written, drawn, and painted according to the logic of a building with a grand entrance and many rooms within to be explored. Key to the construction of this parchment and ink architecture is the Odbert Psalter’s

¹ Translation from Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, trans. Marie Liguori Ewald, The Fathers of the Church, vol. 48 (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1964), 3. “Psalterium ita est quasi magna domus, quae unam quidem habet exteriorem clauem in porta...Licet amplior una clauis sit gradis portae Spiritus sanctus, tamen unumquodque cubiculum habet proprias clauiculas suas. Si quis igitur clauis confuses de domo proiciat si voluerit aperire cubiculum, non potest nisi clauem inuenerit: sic singuli psalmi quasi singulae cellulae sunt, habentes proprie clauis suas. Gradis itaque porta istius domus primus psalmus est...” [Jerome, *Tractatus sive homiliae in psalmos, in marci evangelium aliaque varia argumenta*, edited by D. Germanus Morin, Corpus Christianorum Series Latina, vol. 78. (Turnhout: Brepols, 1958), 3].

innovative series of historiated initials containing scenes from the life of Christ. This thesis considers how and why Odbert and the other architects of the Psalter created this manuscript as a figurative building. That figurative concept generates a design that is not only conducive to the devotional and educational uses of the Psalter, but also to expression of the person who is at the heart of Scripture and ideally at the heart of all Christian practice—Christ Himself. The psalter was the central devotional text in the monastic life, comprising the majority of the Divine Office and thus structuring the daily life of a monk. It makes sense that the monks of Saint-Bertin would consider their psalter manuscript a particularly suitable site for expressing Christological doctrines central to their beliefs and practices.

The Odbert Psalter takes its name from the man who decorated it—Odbert, abbot of the monastery of Saint-Bertin from 986 to c. 1007.² He is named as the decorator in an acrostic poem, which also names the scribe, Heriveus, and the “editor,” Dodolinus.³ At Saint-Bertin, located in the Flemish town of Saint-Omer, Odbert lead, as both abbot and artist, an active scriptorium that produced approximately sixteen manuscripts.⁴ The Odbert Psalter is a monument among them, figuratively and literally,

² Additions to the Saint-Bertin chronicle made after the time of Odbert give conflicting dates of his abbacy. A beginning date of 986 is generally agreed upon, but his death ranges from 1007 to 1012. See Claire Kelleher, “Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert” (PhD diss., University of London, 1968), 6-14, for a discussion of dating his abbacy.

³ “Me composit Heriueus, et Odbertus decorauit./Excerpsit Dodolinus...” See Appendix C for full text of the acrostic and translation.

⁴ Kelleher includes 16 manuscripts in her catalogue of the scriptorium and Susan Lowry agrees with her. See Susan Lowry, “New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 333 and Manuscript Illumination at the Monastery of St. Bertin Under Abbot Odbert (986-Ca. 1007)” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 1993) 3, for a history of attributions to the scriptorium. For an introduction to the products of the scriptorium, see

with a size of 356 x 310 mm and 231 leaves. The manuscript contains the Gallican version of the psalms, accompanied by a marginal gloss based largely on Augustine's *Enarrationes in Psalmos* and Jerome's *Tractatus sive homiliae in Psalmos* (ff. 11r-168r).⁵ Further texts include a symbolic description of the Church (f. 1r);⁶ an acrostic poem that includes a colophon (f. 1v); a group of prefaces (several of which are by Jerome; ff. 3r-10v); the apocryphal Psalm 151 (*Pusillus eram*); and various canticles, collects, hymns and prayers (ff. 168r-231).⁷

the introduction to Kelleher's catalog (p 20), and, more recently, Richard Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," in *Pen in Hand: Medieval Scribal Portraits, Colophons and Tools*, ed. Michael Gullick (Walkern, Herts: Red Gull Press, 2006), 33-35.

⁵ V. Leroquais, "Psautier-hymnaire glosé de Saint-Bertin, 999," in *Les Psautiers: manuscrits latins des bibliothèques publiques de France* (Mâcon : Protat frères, 1941), 1:99. Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 52, 59. Leroquais mentions only Augustine's *Enarrationes*. Kelleher adds that some of the commentary is an abstract of Augustine and that other parts are clearly from Jerome's *Breviarium in Psalmos*. The *Breviarium* is now considered Pseudo-hieronymian, drawing on both the *Tractatus* and his *Commentarioli in Psalmos*, among other sources. See Martin McNamara, *The Psalms in the Early Irish Church* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 49. In my comparisons between transcriptions made from the Psalter and the *Tractatus* and *Enarrationes*, I have found a few close paraphrases of those works in the gloss, but I have been unable to investigate how much of the Jerome comes via the *Breviarium* due to time constraints on this project.

⁶ "Fundamentum ipsius camerae est fides..." The text has been attributed to Jerome [As part of the contents of Cambridge, Jesus College, Q. B. 6, a twelfth-century psalter in M. R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Jesus College, Cambridge* (London: C. J. Clay and Sons, 1895), 25.], but Leroquais does not reference an edition in his entry on the Odbert Psalter, and I have not been able to find one. The Boulogne catalog of manuscripts says that this text was a later addition to the Odbert Psalter. According to David Gura, the script of this text does not appear to be much later than the script throughout the rest of the manuscript, and it is from the early eleventh century (Personal correspondence, 10-25-2012). If the text was indeed written later, but not much later, than the rest of the Psalter, it might be considered as a contemporary response to the Psalter, an idea that I will explore in the second chapter. This text's placement before the dedication poem, its odd mise-en-page, and the fact that it is unfinished suggest that it was not part of the original plan for the manuscript. We can tell that it is unfinished because of the empty indented space along the left side of the text block that was apparently supposed to be filled by a large, most likely decorated initial for the beginning F. The initial for each phrase is set apart from the word it begins and is written in very light brown ink. Some of these initials are missing.

⁷ See Leroquais, "Psautier-hymnaire glosé de Saint-Bertin, 999," 94-101, for a complete, detailed listing of the contents.

These texts are integrated into a remarkable and innovative manuscript design alongside pictorial elements, and they sometimes become a part of those elements.⁸ The first images in the manuscript are miniatures of David, with the psalm co-authors on folio 2r and then enthroned and playing the psaltery on folio 2v (Figs. 2.1, 2.2). Space on both of those folios is also filled with a collection of Old Testament musical instruments described in a letter attributed to Jerome, which is excerpted alongside the instruments and included among the prefaces.⁹ The only other full-page miniature is the next image (f. 11r; Fig. 2.3), a decorative frame incorporating more Davidic scenes, within which is placed the historiated initial for Psalm 1 and the text of the first verse. This is the first historiated initial in a series of thirty-three spaced throughout the Psalter, twenty-five of which include Christological scenes. These twenty-five letters form the earliest Christological historiated initial sequence within a Psalter, though the events depicted are not entirely in chronological order.¹⁰ The remaining historiated initials contain five Old Testament scenes, an image of Earth and Ocean, a figure related to Psalm 13, and a scene based on the text of Psalm 83.¹¹ Furthermore, the initials of all the remaining

⁸ All of the manuscript's major decorations and many of the decorated initials can be viewed in color online at <http://www.enluminures.culture.fr/documentation/enlumine/fr/>.

⁹ Christopher Page, "Biblical Instruments in Medieval Manuscript Illustration." *Early Music* 5, no. 3 (1977): 299-309.

¹⁰ The Carolingian Stuttgart Psalter (Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. bibl. fol. 23) does have Christological sequence interspersed through its text, but not within initials. Christ also appears sporadically in the drawings of the Utrecht Psalter (Utrecht, Bibliothek der Rijksuniversiteit, Ms 32), but not at all illustrating the Gospel narrative.

¹¹ See Appendix B for a table of the historiated initial subjects, the psalm they accompany, their location in the manuscript, and which division of the psalter they mark, if any. The psalter divisions will be discussed later in the chapter.

psalms, most of the canticles, and a few of the hymns are decorated with an immense variety of Franco-Saxon and Anglo-Saxon motifs. Most commonly there is some kind of interlace form incorporated and/or the letter is formed with the body of a beast. Finally, an Anglo-Saxon artist from outside Saint-Bertin added seven marginal drawings slightly later than the rest of the decorations. They are placed beside Psalms 2, 3, 11, 16, 21, 22, and 24.¹²

The majority of the decorations are executed in ink lines and washes of red, green, blue, purple, and yellow. Red is by far the most common color used. Most of the figures in the historiated initials are drawn simply in red outline without any interior color. The same red color is used for many simple initials and psalm titles throughout the texts and for the small tie notes similar to tironian notes or Greek letters that link each psalm verse to its respective gloss (Fig. 1.1).¹³ These markings are mostly abstract, but some are identifiable as limbs, faces, animal heads, and Eucharistic vessels.¹⁴ The capital letters that begin each verse of the psalms alternate among red, green, and purple. Gold and silver paint is used at key points in the manuscript. The architecture

¹² William Noel, "The Lost Canterbury Prototype of the Eleventh Century Bury St. Edmund's Psalter," In *Bury St. Edmunds: Medieval Art, Architecture, Archaeology, and Economy*, edited by Antonia Gransden (Leeds: British Archaeological Association, 1998), 161-171. Noel and others believe that the drawings were added later, but Don Denny, in "The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter," *Studies in Iconography* 14 (1995), discusses them as an early idea for the Odbert Psalter's decoration that was abandoned in favor of historiated initials. Some of the marginal pen drawings are thematically related to the design of the initial program, but I do not think they have a bearing on what the structure of the initial design intends to convey.

¹³ Paul Henry Saenger, *Space between Words: The Origins of Silent Reading* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), 197.

¹⁴ On folio 33r, the last three verses of Psalm 26 have signs that appear to be a wine vessel, a host, and a ciborium. These same three objects are seen on the table of the feast of the Philistines in the initial for Psalm 58. Examples of the more capricious sort of notes can be found on folio 44r.

framing the figures in the folio 2 images is mostly silver with gold, brown and red details. The instruments on these folios are outlined in silver. Gold and silver are prominent in the Psalm 1 miniature, which is also remarkable for its use of a royal purple background and for the figures in the frame and initial that are painted, rather than drawn.

Gold and silver are also used in a variety of ways to form each initial that marks one of the divisions of the Psalter. The Odbert Psalter is quite unusual in combining the three traditional Psalter division systems: three-part,¹⁵ five-part¹⁶ and eight part.¹⁷ The three-part division system is an Insular tradition that often uses typological or symbolic images as markers.¹⁸ The five-part system comes from the Hebrew tradition of dividing the Psalter into five books. The eight-part or ferial division is usually a feature of secular liturgical psalters, i.e. for use cathedral and collegiate churches, because it is dictated by the use of the psalms in the secular Divine Office of the Roman rite. The psalms that begin each of the eight parts are the first psalms prayed at Matins from Sunday through Saturday, plus the first one prayed at Vespers on Sunday. That is, Matins on Sunday

¹⁵ The parts begin with Psalms 1, 51, and 101; this division is of Irish origin. For a more detailed discussion of the origins of the divisions, see Lisa Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents of the Psalms in the Early Middle Ages" (PhD diss., University of Michigan, 2005), 12n34.

¹⁶ The parts begin with Psalms 1, 41, 72, 89, and 106. These sections come from the division of the Psalter into five books in the Hebrew Scriptures.

¹⁷ The parts begin with Psalms 1, 26, 38, 52, 68, 80, 97 and 109. The three- and eight-part systems were sometimes combined, but the additional use of the five-part is rare.

¹⁸ K.M. Openshaw, "The Symbolic Illustration of the Psalter: An Insular Tradition," *Arte medievale*, II Serie, Anno VI (1992): 41-60.

begins with Psalm 1, Matins on Monday with Psalm 26, etc., but the ensuing group of psalms was only read in its entirety for Matins on Monday, Thursday, and Saturday.¹⁹

Despite marking the ferial division, the Odbert Psalter is not suitable for liturgical use. It is a biblical psalter, which is to say that the psalms are laid out in order from 1 to 150, rather than being arranged according to their use in the Office. Thus the Odbert Psalter was probably intended for private devotion or study.²⁰ There are numerous corrections of words and letters throughout the manuscript, suggesting a close, critical use of the manuscript.²¹ These corrections also indicate that, despite its size and the richness of its decoration, the Odbert Psalter, not being kept in pristine condition, was probably not displayed publicly. The extensive glossing is also an indication of private use, not only because the gloss was a guide for devotion and study, but also because its text is entirely too small and cramped to be read aloud in a group setting.²² Guy Lobrichon considers the mise-en-page of the Odbert Psalter, one accommodating a

¹⁹ K. Horst, William Noel and Wilhelmina C. M. Wüsterfeld, *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David* (Westrenen: Hes, 1996), 36. The ferial division is also discussed by Rosemary Wright: "Introducing the Medieval Psalter," in *Studies in the Illustration of the Psalter*, (Stamford, (Lincolnshire: Shaun Tyas, 2000), 2-3. Wright states that monastic ferial psalters did not have divisions at Psalms 80 and 97, but the Odbert Psalter does. I will argue the case for its monastic use shortly.

²⁰ Rosemary Wright, "Introducing the Medieval Psalter," 2-3. Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents," 5.

²¹ Distinguishing and dating the hand or hands of these corrections was beyond my skill and beyond the scope of this project. The corrections seem to be in a uniform, darker ink.

²² Wright, "Introducing the Medieval Psalter," 3. At certain points in the manuscript, the text of the psalms themselves would also be quite difficult to read aloud. Sometimes when a line of verse is too long for the text space, the end of the line is placed above it in the space left by a previous verse ending before reaching the margin.

marginal gloss, to be an essentially scholarly characteristic.²³ Lisa Bessette notes that biblical psalters are usually considered to be for secular use; for instance, Koert Van der Horst argues that this is the case for the Utrecht Psalter.²⁴ On the other hand, Bessette points out that biblical psalters were used in monastic contexts for study and devotion. In the case of the Odbert Psalter, the opening acrostic makes it quite clear that the manuscript was intended for use at Saint-Bertin.²⁵ The poem makes reference to the monks' singing of the psalms; prays for the salvation of the community; names the book-makers and seeks particular blessings for them; condemns anyone who might steal it from its repository; and directly addresses the residents of Saint-Bertin as readers.²⁶ The author, Heriveus, also verbally presents the book to St. Peter, who had had a dedicated chapel at the monastery for a long time.²⁷ Given the Psalter's context of

²³ Guy Lobrichon, "Le Psautier d'Odbert," in *Mise en page et mise en texte du livre manuscrit*, eds. Henri Jean Martin, Jean Vezin and J. Monfrin (Paris: Éditions du Cercle de la Librairie-Promodis, 1990), 174.

²⁴ Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents," 5; Horst, Noel and Wüsterfeld, *The Utrecht Psalter in Medieval Art: Picturing the Psalms of David*, 39. Van der Horst bases this argument primarily on the fact that the Utrecht Psalter marks the first lines of the sections of the long Psalm 118 that begin the daily Little Hours in the secular Office. The Odbert Psalter does not mark these sections, but it does provide a decorated initial for each of the parts beginning with the letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The letters are inherent in the Psalm text as headings. They are spelled out (aleph, beth, gimel, etc.) in red ink in the Odbert Psalter.

²⁵ See full text in Appendix C.

²⁶ Gameson states that only one of the Saint-Bertin manuscripts was exported, and thus that the various colophons in them were only for the eyes of the monks. Gameson concludes that the frequent naming of Saint-Bertin residents in their books happened to be a characteristic of this community's scriptorium, suggesting that Odbert was the force behind this custom. Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 68.

²⁷ Ibid., 36. We can also note that Heriveus, in the acrostic phrase, states that he wrote the poem (and/or book?) for St. Bertin, though not for the monastery Saint-Bertin, which is referred to as Sithiu in the poem. Sithiu was the monastery's former name, but, according to Gameson, the monastery had been dedicated to St. Bertin by Odbert's time.

use and biblical arrangement of the psalms, we can conclude that the ferial divisions were not marked for the practical purpose of finding where to begin reading during the Office.

In order to discuss the logic of the Psalter's organization, it is essential to understand how the design elements of the historiated initials mark the text divisions, and how the biblical narratives depicted relate to the varieties of initial design. There are two basic visual categories of historiated initials: those that mark divisions and use gold and silver paint, and those that do not mark divisions and use only colored ink. The scenes in the division initials are in chronological order and are all from the New Testament. The subjects in the other initial category are from the Old and New Testaments, and they do not exactly fit into the chronology of the division initials. Don Denny suggests that there was an original plan to intersperse Old Testament initials between those marking the divisions, but that this was abandoned; all the non-division initials from Psalm 81 onward have New Testament subjects.²⁸ Although there are unanswerable questions about the design process that led to the group of initials we now see in the Odbert Psalter, it does seem that the designers initially planned a coherent Christological cycle for only those initials marking divisions.²⁹ The present study

²⁸ Don Denny, "The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter," 62. Denny engages in further speculation about when in the creative process it was decided that various subjects and initial types would go together and where they would be placed. This is a problem that deserves greater attention, but such an analysis is beyond my scope here. I follow Denny in thinking that the division initials were planned together at the start, but depart from his tentative suggestion that the Beatus initial was conceived after the rest of the sequence, for reasons that will become evident in the course of this thesis.

²⁹ Ibid., 68.

focuses on that core initial group, but the non-division initials do play a part in the analysis.

The Odbert Psalter's miniature/initial for Psalm 1 (Figs. 2.3-2.4) is the marker of part one for all three systems of division. The color scheme of this initial is similar to that of the ensuing initials in a few ways: the letter's golden outer edges enclose silver interior spaces; those spaces are articulated by interlace drawn in red ink; and the background of the historiated space within the gold and silver letter is painted bright blue. The pen designs on the letters are sometimes foliate scrolls or other motifs instead of interlace. In several cases, although the gold and silver layers are still used, the decorative motif simply uses the colors of the ink and parchment, adding a third layer of color (e.g. the Baptism initial in Fig. 1.1).³⁰ As previously mentioned, the Psalm 1 initial is unique in that the figures within are fully painted, except for their skin.

The other two initials that mark the three-part division are the largest and most ornate in the manuscript. The Psalm 51 initial (f. 58v; Fig. 3.9), which houses the Nativity and Annunciation to the Shepherds, is slightly over eleven lines in height, and the Psalm 101 initial (f. 109r; Fig. 1.2), which houses the Paschal Sequence, is twelve lines, making both of them about a third of the page height. These initials are the only ones that contain multiple scenes. The continuation of the psalm verses begun by the initials is written with gold ink in narrow lines to the right of the initial, using uncial and rustic capitals for Psalm 51 and capitals only for Psalm 101. The initials for the five- and eight-

³⁰ The gold layer is usually quite thin in these instances. See also the initials for Psalms 41 and 72 (ff. 49r and 78r).

part divisions are smaller and do not vary drastically in size from each other. They are generally five to six lines in height, but the Annunciation initial reaches almost eight lines in height, and the Ascension initial is the largest of this group at a full eight lines. The color, size and script of the titles and verse continuations alongside these initials do not follow a rigid pattern, but there are a few constants. At both the eight- and five-part divisions, the title verses are written in uncials and colored ink, usually red and green.³¹ The colored uncials are also used for the verse after the title at the eight-part markers, with each successive line in a different color than the one before in most cases. At the start of the five parts, the word begun by the initial is in black uncials, but the verse continues in the miniscule script.

Among the incredible formal variety of the initials, the unified color scheme—gold and silver framing a scene in red and taupe on a blue ground—stands out by its repetition. It is the dynamic of this color scheme that first prompted the impression that the initials work like architectural elements—windows, to be precise. The bold, reflective surface of the metallic paints makes the letterform advance while, in most cases, the lighter figures seem to recede, creating the illusion of depth that pierces the flat parchment surface.³² This visual dynamic is most suggestive of architecture in the

³¹ The title verse is usually the one designated verse 1, though sometimes the title extends into verse 2. The title verse often gives a person or event with whom the psalm is associated, along the lines of verses 1-2 of Psalm 51: “Unto the end, understanding for David. When Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul, David went to the house of Achimelech.” The historiated initials always begin the verse after the title i.e. the first verse containing words of prayer spoken to God. All scripture references will be from the Douay-Rheims (DR) translation of the Vulgate. Swift Edgar and Angela M. Kinney. *The Vulgate Bible: Douay-Rheims Translation* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2010).

³² The initial for Psalm 80 is an exception. The setting and figures of the Presentation in the Temple are woven into the silver and gold letterform. This initial is discussed in detail in chapter three.

specific case of the miniature for Psalm 1. Here the illusion of depth appears not only in the initial, but also analogously between the arch and the initial. A built space, albeit a stylized one, emerges in the flat parchment folios. We see a distant window through an archway.³³ This observation of the visual dynamics of the painted pages in concert with the supporting visual and textual evidence that I have uncovered led to the conclusion that the designers of the Odbert Psalter conceived of their entire creation, their arrangement of texts and images, as a building project in parchment and ink, a work of architecture within a codex.

This is a design plan not limited to images that include “literal” architectural elements, such as that for Psalm 1. The plan combines such literal architecture with more abstract architectonic principles to achieve two main goals: to guide the monk through spiritual and typological readings of the psalms and to make the Odbert Psalter decoration an effective aid and catalyst to the memory. This latter goal will be explored later in the present chapter, and the former goal primarily in chapters two and three. The mise-en-page of the Psalter and the ordering of its initials embody on the page the qualities of a built structure and suggest that the Psalter was imagined this way. The Psalter draws from a long tradition of mnemonic and meditative architecture. It constructs, however, a new architecture of images and words to facilitate a particular understanding of the psalms. Encompassing the practical goals of prayer and education, the Psalter’s architecture expresses Christ’s roles as Lord and as mediator between

³³ A much more detailed analysis of the space in this miniature is included in chapter two.

humanity and God in the monastic life and throughout history. The plan for the textual building of the Psalter is the same plan that forms creation and recreates fallen humankind—that is, Christ the Logos.

1.1 Literature Review

Rather than considering comprehensively the interweaving of the glossed psalter and the life of Christ, most of the previous studies done on the Odbert Psalter have focused specifically on parts of its decoration, either tracing iconographic traditions of images or choosing one as example of a theme found in a several manuscripts. Claire Kelleher, in her 1968 dissertation on the scriptorium of Saint-Bertin under Odbert, selected a number of initials and a couple of the manuscript's prefatory miniatures and identified the visual traditions of these images and some contemporary examples of similar iconography.³⁴ She concluded that the style and iconography of the Psalter was based mainly on English sources, though she considers the Psalter to have the most diverse sources of any of the manuscripts made under Odbert. Rainer Kahsnitz studied all of the Christological iconography in the Psalter, but, valuable as his work is, it also does not address the question of why the iconography was conceived for a psalter in the form of historiated initials.³⁵

³⁴ Claire Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 211-277, 307-309.

³⁵ Rainer Kahsnitz, "Der Christologische Zyklus im Odbert-Psalter," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 51, no. 1 (1988), 33-125.

K.M. Openshaw's work on the themes of spiritual warfare and the victory over evil in the imagery of the Tiberius Psalter³⁶ and other earlier psalters incorporates the Odbert Psalter initials that depict the three temptations of Christ.³⁷ The presence of such temptation images in early psalters—along with a set of typologically related images of David fighting foes and prefatory texts extolling the power of the psalms against evil³⁸—indicate that the struggle with and eventual triumph over sin is a significant theme of psalter decoration. The present study considers spiritual warfare as one theme among several that are explored in the Psalter's structure and enriched in that context.

Don Denny conducted a more comprehensive analysis of the Odbert Psalter that seeks to explain its innovative placement of a "biography of Christ" within the psalms in historiated initials.³⁹ He argues that this innovation was related to an increased interest in the historicity of Christ's earthly life cultivated by the monastic reform movements of the tenth century. Saint-Bertin had undergone reforms under Gérard of Brogne beginning in 944.⁴⁰ Denny notes that the late tenth century saw an increase in

³⁶ London, British Library, MS Cotton Tiberius C.VI.

³⁷ K.M. Openshaw, "The Battle Between Christ and Satan in the Tiberius Psalter," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 52 (1989): 14-33 and K. M. Openshaw, "Weapons in the Daily Battle: images of the Conquest of Evil in the Early Medieval Psalter," *The Art Bulletin* 75, no. 1 (Mar. 1993), 17-38.

³⁸ Openshaw does not mention the appearance of the Davidic scenes in the Odbert Psalter.

³⁹ Denny, "The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter," 55.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 57. Denny explains that "...psalms...were more and more...integrated into Christocentric rituals...most thoroughly developed in the Cluniac order..." but also in Gérard's reforms and the related reforms in England. See also Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 33, and Steven Vanderputten, "Canterbury and Flanders in the Late Tenth Century," *Anglo-Saxon England* 35 (2006), 229.

production of Christological sequences in liturgical books, such as in the Benedictional of Aethelwold.⁴¹ At Saint-Bertin, this kind of image sequence was brought not only to the Psalter, but also to the two gospel books made under Odbert, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 333 and Boulogne Ms 11.⁴² The sequential nature of the initials does emphasize Christ's humanity by placing Him in narrative time, but we shall see that the relationship of these scenes to their architectonic organization equally brings out Christ's identity as the divine Logos.

Denny also suggested how the initials express the divinity of Christ with his argument that the initial program operates like an acrostic poem, noting the interest in acrostic form at Saint-Bertin demonstrated by the poem in the Odbert Psalter.⁴³ Like an acrostic's vertical letters, the separate scenes combine to form a "text" not otherwise present in the psalm verses—the gospels in visual form. The narrative order of the gospel scenes makes the initial sequence most like an alphabetic acrostic in which the first letters of the verses follow the order of the alphabet, rather than the order of a particular word. To present the earthly life of Christ in initials as an alphabetic acrostic—one with a beginning, end, and specific order—imbues it with a greater significance by referencing the idea of Christ as the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end of existence.⁴⁴ Denny also points out that in monastic intellectual culture, additional

⁴¹ London, British Library, Add. 49598. Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1995).

⁴² Denny, "The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter," 56.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 58-60.

⁴⁴ Revelation 1:8.

mystical and moral significance was attributed to the order of the alphabet, in part because of the special role of the monks as literate members of society.⁴⁵ Furthermore, the psalter was the foundational educational text of the Middle Ages with which one first learned to read.⁴⁶ Denny's analysis is insightful. There is a good possibility that the initials were thought of in terms of acrostic structure, but I believe this to be one structure that fits into the wider architectonic design guiding both the layout and content of the Psalter.

My work calls into question the assumption of Denny and other scholars that the placement of the Christological images in the Odbert Psalter was determined without reference to specific psalm texts, but derives from a general understanding of the psalms as prophecies of Christ, as was the case with earlier uses of Christological imagery in psalters.⁴⁷ That interpretation of the psalms had been present in Christianity since the writing of the gospels. Long before the Christological concerns of monastic reforms, the antiphons and responsories of the Divine Office had reminded monks that the psalms foretold the life of Christ, and that David, the Old Testament king, was a

⁴⁵ Among the prefaces in the Odbert Psalter is a letter by Jerome on the significance of the Hebrew alphabet.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 59. On the psalter's place in education, particularly in an Anglo-Saxon context, see George H. Brown, "The Psalms as the Foundation of Anglo-Saxon Learning," in *The Place of the Psalms in the Intellectual Culture of the Middle Ages*, ed. Nancy Van Deusen (Albany, N.Y.: State University of New York Press, 1999), 1-24.

⁴⁷ Barbara Raw interpreted the Psalm 101 initial from a similar prospective, seeing it as one prominent piece in a sequence of initials that do not refer to specific themes or prophecies in the Psalms. Barbara Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival* (Cambridge ; New York : University of Cambridge, 1990).

prefiguration of Christ the new king.⁴⁸ Certainly these general typological ideas are present in the Odbert Psalter, particularly that of Christ the King, but there is evidence that at least some of the images are specifically associated with the psalm in which they are placed, in addition to playing a part in the overarching narrative. For instance, the gloss for Psalm 101, which is accompanied by a depiction of the death, descent to hell and resurrection of Christ,⁴⁹ says that Christ prayed the psalm in His passion.⁵⁰ Other examples of significant psalm-image pairings will be explored in the following chapters.

An approach to art history based on the materiality of art objects has been popular of late and this approach influenced the way in which I analyzed the Odbert Psalter, looking to the interactions of color as indicators of meaning. In Melanie Holcomb's essay for the exhibition catalogue *Pen and Parchment*, she examined the distinctive impact of drawing in different periods of the Middle Ages. Elaborating on the arguments of Lisa Bessette,⁵¹ she argued for the significance in the ninth-century Corbie Psalter⁵² of using the same ink to draw figures that form initials and to write letters in

⁴⁸ Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival*, 33.

⁴⁹ Referred to succinctly as the Paschal Sequence on the table of historiated initials (Appendix B).

⁵⁰ "Domine exaudi. Vox Christi et ecclesiae. Oravit Christus in passionem. Orat ecclesia in tribulationem."

⁵¹ Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents."

⁵² Amiens, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 18

the text.⁵³ The material equivalence of the figures and text joins the activity of the imaged figures to the text in a physical way that reinforces their conceptual link.

Bessette's methodological approach to analyzing the imagery of the Corbie, Utrecht, and Stuttgart Psalters⁵⁴ has guided my own. She considers the way the imagery in those three psalters engages with scripture to be analogous to the methods of biblical exegesis. The images are interpretive rather than simply representative, and they guide the devotion of the reader. Bessette points out that the psalm verses, "were available to the monk as his own for private contemplation, prayer, and penitence [and] the language of the psalms structured his experience of life, was constitutive of his identity, and mediated his conception of God."⁵⁵ That relationship of the monk to the psalter inspired manuscript imagery that reflects and invites the monk's involvement with the psalm text.

Christiania Whitehead's analysis of architectural imagery in medieval literature, specifically her discussion of Gregory and Bede's writings on the Temple and Tabernacle, suggested ways in which exegetical writing may have influenced the creators of the Odbert Psalter.⁵⁶ Both Gregory and Bede imagined those biblical buildings as structures

⁵³ Melanie Holcomb, "Strokes of genius: the draftsman's art in the Middle Ages," in *Pen and Parchment: Drawing in the Middle Ages* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 6.

⁵⁴ Utrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit, Ms 32, and Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Cod. Bibl. Fol. 23.

⁵⁵ Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents," 2.

⁵⁶ Christiania Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2003).

that charted personal spiritual development and the historical development of the Church. For the monks whose thought was shaped by the psalter and whose lives progressed in time marked by praying the psalter, this text was their constant guiding structure. The Odbert Psalter imagines the literal psalm text as a sacred architecture and represents within that architectonic text its allegorical and tropological meanings, using images of David, Christ, and their followers. The praying activity of the psalms is not reflected so directly as is done in the Corbie Psalter, according to Bessette's analysis. Instead, the Odbert Psalter's design guides meditation by expressing the nature and actions of Christ—who is the ultimate model for prayer and meditation—through and within the form of the psalms.

Imagining and portraying the psalms as architecture draws from a background of biblical architecture used not only as the subject of exegesis but also used metaphorically to describe the structure of thought and memory. Here the work of Mary Carruthers on medieval memory and recollection⁵⁷ and its formation specifically in an early monastic context is especially relevant.⁵⁸ The Odbert Psalter is particularly suited for cognitive activity because of its architectural form with specific references to the Tabernacle and the Ark. Carruthers explains that *thesaurus* ("storage room" or "strong-box"), *cella* ("storeroom," too, but also referring to the dwelling places of

⁵⁷ Mary Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture* (Cambridge England; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

⁵⁸ Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of images, 400-1200* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

monks, birds, and bees),⁵⁹ and *arca* (also a storage chest but sometimes referring to cupboards in monastic libraries) are major medieval metaphors for the memory and its contents. She describes how the *arca* becomes associated with biblical Arks:

“As *arca sapientiae*, one’s memory is the ideal product of a medieval education, laid out in organized *loci*. One designs and builds one’s own memory...That makes it a construction...As something to be built, the trained memory is an *arca* in the sense understood by the Biblical object called Noah’s Ark...and the Ark of the Covenant, into which the books of the Law were placed...”⁶⁰

The *arca* of the memory, reflected in the structure of the Odbert Psalter, is connected to the biblical Ark of the Covenant by the subject matter of the Psalter’s first image, as I argue in the second chapter. Additional imagery in the Psalter develops the typology of Christ as the Ark and thus establishes the Psalter, most clearly in its division-marking historiated initials, as the tabernacle that holds Christ as Ark. The Psalter is additionally founded on and designed in the image of Christ. He is both the content at the heart of the structure and its formative principle. Thus the first text by which a monk develops his *arca sapientiae* is itself a figure of *the* Ark, the Person who is the New Covenant and the Logos. Recognizing the architectonic nature of the Odbert Psalter reveals how the monks understood the integral relationship of Christ to their foundational text.

Such a foundational text needed to be memorized, and the Odbert Psalter displays some of the organizational and visual characteristics that Carruthers describes as aids for storage in the memory. For those readers who already had the psalms stored

⁵⁹ This word is used by Jerome to describe the psalms in his homily on Psalm 1, excerpted as the epigraph.

⁶⁰ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 43.

in their memories, the traits of the Odbert Psalter could help them internalize the meaning of the gloss, which was not totally separate from the psalm text, but part of the text's primary, living form within the memory.⁶¹ One strategy was to divide longer texts into shorter sections and then sort them into an orderly framework in the memory. Any distinctive visual trait of the manuscript from which the text is memorized could be stored with it and used to "label" the parts of the text within the framework constructed in the memory.⁶² Carruthers relates these ideas via the *Chronica* of Hugh of St. Victor, who presents a method for memorizing the psalms as an example for how the memory should be organized. He advises that one should construct consecutively numbered mental compartments in which to place the psalms, "a rigid system of backgrounds with a definite starting point."⁶³ The distinctive characteristics of the Odbert Psalter initials allow them to be labels transferred to the memory, signs under which the longer text that they begin can be stored. The way in which the initials mark divisions of the text might also suggest a similarly organized mental framework of compartments for the psalms. I will continue to engage with Carruthers' work in the following section where I explain more precisely how the characteristics of the Odbert Psalter's design form a framework and how that framework is architectonic in nature.

⁶¹ Ibid., 12.

⁶² Ibid., 73-82.

⁶³ Ibid., 82.

1.2 Architectonic Design Elements

The design of decorative elements and the mise-en-page in the body of the Psalter present the text according to architectural principles and traditions, and that presentation affects both memorization of the psalms and continued interaction with them. The colors, forms, and organization of the body of the Psalter measure its dimensions; provide a sense of directed movement through the structure; use repetitive elements to unify the structure; communicate the place of individual parts within the larger whole; and create an interior and an exterior space. These qualities all assist memorization of the psalms by placing the psalms in an organizing framework while also giving each individual prayer distinguishing characteristics.

The opening texts and images from folios 1r to 11r are important for facilitating an architectural reading of the body of the Psalter. The ways in which they do this will be explained in detail in chapter two. It will suffice to say here that the content of the opening folios functions as the façade of the Odbert Psalter's architecture. Like a built façade, these folios present a general idea of the shape of the building, but not a complete concept of its three-dimensional form. The façade texts and images are a unit that expresses succinctly the several theological narratives that develop in more depth throughout the rest of the decorations. The façade introduces both the structure and content of the Psalter—how it is supposed to be read, the interpretations of the psalms, and the monk's relationship to those interpretations. The function of the Odbert Psalter façade is similar to the Tabernacle plan at the head of the eighth-century Codex

Amiatinus⁶⁴ or an opening cross carpet-page of an Insular gospel book⁶⁵ as Carruthers explains them—“picture[s] made to Heaven’s pattern...providing the basic ‘way’ of reading the Bible.”⁶⁶ The reader is oriented toward the heavenly pattern of existence as the guide for reading. In the Odbert Psalter, the heavenly pattern is expressed in terms of typological fulfillment in the history of salvation, with Christ the Ark as telos. Figures represent that history within literal depictions of architecture that simultaneously form the figurative façade of the Psalter structure across the opening folios.

The initials that mark the three division systems, beginning with the Beatus initial housing Christ the Ark, measure the dimensions of the building proper that extends behind the façade. The number of psalms in each part and the number of parts within the Psalter act as numerical measurements of the Psalter, measurements that take form in the division initials and the folios between them. In Ezekiel, measurement of the Temple in the prophet’s vision is described as a penitential activity, and measurement of architectural plans “became in monastic rhetoric a trope for penitential ‘remembering’”—calling to mind the ideal and how the viewer has fallen short of it.⁶⁷ Measurement undertaken in prayerful recollection by individual or community, however, reconciles that suppliant with God. The idea of reconciliatory measurements began with the divine measurements of the Tabernacle given to Moses in Exodus that

⁶⁴ Florence, Biblioteca Medicea Laurenziana MS Amiatinus I.

⁶⁵ Such as the Lindisfarne Gospels, London, British Library Cotton MS Nero D.IV.

⁶⁶ Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of images, 400-1200*, 236.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 231-33.

made it possible for God to dwell with Israel and be reconciled to His people.⁶⁸ The measurements later took form in Solomon's Temple and the visions of Ezekiel and John in Revelation. These measurements of the Old Testament were given Christian interpretations in 1 Corinthians 3—"...you are God's building. According to the grace of God that is given to me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation; and another buildeth thereon...For other foundation no man can lay, but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus"⁶⁹—and Hebrews 8—Christ is minister "...of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not man."⁷⁰

For the visionary temple of Ezekiel and the heavenly Jerusalem of Revelation, "measuring out the plan of the structures is the chief way for the visionaries [Ezekiel and John] to receive, remember, and retell their 'seeings.'"⁷¹ So too for him who measures the Odbert Psalter, who moves through it, praying its contents. This is a penitential measurement; the praying of the psalms was always geared toward the rejection of sin and reconciliation with God. As one reconciles with God in contemplative prayer, an inner vision of Christ becomes possible, and this vision is portrayed within the initials measuring the Odbert Psalter. In this portrayal, the creators of the Psalter "retell their seeings." Measurement and reconciliation are brought together in the Psalter's Annunciation initial, the first in the main body of the text. At the beginning of God's

⁶⁸ Ibid., 232.

⁶⁹ Verses 9-11. The theme is developed more fully in additional verses of the chapter.

⁷⁰ Verse 2. Christ as minister of the tabernacle is an important exemplar in the devotional practice fostered by the Psalter architecture.

⁷¹ Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of images*, 232.

dwelling among men in the Incarnation, the angel Gabriel holds a rod with which he measures the height of the pavilion in which Mary prays (Fig. 1.3).⁷²

As mentioned above, the colors of the division-marking initials give them an appearance like windows. The character of the whole group of initials as a series—repetitive in its general shape, color, and media, but varied and developing toward an end through its size and content—is akin to the character of windows in a building and other kinds of architectural elements, like column capitals. Imagine walking down the nave of a Romanesque church. In most cases, the aisle windows one sees will be the same shape and otherwise consistent in appearance (at least as we know them today).⁷³ One is conscious of moving further into the church because of the succession of repeated forms, so that there is a sense of unity and cyclical movement even as one progresses in a linear fashion. The column capitals along the nave arcade work similarly to the windows, except that they display greater variation in form and thus communicate linear change and development more clearly. The windows and capitals give the building a character that is directional and repetitive, multifaceted and unified, variable and consistent.

⁷² See chapter three for a detailed discussion of this initial. There is an eleventh-century glossed psalter from Saint-Denis (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Ms lat 103) that may be working with similar measurement themes. This psalter marks the eight-part division with large decorated initials and script hierarchy, the five-part division with images of scribes in archways, as well as decorated initials and script hierarchy, and the three part division with simple drawings above the decorative start to the psalm text. The drawing accompanying Psalm 101 is probably an image of Ezekiel witnessing the water flowing from the Temple (Ezekiel 47:1), while above him the Lord sits in majesty flanked on his right side by one seraph.

⁷³ Probable variations in paint color around the windows are now lost.

With the initials in the Odbert Psalter, there is more variety than consistency, but they are drawn and painted in a layout that is consistent across many folios. What does this mean for the way the initials are read, seen, and studied? The novelty of each successive initial and the discrete localization of decorative elements on the page within that initial encourage concentrated viewing of each initial, unlike the way one might view the spread out drawings of the Utrecht Psalter (Fig. 1.4) or the Bury St. Edmunds Psalter.⁷⁴ Although the viewer would focus separately on each initial, he is aware of having interacted similarly with other initials in the book, and so approaches the initial before him as one part within a larger whole that is not presently visible. He will, however, be able to immediately perceive the carefully described continuity between the initial, the psalm and the gloss: a continuity guided by the colored titles and verse initials, the hierarchy of script (usually from capitals/uncial to miniscule), the tie notes that lead to the gloss, and the smaller, mostly red initials of the gloss that echo the verse initials.

The preceding description of focused viewing parallels how one views and understands architectural components like windows and column capitals in a church, or rooms in a house. When one looks at a specific component, the structure in its entirety is not visible, but the viewer is aware of being within that structure and of the existence

⁷⁴ Vatican, Biblioteca Apostolica, Vaticana MS Reg lat 12. Raw, *Anglo-Saxon Crucifixion Iconography and the Art of the Monastic Revival*, 36-37. The drawings of the Bury St. Edmunds Psalter were executed in the margins but sometimes the action stretches across the folio, if not the entire opening. Raw contrasts those drawings with the illuminations in the frames of the opening images for the Gospel of John in the Grimbold Gospels (British Library, Ms Additional 34890; available online), dated 1012-1023. These are in contained roundels placed in the stable structure of the frame.

of other components like the one he presently sees. The viewer can remember and infer what other areas of the structure are like, but he will not be able to construct a complete mental image of the structure until he has moved through the entire building. Even then, the viewer cannot physically see all parts of the building at once. So it is with the sequence of initials: one does not know exactly in what forms of initials and iconography the gospel narrative unfolds until one reaches the Ascension initial with Psalm 109. Furthermore, although looking at a column capital limits your view of the overall structure, you do not view the capital in isolation. As an initial in the Psalter belongs to the text and is continuous with it, so the column capital is part of a column, an arch, and probably a larger arcade. The shape of the capital does not make much sense if the capital is divorced from its role in the arch to which it belongs, but its individual carved motifs and figures would retain their interest for the viewer and relationships to each other. The full meaning of any one of the Odbert Psalter's historiated initials depends on its relationship to both the folio it is on and its place in the overarching sequence extending throughout the manuscript.

The mise-en-page is designed so that the decorated initials are not simply placed alongside the texts, but so that all parts are integral to the structure. The mise-en-page also suggests interior and exterior spaces on the page. That is the fundamental role of a building—to designate an interior space separate from the exterior natural environment. The Odbert Psalter is not the first manuscript to inscribe a gloss in the margins around the text, but, according to Lobrichon, the Odbert Psalter is distinct from secular texts using a similar layout for not including any interlinear gloss, reserving the

interior space for the sacred Scripture text and making the gloss function like a frame.⁷⁵

The formal relationship between gloss and psalm text is repeated in the historiated initials, and in some of the decorative initials whose letterforms frame interior patterns. A letter from the text framed by the gloss becomes the exterior frame of the image within the letter. The most sacred “text” of all, the gospels, here represented in images, is the furthest inside, the Old Testament Scripture is further out, and the merely human words of the commentators are at the exterior.

According to this description, the initials do not really work as windows since they are at the center of the page structure. This is not problematic, however, because the Psalter architecture is an indeterminate guide for meditation rather than a strict, literal building plan. Sometimes described as an early Romanesque work, the Odbert Psalter has some qualities of an image type considered typical of the period—diagrams. Carruthers describes the generally medieval diagrammatic treatment of space in full-page miniatures like this:

“...images placed in specific locations, often grouped about a large central figure, often in an architectural setting, often with related images enclosed in roundels or other geometric forms, usually with a border, and commonly with inscriptions...to help associate the figures with one another...The framework of the page provides a set of orderly *loci*; furthermore, this frame remains constant while the images in it change from page to page—that is...also the manner of the page of memory...”

The Odbert Psalter uses architectural settings and other characteristics in its full-page miniatures, but the psalm pages continue the structure using those diagrammatic

⁷⁵ Lobrichon, *Le Psautier d'Odbert*, 175.

qualities. Medieval diagrams and diagrammatic images, according to Carruthers, “can have either (or a combination) of two functions: they can serve as ‘fixes’ for memory storage, or as cues to start the recollective process...one function is pedagogical...the other is meditational.”⁷⁶ For images to invite *compositio*—the reader’s recollective engagement with a text—they have to be flexible for the individual habits of memory construction and the associative nature of recollection.⁷⁷ The interior-exterior dynamic of the Odbert Psalter may have yielded fruitful meditation on some occasions, while on others, the initials’ progress across pages or the depth of a single initial may have been the point of departure.

The window-like perception of depth in the division initials, which began this investigation of the Psalter as architecture, can itself be incorporated into the Psalter-building in multiple ways. The reader could imagine himself within the Psalter as he sits before the manuscript, looking out from that scriptural sanctuary to see the contemplative visions that are the reward for he who dwells within the Psalter. Alternatively, the reader could consider the text as an exterior wall through which he is able to see the Person who is at the heart of the text and whose life, from the exterior perspective, is then united in the amorphous, blue interior space.

That possibility of reading the historiated initials as windows is just one reason to conclude that the Odbert Psalter was conceived specifically with architectonic form in mind, rather than being more generally diagrammatic in its organization and including

⁷⁶ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 253.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 256.

the occasional manifestation of architectural metaphors. The preceding comparisons in this section also point to an architectonic concept. Other aspects of the design provide further evidence for that concept. We briefly discussed at the start of the section how the Odbert Psalter's façade models the shape of the Psalter-structure's development. The gold and silver paint that forms the majority of the architectural motifs in the façade is used to carry the architectural concept into the body of the Psalter by framing the division initials, which both embody the building dimensions and are its windows. The first text in the manuscript describes a "chamber of Christ" (*camera Christi*) as a symbol of the monastic life, with each of its components symbolizing the virtues of that life.⁷⁸

The scribal architecture of the Odbert Psalter has a basis in manuscript tradition, and some manuscripts contemporary with the Odbert Psalter demonstrate a particular interest in the tradition of architectural imagery. Medieval manuscript makers had used architectural frames to organize texts and images at least as early as the sixth-century Gospels of St. Augustine.⁷⁹ The ninth-century Drogo Sacramentary is one of the few Carolingian manuscripts with an extensive Christological sequence of images, images that are arranged in various ways in or around decorated initials (Fig. 1.5). These are not historiated initials per se, but, as Pächt puts it, describing the Epiphany initial particularly, "...the structure of the initial, determined by its identity as script, becomes

⁷⁸ See Appendix C for the text and chapter two for further comments on it.

⁷⁹ Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, Lib. MS. 286.

a stage for the action.”⁸⁰ Architectural details form the sets for this stage and mark the path followed by the Magi.

Three sacramentaries that share similar designs and Christological imagery, made in the late tenth century at the Ottonian monastery of Fulda, use text, images and architectural motifs in a way that is conceptually akin to the design of the Odbert Psalter.⁸¹ Lavishly decorated initials begin many of the prayers, and at the beginning of groups of prayers for particular liturgical feasts of the *temporale*, the initial is paired with the appropriate scene from the life of Christ. In most cases, the beginning of the prayer and the image are placed in juxtaposed frames, one of which is a basic rectangle, the other of which is formed by columns and lintels or arches. For the Annunciation in the Sacramentary in Udine (Fig. 3.4), the initial D becomes part of the frame, acting like a support to the course above it—the columns and lintels that frame the Annunciation. The initial belongs to the organizing architecture of the manuscript even more clearly than the initials do in the Odbert Psalter. Many of the Fulda initials are linked to the frames, creating units of text and image that build up the guiding structure for the contents of the manuscript, just as in the Odbert Psalter.

⁸⁰ Otto Pächt, *Book Illumination in the Middle Ages: An Introduction*, (London: H. Miller Publishers; Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 79.

⁸¹ Göttingen, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Theol. 213; Udine, Archivio capitolare, Ms 1; and Bamberg, Staatliche Bibliothek, Ms Lit 1. These three were made between 970 and 997. Eric Palazzo, *Les sacramentaires de Fulda: étude sur l'iconographie et la liturgie à l'époque Ottonienne* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1994). Some uncommon aspects of the Odbert Psalter's iconography are very similar to motifs in these three manuscripts, indicating, in addition to the conceptual similarities, that Odbert had seen one of them or a closely related manuscript. See chapter three, section 3.1 for a discussion of the iconography.

1.3 Dwelling in the Psalter

Several aspects of study and devotion with the psalms suggest architecture as a fitting model for the Psalter. In turn, the formulation of the Odbert Psalter as architecture molds those monastic activities that take place within it. The Christological implications of the psalms motivated the Odbert Psalter's architectonic composition, and that composition works with explicit Christological imagery to imbue memorization and meditation with evangelical themes.

A reader of the Odbert Psalter builds the psalms and/or gloss into his memory with reference to the gospel text. With gospel images marking the divisions of the Psalter, it is logical to sort and label a psalm either by the gospel image at its head or by where it falls between points in the narrative. To use the gospel narrative as the organizing principle of the psalms impresses upon the reader the traditional belief that the psalms are fundamentally about Christ. The gospels make sense of the psalms within the reader's memory. It is fitting that the formative text of the monastic mind should be laid out in such a way as to reflect the structures of that mind and the dependence of that structure and the psalms on the foundational mind of Christ. The images of the gospel narrative make the holiest scripture present in pictorial form *within* the psalm text. The interior-exterior dynamic demonstrates that the gospel resides at the heart of the Psalter.⁸² Even though the division initials can give the impression that their interior

⁸² images were a method equally valid to letters for calling forth from the memory the texts represented by these signs. The images are not fundamentally reproductive, but rather re-presentative of writing, as eleventh century abbot of Westminster Gilbert Crispin said. See Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 22.

is a distant space behind the page, the use of pen and parchment alone to form the figures establishes a color and media correspondence between the text represented by pictures and the text represented by letters. The immediate visual association of these texts communicates a relationship between the Word and the psalms to the viewer.

The tight weave of gospels and psalms in the Odbert Psalter indicates that “study” and “devotion” are not distinct activities. Christ, the object of devotion and guide towards virtue, is presented as the organizing principle for study. Indeed, the building of the *arca sapientiae* after the true Ark was an essential part of developing moral character.⁸³ Christian devotion is, in very simple terms, the following of Christ. The Odbert Psalter is a building within which the monk is invited to follow Christ in prayer, in addition to being a place where the monk builds his *arca*. He follows Christ through the Psalter, a tabernacle built by the monks of Saint-Bertin to house the Ark, who is both the objective and the guide to their meditation.

Christ role as guide becomes apparent in the Psalter’s portrayal of him as described in the book of Hebrews: the Son of God who, because he humbled himself to exist as a man—a person living through a series of events in the temporal realm—is able to be humankind’s great High Priest, making once and for all an offering in the true Tabernacle of heaven. In the words of Hebrews:

“We have...an high priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of majesty in the heavens, a minister of the holies, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord hath pitched, and not

⁸³ Ibid. 12.

man...[H]e is a mediator of a better testament, which is established on better promises.”⁸⁴

The idea of the true, heavenly tabernacle, “the pattern which was shown [to Moses] on the mount,”⁸⁵ corresponds with the interpretation of the Psalter as a measured structure. The scenes in the initials that measure the Psalter portray how humankind is fully reconciled to God by the Mediator and brought into the “better testament.” Both Hebrews 8 and 10 quote a prophecy of this testament from Jeremiah 31. Hebrews 10 introduces the prophecy by saying Christ,

“...by one oblation...hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. And the Holy Ghost also doth testify this to us. For after that he said: And this is the testament which I will make unto them after those days, saith the Lord. I will give my laws in their hearts, and on their minds will I write them: And their sins and iniquities I will remember no more.”⁸⁶

This is exactly what is portrayed in the Odbert Psalter: the new law, the person of Christ, is placed in the heart of the monk, “written” in images in the structure of his mind. That correspondence is even clearer with the idea that “in the heart” was understood as a synonym for “in the memory” throughout the Middle Ages.⁸⁷ The Pentecost initial for Psalm 1 portrays Christ in the heavenly Tabernacle writing of the new law on the hearts of the apostles/monks via the Holy Spirit.

⁸⁴ Hebrews 8:1-2

⁸⁵ Hebrews 8:5, quoting Exodus 25:40

⁸⁶ Verses 14-17.

⁸⁷ Carruthers, *The Book of Memory: A Study of Memory in Medieval Culture*, 44.

The testament is mediated through Christ's ministry; he is the leader of the liturgy not only by His sacrifice, but also, with particular significance for the monks, as one who prays the psalms, which are quoted frequently in Hebrews, often in the voice of Christ. For instance, in Hebrews 2:12, Christ acclaims God with the words of Psalm 21: "I will declare thy name to my brethren; in the midst of the church will I praise thee." In Hebrews 10:7, he quotes Psalm 39: 8-9: "Then said I: Behold I come: in the head of the book it is written of me: that I should do thy will, O God." In Hebrews, Christ is a model of faithful prayer, of a relationship to God, and of liturgical life.⁸⁸ With the Odbert Psalter's architecture understood as a figure of the church building, Christ is in the midst of it, using that Psalter—as its original inventor, in truth—to sing his praise. When the monks are present in the Psalter, they are to do the same, following Christ through that sanctuary, praying the psalms so that they can join Christ at the center of it.

The monks' following after Christ is also thought of as a spiritual pilgrimage to the Heavenly Jerusalem, where the true Tabernacle would be located. So the Psalter architecture is both a model of those destination structures and a structure that guides spiritual progress toward the destination. In this sense, the Psalter is a figure of the Church, as the authority directing the pilgrimage and as the Body of Christ, built on Christ the foundation. At several places in the Odbert Psalter's gloss, the phrase "house of God" is said to refer to the Heavenly Jerusalem, where, in the case of Psalm 83, the

⁸⁸ Harold W. Attridge, "Giving Voice to Jesus: Use of the Psalms in the New Testament," in *Psalms in Community: Jewish and Christian Textual, Liturgical, and Artistic Traditions*, eds. Harold W. Attridge and Margot Fassler (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 109-10.

blessed ones dwell who will praise the Lord forever. As they pray, the monks themselves make the ascent toward the Heavenly Jerusalem and lead the Body that way.

The monks of Saint-Bertin are special custodians of the Word not only as literate monks, but also as manuscript creators. They have built the Scripture text central to their identity as a flexible building that forms a number of associations that assist the integration of the texts in their memories and guide their devotional prayer. Most importantly, however, the Psalter is the Tabernacle of their Lord and an embodiment of His divine plan at the foundation of creation.

CHAPTER 2:

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE ARCHITECTURAL THEME IN THE FAÇADE

The design of the Odbert Psalter indicates from the very beginning that the manuscript ought to be read as visual and verbal architecture. The first miniature focuses on David and the psalm co-authors, Asaph, Aman, Ethan and Idithun, in an arcade at the base of a group of buildings (f. 2r; Fig. 2.1).⁸⁹ On the verso David is again seated under an array of buildings and between columns (f. 2v; Fig 2.2). The third full-page miniature appears after several pages of prefatory texts—it begins Psalm 1, the initial and text of which are set within an archway (f. 11r; Figs. 2.3-2.4). Before viewing any of the images, the reader encounters the acrostic poem on folio 1v (Fig. 2.5), a manifestation of architectonic organization that also refers to the actual buildings of Saint-Bertin. These opening images and text, which we refer to as the Psalter's façade, introduce the figurative architecture described in the previous chapter and guide its interpretation. This façade presents a building that not only functions mnemonically and houses the Word, but that also frames the literal, allegorical, tropological and anagogical narratives connected to the psalms that suggest the Psalter's representation as a building in the first place.

⁸⁹ The co-authors are named in multiple places in the Bible and in one of the prefaces. See page 48n116, where their textual bases are discussed in greater detail.

The form and content of the Odbert Psalter's façade are built up over four main components—the acrostic and three miniatures—into is a single unit that portrays concisely the form and content of the entire Psalter. Each component has its own form that is independently coherent, but that also builds the larger narratives of the façade. That relationship of independent parts working together to construct the whole is a sort of microcosm of the entire Psalter. The façade is not detached from the rest of the building/Psalter, but leads into that larger body of the structure and hints at how it will develop as the reader walks/reads through it. The components of the façade construct relationships between David and Christ, between that biblical pair and the monastic reader, and between those three persons and the psalms following the opening miniatures. I will trace the various narratives through each component and how they are connected via literal architectural motifs and architectonic organization.

In the first miniature, the “historical” origin of the psalms is portrayed. King David announces to the other psalm authors their vocation to compose the psalms with him, and the inspiration for their activity of composition—the Holy of Holies and the implied Ark of the Covenant—is depicted with them in the form of the Tabernacle structure. This image presents the type of the Ark-Logos typology. In the second miniature, King David, son of Jesse, sits on his throne surrounded by his built domain and demonstrates the composition of the psalms. Those first two miniatures set up the typology of David as the type of Christ as portrayed in Hebrews—priest and king.⁹⁰ David

⁹⁰ See the end of Chapter 1 for an elaboration of how Christ is characterized in Hebrews.

is not a priest, but—as a musician and author of the psalms—is an exemplar for offering prayer.⁹¹ The third miniature guides the reader inward, from the kingship of David to that of Christ, who is depicted with final authority over evil. There in an image of Pentecost, Christ opens the *vita contemplativa* to the apostles who abide in his kingdom. Or, if we follow Jerome’s metaphor, the Lord of the mansion opens its front door to the apostles by sending them the Holy Spirit. There is an additional three-part typology at work here between the psalm co-authors, the apostles and the monastic readers. The images of the monks’ precursors outline a tropological narrative for the medieval reader to join: the journey from the exterior, material world to the interior, spiritual world through meditation on the psalms. On this spiritual journey, the monks are also communally leading the Church in the construction of the kingdom of God, with the eventual goal of reaching the Heavenly Jerusalem. In the façade, representations of architecture establish the typologies of David and Christ and position the reader for his contemplative engagement with the Psalm text and its integrated images. The reader’s position is established in the Pentecost initial and his contemplative movement culminates there only after he arrives at the final historiated initial in the manuscript, an Ascension image that forms a pair with the façade initial (Fig. 2.20).

2.1 The Opening Texts

The first indication of the Saint-Bertin monks’ interest in symbolic architecture is the uncommon text on folio 1r, which has not been included as a component of the

⁹¹ The psalm co-authors are actually Levitical priests.

façade because it is apparently a slightly later addition,⁹² but which nonetheless should not be ignored.⁹³ In the text, the monastic life is conceptualized in architectural terms akin to the way the Psalter itself has been conceptualized. The text describes the components and contents of a certain *camera* (a room, vault or chamber). Its dimensions are the theological virtues, its façades are justice and truth, the chair of Christ is serenity of mind, etc. Several times the room is referred to as the *camera Christi*, and the *camera* is said to be “heavenly monastic life.”⁹⁴ That *camera* is made manifest in the Psalter, in which the psalms, which guide the monastic life, build the holy place where the monk prays alongside Christ. The life of the monk is the chamber; the chamber belongs to Christ. The *Fundamentum* text also says, “The ministry of Christ in his chamber is a good memory.” This is the phrase that supports most clearly the present argument: Christ is ministering within the initials to build a good memory.

It seems, then, that the *Fundamentum* text may have been written as a description of what is embodied in the Psalter, either by the makers themselves, or another monk who came later and responded to the manuscript by writing this paragraph. There are eleventh-century corrections throughout the manuscript; it is

⁹² See note 6.

⁹³ The full text and translation are provided in Appendix C. As far as I can tell, it has only been published in the following (and only in Latin): John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb, “Introductory Essay,” In *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: A Translation of the First Book of the Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, edited by John Mason Neale and Benjamin Webb, Third ed. (London: Gibbings and Company, 1906), lxxii. Neale and Webb write that this is a text of the tenth or eleventh century, apparently believing it to have originated at Saint-Bertin. They describe it as a “symbolical description of a church.”

⁹⁴ An alternate translation could be simply “heavenly way of life.” The meaning of *conversatio* in a Benedictine monastic context is a complex matter, though it is basically translated as “monastic way of life.” This matter came to my attention too late to delve into it here.

possible that a later editor wrote the text. It is not possible to reach a conclusion about its origins. One final comment about the text: it is positioned on precisely the same area of the folio as the image of David and the co-authors is underneath it, further indicating that it was intended as an introduction to the structures within the manuscript.

The façade proper and its typological narratives begin on the verso with the twenty-eight-line acrostic poem.⁹⁵ It was composed by the scribe Heriveus who identifies himself in the acrostic, and names Odbert as the decorator and Dodolinus as the editor.⁹⁶ Heriveus also mentions himself in the vertical phrase: “Heriveus scripsit me Sancto Bertino.” (Heriveus wrote me for St. Bertin.) The acrostic is the first expression of the architectural theme in both its form and content. In terms of content, in the tenth and eleventh lines, Heriveus makes a connection between the psalms contained in the manuscript and the built space of the abbey church: “Coenobii que Sithensis sic concio sancta/Rite deo psallit. quorum penetralibus altus.” (And thus the holy company of the monastery of Saint Omer/ solemnly sings psalms to God, the clear sound of which [is] in the sanctuary.)⁹⁷ These verses do not simply place the psalms in the sanctuary, but also point out the monastic community’s role in activating them there, through their voices. After enjoining the monks of Sithiu to rejoice in singing the psalms of David, Heriveus

⁹⁵ See Appendix C for text and translation.

⁹⁶ “Me compsit Heriveus, et Odbertus decoravit./ Excerpsit Dodolinus...”

⁹⁷ Translation from Richard Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," in *Pen in Hand: Medieval Scribal Portraits, Colophons and Tools*, ed. Michael Gullick Walkern, Herts : Red Gull Press, 2006), 69. In addition to sanctuary or shrine, the phrase “penetralibus altus” also has the valences of “in the high chambers” or “in the deep recesses,” suggesting how the psalms in the church reach both high toward the heavenly realm and deep in every corner of the building and into the soul.

praises their church, writing “Templa nitent tibi campanis redimita canoris.” (Your churches sparkle, enwreathed with tuneful bells.)⁹⁸ The sensual effects—the tunes, the sparkling—of the auditory and visual adornments on the church and the church structure itself are intertwined in this verse. Likewise the decorations of the Odbert Psalter are integral to the structure and interpretation of its text. These two excerpts from the acrostic make a connection for the reader between the following contents of the manuscript and his daily experience of praying psalms in the church building.

The formal characteristics of this acrostic poem work in concert with its explicitly architectural content to prepare the reader for an architectonic study of the Psalter. Odbert’s name is written in red ink each of the three times it occurs. This emphasis on the leader of Saint-Bertin is the first hint at the theme of authority developed in the following miniatures through the depictions of David and Christ as rulers and authors in the midst of built realms. More pertinent to the expression of architectonic principles is the overall format of the poem. The vertically formed phrase of an acrostic is an overarching structure that extends through the entire poem and determines how the component horizontal verses are composed. This is not to say that the vertical component is necessarily composed first, and the horizontal verses second, but that the acrostic form restricts and regularizes a poem’s composition. Just as an architect must solve problems posed by functional needs and the laws of physics in order to design a

⁹⁸ Ibid., 69.

stable, logical building, the acrostic poet must follow formal rules in order to arrange verses in a logical flow while also communicating a coherent message in their initials.

From the viewer's perspective, the integral parts of both kinds of composition are as prominent, if not more so, than the larger whole to which they contribute. In the Odbert Psalter acrostic, the overarching vertical phrase stands out most clearly, written in slightly larger letters in red ink. Those qualities clearly set apart each initial, however, making it more difficult to string them together as a phrase than it is to do so with the letters written horizontally. The separation of the capitals also draws attention to each verse that they begin, so that, despite the initial prominence of the vertical phrase, the horizontal ones, the building blocks of the poem, have just as much of an impact. Indeed, the horizontal lines, a black mass, form the bulk of the written material, making it clear that the more substantial content of the poem is contained therein. Upon first looking at the poem, one can read the vertical message and comprehend the poetic form of the writing, but the full meaning is not immediately apparent, and one must read line by line to completely understand the poem. Architecture works according to this same dynamic: one usually sees one or two elevations of a building at a time, and is simultaneously aware of the parts—such as windows or bricks—that form these elevations. The entire form of the building, however, is not perceptible with a single look. As we discussed in the previous chapter, the whole decorative program follows this dynamic—the Psalter's façade presents a general picture of its structure and typological narratives in a concise, readily understood format, but this is simply a stepping off point for the more complex argument that will be developed through the

design of the manuscript's entire body. Both the acrostic poem and the initial program, which shares some of its characteristics,⁹⁹ are elements of the wider-reaching architectonic content and organization that also includes the opening miniatures.

2.2 The Psalm Authors with Instruments

The motif that unites the opening three images (f. 2r/v, 11r) into a single architecture and typology is that of the enthroned king within an arch. Two depictions of David in this position are followed by one of Christ, on his throne in heaven.¹⁰⁰ On the folio facing the acrostic, we find David sits under the arch alongside his companions in an arcade, surmounted by a less prominent group of drawn buildings. David is the first figure to draw the viewer's attention because the arch and columns around him are wider and more elaborate than the others in the arcade. In addition, he is enthroned, while the others stand, and his name is written above him. These features contribute to the opening statement made across the three full-page miniatures by visually linking David to the other king figures. The psalm authors scene makes its own opening statement about how the reader is supposed to engage with the Psalter. It introduces the idea of the Psalter as a Tabernacle by combining variations on the narrative moment found in traditional psalm author groups with particular architectural motifs that represent the Tabernacle and Ark.

⁹⁹ Don Denny, "The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter," 51-82.

¹⁰⁰ These ideas are elaborated in the section dealing with the Psalm 1 miniature on f. 11r.

In this unusual author group scene, none of the figures play an instrument, as was common in scenes of David and the co-authors. One example of the more common figure group is in a ninth-century Psalter from northern France, which, like the Odbert Psalter, pairs this group with a collection of instruments (Figs. 2.6-2.9).¹⁰¹ In some versions of the author group, scribes are shown copying David's words.¹⁰² There are a couple of these scribes in the Angers Psalter, below the instrument players. In two versions more similar to the Odbert Psalter, a Bavarian example from the eleventh century (Fig. 2.10)¹⁰³ and a northern Italian manuscript from the late tenth century (Fig. 2.11),¹⁰⁴ David and the scribes are sitting under arches. Unlike these examples, the figure of David in the Odbert Psalter does not hold an instrument, but a staff,¹⁰⁵ and he points with his right hand toward the co-authors. The two figures closest to him face him and hold books. The others also hold books (or maybe scrolls) and make explanatory gestures as they communicate with each other.

If this is not the traditional image of the group performing or writing the psalms, then what is pictured? We can look to the architectural setting for a possible answer. Over the column between the fourth and fifth arches, a smaller arch contains a single

¹⁰¹ Angers, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 18. Leroquais, *Les Psautiers*, 19-24. For a large catalogue of manuscripts with Davidic imagery, including the Angers manuscript, see Hugo Steger, *David Rex et Propheta* (Nürnberg: H. Carl, 1961).

¹⁰² Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 227.

¹⁰³ Eberhard Psalter, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 7355, f. 5v

¹⁰⁴ Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Cod. Lat. 83, f. 12v

¹⁰⁵ The Italian David holds a scepter, but he also plays a psalterium.

curtain, pulled to the left side. The curtains framing the Psalm author portraits echo that singular curtain, and the curtain motif is even used in a miniscule arcade in the base of David's throne. The single curtain is further linked to the authors by the consistent use of the curtain's blue color on or around each of the authors—in their hair, clothing or curtain. That blue is the only color present within all the arches. The arches themselves are formed partly with silver paint, and gold paint, brown ink and small amounts of red ink are used for the capitals and interior of the columns.

The isolated and seemingly minor arch and curtain represent the Holy of Holies that enclosed the Ark of the Covenant behind a veil in the Exodus Tabernacle,¹⁰⁶ and later did the same in the Temple. The placement of the arcade on the page at first seems to be a poor job of copying with the arch and figure on the right cut off by strict margins,¹⁰⁷ but the function of the small arch as the Holy of Holies indicates that the model image was cut off not only for reasons of space but also to highlight the importance of the small arch by isolating it.¹⁰⁸ The arch and curtain can be identified with the Holy of Holies for a few different reasons. Firstly, curtains like this one have a long history as features of author portraits, particularly of evangelists, in which they

¹⁰⁶ The Tabernacle, Ark and other objects within the Tabernacle are described in Exodus 25-27.

¹⁰⁷ Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer under the Abbacy of Odbert," 229-30.

¹⁰⁸ One expects that the smaller arch was originally part of a larger, symmetrical arrangement, but that is not necessarily true. Perhaps Odbert's model also included the solitary arch, or only the larger arcade, to which Odbert added the small arch. In any of those cases, the placement of the small arch in the Odbert Psalter is purposeful, not accidental.

symbolize the revelation of Scripture through reference to the temple veil.¹⁰⁹ The ark containing the old Mosaic Law was always hidden behind a veil, but the synoptic gospels relate that when Christ, the living Word, was crucified, the temple veil was rent.¹¹⁰ Thus, the Word was fully revealed.

The curtains and arcade framing the authors refer to the curtains and pillars forming the outer court of the Tabernacle that encloses the veiled Ark. In Exodus 27:10, God stipulates that the pillars be made with brass (or bronze)¹¹¹ and engraved with silver. The colors forming the columns and arches in the miniature reflect those stipulations, perhaps representing both bronze and brass with brown and gold.¹¹² The use of metallic paints and brown ink for the arches makes these structures stand out as the most prominent features on the page, along with the instruments below. They are the first features to grab the viewer's attention. They direct him particularly to the arch of the veil because it is set apart from the larger arcade and the decorations around it are drawn rather than painted. The arrangement of David and the musicians in a Psalter made in the second half of the eleventh century at Soignies also appears to depict the

¹⁰⁹ For instance, the portraits of Matthew (f. 9v) and John (f. 150v) in the eighth-century Canterbury Codex Aureus (Stockholm, Kungliga Biblioteket, A 135). The Odbert Gospels (New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M 333) also uses the curtain motif in its evangelist portraits.

¹¹⁰ See Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45.

¹¹¹ The DR translates *aeneis* as brass, but the word can also mean bronze. The New American Bible uses bronze in Exodus 27:10.

¹¹² It is possible that these colors were used simply as part of a predetermined color scheme for the entire Psalter rather than specifically following Exodus, especially given the inconsistency between using silver to represent silver and gold for brass/bronze. It also seems odd that both translations of *aeneis* would be represented simultaneously.

Tabernacle (Figs. 2.12-2.13).¹¹³ David is depicted in an arcade with the curtain motif, and the musicians on the opposite page play in front of a layered arcade.

In addition to visual cues and iconographical tradition, certain scripture passages and one of the Psalter's prefatory texts related to these scriptures also indicate that the small curtain refers to the Holy of Holies. The first Psalter preface, entitled *Origo prophetiae regis David psalmorum CL*, is on folio 3r, directly under the psalm authors scene and facing the second miniature of David.¹¹⁴ The *Origo* summarizes a story told in 2 Samuel 6, and 1 Chronicles 15 and 16, in which David and the Israelites play instruments and dance as they lead the ark back to Jerusalem and to the tabernacle, "which David had pitched for it."¹¹⁵ God was then dwelling with David in Jerusalem, referred to as the city of David in 2 Samuel. The psalm co-authors are named in 1 Chronicles and recounted in the *Origo*,¹¹⁶ which describes at its beginning and end how many psalms David and the co-authors wrote, information not included in the biblical account.¹¹⁷ The more common David and musicians groups have a clearer connection to the narrative described above than the group in the Odbert Psalter, though they do not

¹¹³ Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod Nr. 774. Steger, *David Rex et Propheta*, no. 31.

¹¹⁴ This text, in various versions, had been a common Psalter preface since Carolingian times. See Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents," 16n41.

¹¹⁵ 1 Chronicles 16:1

¹¹⁶ Asaph is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 15:19, 16:5-7, and 25: 6, as well as Psalm 49. Aman is in 1 Chronicles 15:19, 16:42, and 25:6. Ethan is in 1 Chronicles 15:19 and Idithun in 1 Chronicles 16:42, 25:6 and Psalm 38. (As in Bessette, "The Visualization of the Contents," 16n41).

¹¹⁷ The preface also attributes psalms to the sons of Core, Haggai, Zechariah, Moses, and Solomon. The particular attention to the number of Psalms by each author and their adding up to 150 is evidence of the kind of numerological interest that inspired the use of psalm numbers as measurements of the Psalter.

exactly illustrate it because they do not depict a procession for the transportation of the ark.¹¹⁸

Because the Odbert miniature is also not a procession and additionally lacks instruments or dancing, it is even more distant from the transportation part of the narrative, though it was indeed conceived in relation to the preface. The very first sentence of the preface relates that during his reign, David chose four men who would compose the psalms with him. The inscription in the arcade above the figures labels the image as that moment “when the four are chosen...”¹¹⁹ David appoints these men, who are Levites, as part of the preparation that occurs before they and the rest of the Israelites go to fetch the ark. The first verse of the ark narrative states that David pitched the tabernacle and built the place for the ark in Jerusalem.¹²⁰ Then he says, “No one ought to carry the ark of God, but the Levites, whom the Lord hath chosen to carry it, and to minister unto himself for ever.”¹²¹ Most of the remainder of the chapter names the Levites appointed to various duties involved in moving the ark, wherein three of the four co-authors are named as musicians. In the miniature, then, we see the veil and the Tabernacle courts prepared in Jerusalem (the city is represented by the drawn group of

¹¹⁸ The transportation is found in a few Carolingian Psalters, including the ninth-century Folchart Psalter (St. Gall, Stiftsbibliothek, Cod. 23). It appears there in the upper space of an arcade that frames a litany written in two columns per page. On another page of the litany, the same space contains David at a scribe’s writing table above one column, and a group of eight scribes and attendants above the other.

¹¹⁹ From the preface: “David filius Jesse, cum esset in regno suo, quatuor elegit qui psalmos facerent, Asaph, Eman, Ethan et Idithun.” J. -P Migne, *Patrologia Latina the Full Text Database* (S.I.: Chadwyck-Healey, Inc, 1996), Col477D. The inscription: “Ubi quattuor electi sunt principes qui psalmos facerent pleni spu sco”

¹²⁰ 1 Chronicles 15:1

¹²¹ 1 Chronicles 15:2

buildings), David giving the authors their mission, and them receiving the order and presumably pondering and discussing what they will compose to accompany the procession.¹²²

Odbert departed from both the musician and scribe iconographies of this group in imagining a scene of artistic and scholarly discussion and reflection, activities indicated by the authors' gestures and the written material or writing supports they hold. This scene is a logical extrapolation from what is described in the biblical narrative, but there are additional reasons for why David and his companions might be depicted in dialogue before the Tabernacle, particularly at the beginning of this manuscript. As we saw in chapter one, the Tabernacle and other divine architectures were fertile soil for exegesis. The subject matter and methodology of this kind of exegesis probably influenced the conception of the Psalter's design based on architectural forms and their organization. The psalm authors, like exegetes, compose responses to the holy structure before them.

Gregory, and Bede, among others, interpreted the Tabernacle structure both tropologically, that is, according to its moral meaning, and allegorically, describing how the Tabernacle represents the Church. Both Gregory and Bede wrote similarly about the Temple—Gregory referring to Ezekiel's visions of the Temple, and Bede to the Temple described in 1 Kings 5-7, which, though it was built by Solomon, was first conceived of

¹²² Although there are no specific elements that mark this group of buildings as Jerusalem, its identity as such (though perhaps not only as such) is strongly suggested from the associated narrative. A similar building group represents the Heavenly Jerusalem in a hagiographical manuscript made under Odbert (Boulogne-sur-mer, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 107, ff. 6v-7r).

by David right after he returned the ark to Jerusalem. Bede's commentaries, composed c. 721-31 C.E., had widespread influence from the ninth century onward, becoming standard references for those interested in architectural exegesis.¹²³ Gregory's reflections on the Tabernacle and Temple occur in the context of his *Liber regulae pastoralis* and *Homiliae in Ezechielem*, also enormously influential texts.¹²⁴ Gregory was the most-copied patristic author at Saint-Bertin during Odbert's time.¹²⁵ Those texts of Gregory and Bede's *De tabernaculo* are known to have been in the Saint-Bertin library in the twelfth century.¹²⁶

The interpretations of the Tabernacle by the two fathers sheds some light on why the psalm author group is depicted in thoughtful discussion in the Odbert Psalter. Gregory describes progression from the exterior to the interior of both the temple and the tabernacle as an image of both the journey of the soul towards contemplation and the historical movement of the Church toward triumph at the end of time.¹²⁷ The reader of the Odbert Psalter, as he looks at the psalm author miniature, stands before the exterior of the decorative structure, about to begin a progression through the psalms and the accompanying images, moving toward a contemplative and a historical climax in

¹²³ Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, 12-16. Bede and Christophe Vuillaume. *Le Tabernacle*, (Paris: Cerf, 2003).

¹²⁴ Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, 13. Gregory I. Pope and Theodosia Tomkinson, *Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel* (Etna, Calif.: Center for Traditionalist Orthodox Studies, 2008).

¹²⁵ Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 34.

¹²⁶ Gustav Heinrich Becker, *Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqui* (Hildesheim, New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1973), 181-183.

¹²⁷ Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind*, 14.

the historiated initials. The arcade, as the first image in the Psalter, is a gateway or portico before the rest of the decorations, which continue to build an interpretive structure for the reader to follow. The veil above represents the guiding goal of this journey: Gregory used the entrance of the high priest into the Holy of Holies as a symbol of the final movement into perfect contemplation. The co-authors standing before the entrance and discussing the structure before them are exemplars for the monks who are about to enter the Psalter to build up their memory or engage it in meditation, a conversation with the Word of God.

Bede, whose work is based on that of Gregory, sees the structure of the Tabernacle as an allegory of the written corpus of the Church—the writings of the apostles, the Old Testament scripture they use, and the works of the Church fathers.¹²⁸ As Christiania Whitehead puts it, “Bede imagines the tabernacle, and by extension the church, as a written entity...presenting the world with a single, coherent, closed statement of faith.”¹²⁹ The designers of the Odbert Psalter may have derived their idea of the Psalm text itself as a sacred architecture from Bede, and then developed a decorative program to express that idea. The Psalm authors, contributors to the written structure of the Church through their compositions, are about to build a verbal Tabernacle, which—along with the physical Tabernacle around them—will be brought to completion upon the return of the Ark to its rightful place. The core of the Tabernacle is to be the written covenant between God and his people. This covenant is the

¹²⁸ Ibid., 16-17.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 17.

presence of God among his people, and is eventually fulfilled by the person of God who is the Word.

That covenant, that Word, is what both the Psalm authors and the monks reading the psalms are seeking, through their compositions and their procession to retrieve the Ark. The Levites were specially appointed by God to carry the Ark and by David to pray before it, and they lead the ritual celebration around the Ark. Tilman Seebass labels them “liturgists” in his description of the Odbert Psalter Psalm author scene.¹³⁰ The monks see themselves similarly as bearers of Christ the Word. They have been chosen to sing and study Scripture, seeking out its meaning and bringing the Word into their own time and place—to build up the kingdom of God.¹³¹ The core of the monks’ contemplative life is their duty to carry out the liturgy, both in the Mass and the Office.¹³² The monks’ Ark comes to replace the Old Testament Ark in the body of the Psalter, where the blue in the initials may be representing the reverse of the Tabernacle veil.

Just as the miniature draws parallels between the Psalm authors and the monks, the facing acrostic poem links David and the monks. They are brought into a typological

¹³⁰ Tilman Seebass, *Musikdarstellung und Psalterillustration im früheren Mittelalter. Studien, Ausgehend von einer Ikonologie der Handschrift Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fonds Latin 1118* (Bern, Francke, 1973), 142.

¹³¹ Isabelle Cochelin, "When Monks were the Book: The Bible and Monasticism (6th-11th Centuries)," in *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, & Performance in Western Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 61.

¹³² Jean-François Goudesenne, "Musiques de l'invisible, musiques invisibles?" in *La représentation de l'invisible: trésors de l'enluminure romane en Nord-Pas-De-Calais* (Valenciennes: Bibliothèque multimédia de Valenciennes, 2007), 28. In writing about the f. 2v miniature, Goudesenne calls the collective sung prayer of monks an image of the mythic choir of the psalmists of the Temple.

relationship with David and into the architecture on the page that bridges the temporal divide between the past and present types. The poem connects David's acts of praise to those of the Saint-Bertin monks, and the psalm author portraits join the Old Testament figures engaged in imagined contemplative activities with the present-day Christian contemplatives and singers. The arcade is both the tabernacle and the cloister. That was likely the very first structure called to mind for the monks by the bold silver arcade. Furthermore, the Psalm authors were particularly relevant models for the monks of Saint-Bertin in their role as artistic creators. Odbert, Dodolinus, Heriveus, and any who may have assisted them were, in a sense, psalm creators, as well as contemplatives. This part of their identity is addressed in the acrostic dedication. The author tells his brothers "You outstrip the neighbouring cloisters with your innumerable books."¹³³ Their work is juxtaposed with the image of the inspired work of David and the other authors.¹³⁴

The model used at Saint-Bertin for this page may have been another source—besides visual traditions of author portraits, Scripture, and exegesis—that suggested association between the psalm author group, the instrument group, and the tabernacle. The Odbert Psalter is one of a number of manuscripts, dating from the ninth to the eleventh or twelfth century, that include this group of instruments and the associated labels, which derive from a letter attributed to Jerome and written to a man called

¹³³ "Innumeris libris superas uicinia septa." (Appendix C)

¹³⁴ Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 37.

Dardanus.¹³⁵ In two of the these manuscripts, which originate in Italy and date from the eleventh or twelfth century, the group is preceded by a miniature of a seven-branched candlestick, around which are written extracts from the Gregorian homily on Ezekiel and from a commentary by Isidore on Exodus.¹³⁶ The Gregorian excerpt elucidates part of Ezekiel through an interpretation of the candlestick described in Exodus 25:31-40 for use in the tabernacle. He identifies it as a figure of Christ providing divine light to the world while living in his human body, and as a figure of the followers of Christ who join His body through their suffering.¹³⁷ The Vallicelliana manuscript also includes an image of the Ark of the Covenant and one of David playing the psalterium similar in attributes to the David on folio 2v in the Odbert Psalter.¹³⁸ The Vallicelliana Palter and most of the other manuscripts containing the instruments also depict a David and musicians group, as we saw in the Psalter from Angers. The Dardanus instruments and the David and musicians group developed as two separate visual traditions. It seems that Odbert did not directly copy a version in which they were joined as they are on folio 2r because the instruments here fit neatly into the ruled space, but the arcade is oddly cut off on the right side, which has lead to speculation that the arcade was traced.¹³⁹ The menorah and its accompanying texts are not present in the Odbert Psalter, but it is possible that they

¹³⁵ Pamela Willetts, "The Seven-Branched Candlestick as a Psalter Illustration," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 42 (1979), 213, 215.

¹³⁶ London, British Library, Add. MS 47683 is a single leaf fragment. The other manuscript is Rome, Biblioteca Vallicelliana, MS E.24, with the candlestick on f. 25v.

¹³⁷ Gregory I. Pope and Theodosia Tomkinson, *Homilies on the Book of the Prophet Ezekiel*, 56-7.

¹³⁸ Willetts, "The Seven-Branched Candlestick as a Psalter Illustration," 213.

¹³⁹ Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 229.

were present in the model used for the instruments or for the psalm author group. If they were, they may have inspired the design of the psalm author group and its use in the Odbert Psalter, but there is no way to confirm this connection.

2.3 David Plays the Psalterium

The next picture of David enthroned and playing the psalterium is present in four of the manuscripts with the instrument group, but the Odbert Psalter version is the only one in which he is positioned under an archway, or perhaps more accurately a roof—in either case an important feature for linking the three enthroned figures in the opening images.¹⁴⁰ In the other instrument manuscripts, such as the Psalter from Angers (Fig. 2.9) and the Tiberius Psalter (Fig. 2.14), David's throne floats somewhere on the page without any kind of framing device. In the Odbert Psalter, not only is there an arch framing David, but also massive columns and even an architectural stand for the psalterium. These and other aspects of the miniature reiterate David's role both as king and as a leader of prayer, themes first expressed in the acrostic poem and subsequently in the psalm author miniature. David's domain, Jerusalem, is again represented above the archway, and the elaborate gold and silver decoration of David's crown draws attention to his kingship. The inscription that begins in the gable above David reads, "Hic est David filius Jesse tenens psalterium in manibus suis. Hic est forma psalterium." ("This is David, son of Jesse holding the psalterium in his hands. This is the form of the

¹⁴⁰ See the list of versions of the Dardanus group, with short descriptions, in Seebass, *Musikdarstellung und Psalterillustration im früheren Mittelalter*, 142, 145-46.

psalterium.”) The mention of his lineage from Jesse indicates the legitimacy of his kingship and his place in the line that would eventually produce Christ, with reference to Isaiah 11:1. The emphasis on kingship, ruling, and the keeping of order developed in the three opening miniatures is intimately related to the Odbert Psalter’s architectural theme. Ideally a kingdom will be as organized, stable and long lasting as a well-built church. The Psalter is formed into architecture to give the text a rational organization, guiding the person who mentally walks through it. The decoration keeps order.

In addition to calling to mind David’s role as a king, the inscription points out David’s musical skill that enabled his composition of the psalms. This image may also hearken back to the acrostic’s mention of David singing and the monks imitating him: “Rejoice holy band of monks.../Performing the chants of David that were most pleasing to the Lord/ which he [David] sang full of divine inspiration.” The inscription explains the scene and is positioned in a guiding architectural element like the inscription on the previous folio.

2.4 Davidic Archway and Pentecost

The final full-page miniature (f. 11r, Figs. 2.3-2.4) continues David’s story and introduces Christ visually for the first time as the enthroned king at the heart of this image. The dynamic between the archway and the space within it organizes the typological relationship between David and Christ and gives spatial reality to the temporal divide between the types. The archway that frames the miniature includes four victorious scenes from David’s life, framed in quatrefoils and trefoils and positioned

in such a way as to appear like column capitals and supports.¹⁴¹ In the first, he rescues one of his sheep from the mouth of a lion, in the second he uses his slingshot against Goliath, in the third he raises his sword to lay the final blow on Goliath, and in the fourth he brings the head to Saul. These scenes are all described in 1 Samuel 17.¹⁴² Though David is not a king here as he was in the previous images, he is still depicted as a dominant and protective figure. The archway between the vignettes is decorated with various birds and four-legged creatures intertwined with a scroll design—a traditional decorative motif.

Within the archway is the initial B that begins the psalms and specifically the word “Beatus” in Psalm 1. The first verse of the psalm is written along the right side of the B: “Beatus vir qui non abiit in consilio impiorum et in via peccatorum non stetit et in cathedra pestilentiae non sedit.” (“Blessed is the man who hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, nor sat in the chair of pestilence.”) Nothing in that verse or the rest of the psalm really suggests Pentecost as an appropriate scene to be depicted in the initial, but that is what we see. The twelve apostles are gathered in the lower section of the letter, and the white dove of the Holy Spirit is barely visible above them. The apostles and Christ in this initial are the only figures among all those in the manuscript’s historiated initials to have painted garments. Christ, in the upper section, is sending the Spirit, but instead of making a gesture of

¹⁴¹ Yolanta Zaluska, “Catalogue no. 2: Psautier glosé, dit Psautier d'Odbert,” in *La Représentation de l'invisible: Trésors de l'enluminure romane en Nord-pas-de-Calais* (Valenciennes: Bibliothèque multimédia de Valenciennes, 2007), 34.

¹⁴² Kelleher, “Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert,” 230.

blessing, he points with his right hand to the book in his left. Drawn-back curtains outlined in white frame Christ between them. These curtains recall the blue veil of the Holy of Holies on folio 2r, and open to reveal Christ as the fulfillment of the Ark of the Covenant. Christ is dressed entirely in silver and gold and has a cruciform halo. A somewhat similar image of David/Christ as a scribe in which he listens to the dove of the Holy Spirit appears in the Psalm 1 initial in the Corbie Psalter (Fig 2.15).¹⁴³ This is one example of a visual type that expresses the traditional belief that David was inspired by the Holy Spirit in his writing of the psalms.¹⁴⁴

We are still left with the question of why, in the Odbert Psalter, inspiration by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is pictured rather than the inspiration of David, and why this New Testament coming of the Spirit is coupled with the smaller images of David in the archway. In terms of the Psalter's overall design, this image introduces the devotional meaning of Christ's position at the center of the initials: from that position, where he is mediator at the heart of the heavenly Tabernacle, he "give[s] [his] laws in their hearts."¹⁴⁵

Another explanation for the choice to depict Pentecost framed by David is that the composition of the entire page is a figurative continuation of the Old Testament narrative referenced in the Psalm author portrait image, thus uniting that Davidic

¹⁴³ Heather Pulliam, "Eloquent Ornament: Exegesis and Entanglement in the Corbie Psalter," in *Studies in the Illustration of the Psalter* (Stamford, Lincolnshire: Shaun Tyas, 2000), 24-25. Pulliam calls the figure David and David/Christ, noting Jean Desobry's description of it as David as Christ. Desobry also sees the initial as a depiction of "the two voices in the psalm, that of Christ and that of David."

¹⁴⁴ Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 234-35.

¹⁴⁵ Hebrews 10: 16; See Chapter 1.3, 35-6.

narrative to the Christological one that begins in the initial. Following the transportation of the ark, both in 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, David proposes to the prophet Nathan that a temple be built to house the ark, and God, speaking through Nathan, responds that he has never needed his people to build him a stable house, but that he himself will give them a permanent home and build David a house. God reminds David of the past help He gave him using words that the folio 11r David scenes may be referencing: “I took thee from the pastures, from following the flock, that thou shouldst be ruler of my people Israel...and [I] have slain all thy enemies before thee, and have made thee a name like that of one of the great ones...”¹⁴⁶ These verses resonate with the images of David’s pastoral life, his defeat of Goliath, and Saul’s recognition of him for this deed.

The continuation of God’s pronouncement in 1 Chronicles is represented by the image of Christ establishing his Church at Pentecost. God says, “...I will raise up thy seed after thee which shall be of thy sons: and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son...and his throne shall be most firm forever.”¹⁴⁷ These words more proximately refer to King Solomon, but medieval exegetes also understood them as prophecies of Christ. Christ came from the line of David, and during his earthly life, Christ was sent by the Father to establish the kingdom of God. After his defeat of death, Christ ascended to his seat at the right hand of God, a “throne...most firm forever.” The Church, by some accounts born at Pentecost, was tasked with perpetuating the kingdom. In the Psalm 1

¹⁴⁶ 1 Chronicles 17: 7-8

¹⁴⁷ 1 Chronicles 17: 11-14

miniature, we see the difference between a king under the Law, who must maintain authority by violence, and the King of Grace, whose everlasting kingdom allows contemplative peace. It is a transition from God's people being bound to the Law under the Old Testament to a Church living freely in grace. This miniature also represents the transition over time from the reign of David to the new reign of Christ.

Bede and Gregory see their analytical movement through biblical architecture as a symbol of the historical progress toward a more perfect church, and thus a more perfect kingdom of God.¹⁴⁸ The Psalm 1 miniature is an architecture designed to visualize the literal progress from David to Christ, the allegorical progress from the church of the Old Testament to the Church of the New Testament (specifically the early Church consisting of the Apostles), and the tropological progress of the meditative soul. The B initial is like a distant window that can be seen through the closer archway. The arch jumps forward because the intricate decorative motifs fill its space, making it seem more solid than the purple wash, and because the outlining of the capitals and bases places them even closer to the viewer than the decorative parts. On the other hand, the David components also seem further back towards the interior because they have the same purple wash as their background. The animal/vegetal portion may have been understood as further back in time than those of David, a representation of the natural world before God's covenant with the Israelites. In any case, the shared purple backgrounds between the arch and the interior motivate a crossing of the threshold into

¹⁴⁸ Whitehead, *Castles of the Mind: A Study of Medieval Architectural Allegory*, 14, 17. In these cases, Whitehead refers to Gregory's *Homiliae in Ezechielem* and Bede's *De templo*.

the interior space. A curious atmospheric effect is created by the use of a relatively light purple wash between the bold metallic paints of the arch and the initial. The reader can imagine himself in that space between the solid structures of the arch and the window/initial. The initial has the most concentrated use of gold so far in the manuscript, marking its contents as belonging to the time of grace as opposed to the miniatures before it, dominated by silver.¹⁴⁹ Not only does the gold indicate the initial's importance as the first in the sequence, but gold would also be an appropriate frame for an image of Christ in heavenly glory. One sees through the window frame of the letter to the image surrounding and supporting the text, with a blue, sky-like background and faces and hands that are colored by the base layer of parchment. Almost none of the historiated scenes in the Odbert Psalter are literally present in the text, in the structure through which the reader walks. The images are on a higher interpretative level, or a deeper level; they are visions accessed through interior meditation.

This brings us back to the image of Pentecost, which further develops the themes of kingship and contemplative prayer, conceptualized with respect to architecture. We have already seen how the relationship between David and Christ in the Psalm 1 miniature places the enthroned Christ in a line of historic kingship. Christ's presence in Pentecost scenes was rare, and an enthroned position even rarer.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁹ This greater proportion of gold does not remain consistent in subsequent New Testament historiated initials with silver and gold letterforms, but in those cases there is no need to contrast the letter with surrounding painted Old Testament scenes.

¹⁵⁰ Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 235-237. For comparison images of Pentecost, see Rainer Kahsnitz, "Der Christologische Zyklus im Odbert-Psalter," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 51, no. 1 (1988), 115, 117.

Therefore this decision was probably made to emphasize Christ as a ruler. The posture and attributes of Christ in the initial are also part of a visual tradition that depicts the revealed Father by way of the incarnate and risen Son, so that both persons are present in one figure.¹⁵¹ The dove below completes the Trinity and augments this expression of authority. Finally, the throne is a counterpoint to the “chair of pestilence” avoided by the blessed man named in Psalm 1.

This man’s “will is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he shall meditate day and night.”¹⁵² The apostles bring this verse to life and act as models for the activity in which the reader is about to engage.¹⁵³ Three of the four apostles in the front row have their hands to their chins in thoughtful gestures. The Psalm 1 miniature, along with visualizing the historical progress from Christ to David, expresses the meditative progress from the turmoil of the physical, exterior world toward the calm, spiritual interior life. Contemplation of the psalms was not simply an analytical reading activity—it was a penitential exercise used to confront the devil, to purge sin, and to free the soul.¹⁵⁴ The importance of spiritual battle in monastic life originated with the desert

¹⁵¹ Zaluska, “Catalogue no. 2: Psautier glosé, dit Psautier d'Odbert,” 34.

¹⁵² Psalm 1:2

¹⁵³ Monks generally considered their lifestyle to be the form of Christian living closest to the lifestyle of the apostles. They thought of themselves as living the *vita apostolica* because the apostles were thought to be the first adherents of the *vita contemplativa*. See Robert Deshman, “Another Look at the Disappearing Christ: Corporeal and Spiritual Vision in Early Medieval images,” *The Art Bulletin* 79, no. 3 (Sep. 1997), 536-37, 543. Therefore, images of the apostles often function as exemplars for monks, as is the case here. Zaluska points out that none of the apostles are depicted with identifying traits. This makes it easier for readers to imagine themselves in their places. Zaluska, “Catalogue no. 2: Psautier glosé, dit Psautier d'Odbert,” 34.

¹⁵⁴ Openshaw, “Weapons in the Daily Battle,” 25, 27-28.

fathers' interpretations of Christ's struggle with the devil (extensively illustrated in the Odbert Psalter's historiated initials), and descended from there to western monasticism through the Benedictine Rule.¹⁵⁵ The theme was prevalent in Anglo-Saxon Psalter illustration of the early eleventh century.¹⁵⁶ As Christ had done, the monk was supposed to use the word of God as his weapon, both in the communal psalmody of the Divine Office and in private prayer.¹⁵⁷ In the Odbert Psalter's Psalm 1 miniature, David's struggles represent the soul's battle against evil. The defeat of Goliath was "one of the archetypal medieval images of the conquest of evil," and is used with this theme in mind in the contemporary Arundel Psalter (Fig. 2.16)¹⁵⁸ and the slightly later Tiberius Psalter (Fig. 2.17).¹⁵⁹ The Tiberius Psalter also depicts David's rescue of the lamb from the lion as an expression of the theme (Fig. 2.18), as does the Southampton Psalter, an Irish manuscript made c. 1000 (Fig. 2.19).¹⁶⁰ As the reader enters the Odbert Psalter, he is positioned in the exterior/past realm where the battle with the world of temptation is raging, but his end goal is in sight in the Pentecost scene. His process of reading through the psalms will build up, brick by brick, verse by verse, a protective structure around him in which he is free to contemplate the Lord, safe from the devil's temptation. Christ is the foundation of this structure and the Lord of it, the ruler with the power to dispel the

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 24.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid. The majority of the article deals with Psalters of this time period.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 24-25.

¹⁵⁸ London, British Library, Ms Arundel 155, f. 93r

¹⁵⁹ Openshaw, "Weapons in the Daily Battle," 28.

¹⁶⁰ Southampton Psalter, Cambridge, St. John's College, MS. C.9, f. 4v

forces of evil. Even in the outer portal where David is fighting, he is on the winning side; the destruction of evil is integral to the structure of a universe built with Christ, the Logos, as its plan.

Christ shows the apostles the subject of their contemplation and their weapon against the devil by pointing to the book in his hand. This is an image of Christ teaching.¹⁶¹ His gesture here echoes those of David in the previous two miniatures. On folio 2r, David points to the co-authors, calling them to join him in composing the psalms. Similarly, Christ is calling the apostles to build his kingdom by spreading his Word. David also seems to be pointing to the staff in his own hand; if this is the case, both he and Christ point to an emblem of their authority. On folio 2v, David is seated sideways rather than frontal like Christ and is not exactly pointing to the psalterium, but the position of the two objects with respect to the bodies is relatively close, and the resonance between psalterium and book is clear. The psalterium is the tool that, in the hands of David, first effected the creation of the psalms, bringing forth their words and giving them tone, movement and temporal extension. Christ holds the Word, the “tool” for his creation of the entire universe. The psalms as music are just as important to the monastic lifestyle as the psalms in written form, and so the musical instrument, like Scripture, is a weapon in the spiritual battle. Christ is not simply showing the apostles the source of their strength in pointing to the book, but he is equipping them with this weapon, the Word, by sending the Spirit to them. Like the psalm authors before them,

¹⁶¹ Leroquais, “Psautier-hymnaire glosé de Saint-Bertin, 999,” 99.

the apostles will write and pray “full of the Holy Spirit.”¹⁶² The Holy Spirit is the divine person that will write the law on their hearts.¹⁶³ All of these meanings related to Christ’s gesture are particularly resonant for the monks of Saint-Bertin, not only because the monks imitate the apostles as inheritors of the *vita apostolica*, but because of their identity as scribes and artists and the spiritual and worldly reputation generated (at least in part) by their books.

Further inspiration for the illustration of the allegorical and tropological movements described above may have come from the Psalm 1 gloss. Unfortunately, there is a leaf missing between folios ten and eleven in the Odbert Psalter, and the commentary on Psalm 1:1 with it.¹⁶⁴ The patristic commentaries that are the main sources for the Odbert Psalter gloss do, however, suggest a depiction of the Holy Spirit at the start of the psalter. Jerome explains in a general sense that the psalms were inspired by the Holy Spirit and writes that the Holy Spirit is “the great key to the grand entrance [i.e. the first psalm]” of the psalter.¹⁶⁵ Augustine presents the Holy Spirit as one possible referent of the water imagery in Psalm 1.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, Augustine refers to

¹⁶² From the inscription above the Psalm authors.

¹⁶³ Hebrews 10: 14-16

¹⁶⁴ V. Leroquais, *Les Psautiers : Manuscrits latins des bibliothèques publiques de France* (Mâcon: Protat frères, 1941), 96.

¹⁶⁵ Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 3. Kelleher quotes Jerome’s general statement about the Spirit and the psalms in “Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert,” 234.

¹⁶⁶ Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms*, 1-32, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Maria Boulding, Vol. III/15 (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corp, 2000), 68. Whether or not Augustine was quoted in the Odbert Psalter gloss, his commentary on Psalm 1 was probably known to the monks of Saint-Bertin under Odbert because “Augustin liber super psalm ‘beatus vir’” is listed in the monastery’s twelfth-century library catalog. See Becker, *Catalogi Bibliothecarum Antiqui*, 181-183.

the events of Pentecost more directly in his commentary, and he explains the Psalm in terms of the allegorical and tropological themes that we have already seen at work in the Psalm 1 miniature. He considers Christ to be the blessed man named by the Psalm, and notes that he did not accept the “chair of pestilence,” that is, the prideful throne of an earthly kingdom.¹⁶⁷ In reference to verse 3—“And he shall be like a tree which is planted near the running waters, which shall bring forth its fruit, in due season” — Augustine says that the tree represents Wisdom, i.e. Christ, who came to earth to save us.¹⁶⁸ Wisdom is an attribute necessary for good kingship, and is specifically associated with another king in the Davidic line, Solomon.¹⁶⁹ The image of the Holy Spirit coming from Wisdom, the true author of the psalms, is an interesting opposition to the image (expressed textually on folio 1v) of David as Psalm author receiving the Spirit.

In terms of the soul’s movement, Augustine identifies the “running waters” as sinners among whom Christ is a stable trunk that “[draws] them into the roots of his discipline...” Christ rescues those caught up in the temptations of sin by drawing them inward. By doing so, Christ “‘will bring forth fruit’ that is, he will establish churches, but ‘in due season’, namely, after he has been glorified by his resurrection and ascension into heaven. Once the Holy Spirit had been sent to the apostles, and once they had been established in their faith in him and sent out to the peoples, he bore the churches as his

¹⁶⁷ Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms*, 1-32, 67.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 68.

¹⁶⁹ The Psalter gloss, paraphrasing Jerome, relates that Solomon said of Wisdom, “She is a tree of life to those who grasp her.” Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 7.

fruit.”¹⁷⁰ These lines combine the moral and the historical: the apostles who are drawn inward toward Christ receive the Spirit and are strengthened by it so that they are able to go out and build the kingdom of God. Augustine also explains that the apostles’ reception of the Spirit happens after the Resurrection and Ascension, when Christ is in glory in heaven; this status is pictured in the miniature. In fact, it was understood in Odbert’s time that the apostles were only able to begin living the *vita contemplativa* once they had received the Spirit at Pentecost.¹⁷¹

2.5 The Beginning is the End

The narrative of the Psalm 1 miniature, which first suggested a straightforward timeline—from past to future, Old to New, exterior to interior—becomes complicated by depicting Pentecost prior to the Resurrection, Ascension, or any other part of Christ’s life. That does not, however, negate the straightforward narrative movements. The Psalm 1 miniature belongs to the façade of the Psalter’s interpretive program, and so reveals its general shape at the reader’s first look. The Psalm 1 miniature, in concert with the two other façade miniatures and within its own confines, has laid out the general interpretive narrative for the Psalter—David is the type of Christ as king, and the words of his psalms foretell, are a part of, and are prayed by Christ the Word. The psalm co-authors, and the apostles after them, follow and pray the words of their Lords:

¹⁷⁰ Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms*, 68-69.

¹⁷¹ Deshman, *Another Look at the Disappearing Christ: Corporeal and Spiritual Vision in Early Medieval images*, 536-7, 543.

David and Christ. The monastic viewer, in imitating them also imitates their leaders. The monks belong to and support the eternal kingdom of God as long as they continue to pray the psalms and keep evil at bay.

The Pentecost event is the culmination of this narrative as presented in the Odbert Psalter. It is a door—an exit from the first narrative, but an entrance to a more complex one. It concludes the first part of the Psalter decoration, but it is the first historiated initial in the sequence extended over the next 113 folios.¹⁷² Spatially, it is the first initial that the reader encounters, but in narrative time, dozens of the initial scenes on following pages are between the David scenes and the Pentecost. In the Pentecost initial, the readers see their current contemplative goal in meditation, as well as the implied future during which they will lead the kingdom of God, the Church, to the Second Coming through their life of prayer. The Pentecost image, however, only provides a bare-bones picture of their devotional journey; an intricate, multifaceted narrative unfolds in the rest of the text and decoration. Unlike the apostles, the readers at folio 11r have not yet witnessed the Resurrection and Ascension that Augustine wrote was necessary for reception of faith and the Spirit. Indeed, Christ himself first told the Apostles that he must depart from them in order for the Spirit to come to them.¹⁷³

¹⁷² Zaluska, “Catalogue no. 2: Psautier glosé, dit Psautier d’Odbert,” 34.

¹⁷³ John 16:7

Emphasizing this point, images of Ascension and Pentecost were often paired in manuscripts.¹⁷⁴ In the Odbert Psalter, the Ascension is the last historiated initial, but it is joined to the Pentecost nonetheless, stretching a conceptual link across the whole group of historiated initials (Fig. 2.20).¹⁷⁵ In both initials, Christ is seated and holding a book propped on his left leg. His right hand gesture in the Ascension, touching his thumb to his third finger, is didactic, like that of the Pentecost Christ. As he is pictured in the Ascension, Christ is well on his way to the seat of glory pictured in the Pentecost initial; he is completely detached from any representation of the earth. The witnessing Apostles are present, but they are cramped off to the side in the letterform. After reading this image, the reader knows the next scene in the story is back at the beginning of the sequence, where the apostles have moved to the interior of the letter.

Those reading the Psalter at the Pentecost scene who had read the book before would be aware of the other scene of Christ enthroned at the end of the image cycle. They know that the triumphant Christ is the beginning and the end of the story—he is the Alpha and the Omega. His kingship is not limited to the history and the kingdoms depicted in the first three miniatures, but it extends over the whole structure, the whole universe of the Psalter. The promise of Christ triumphant over sin is laid as a foundation at the beginning of the Psalter so that the rest of the Psalter will be built according to that plan. Each of Christ's appearances in the historiated initials as a human being will

¹⁷⁴ Deshman, "Another Look at the Disappearing Christ: Corporeal and Spiritual Vision in Early Medieval images," 518-546.

¹⁷⁵ Zaluska, "Catalogue no. 2: Psautier glosé, dit Psautier d'Odbert," 34.

be understood as components in a narrative that eventually leads back to Christ being the ruler of the universe. Returning to the image of the Pentecost as a door in the Psalter's façade, specifically the façade of a church, we can say that the reader enters with a vision of Christ in majesty, the ruler of the universe; progresses down the nave to reach the choir, the climactic point where the sacrifice of the Mass occurs, represented in the Psalter architecture by an image of the Crucifixion; and then goes back down the nave in the other direction to leave through the same door he entered, which, on its interior side is the Ascension. At that point the reader, like the apostles, is leaving behind corporeal sight of Christ in the mass for the spiritual vision illustrated from the very beginning in the Pentecost scene. The Pentecost and Ascension initials are bookends of the historiated initial program that frame it with a depiction of the meditative progression from corporeal to spiritual vision.

The opening miniatures introduce this meditative process, providing the readers with models of devotion to guide them as they begin their journey of prayer. The miniatures also introduce a world structured by a history that is salvific, a world led by the models of devotion—kings whose authority and dominance flows from their own prayer and command of words. They are kings not just over the buildings illustrated around them, but over the entire structure of the decoration and text, over the architecture of the Psalter. Each part of it is attributed to—belongs to the domain of—both David and Christ. Christ in fact *is* the word, the building, and so controls it completely.

CHAPTER 3:

ARCHITECTURAL MOTIFS THAT SUPPORT THE OVERARCHING ARCHITECTONIC DESIGN

Several of the Odbert Psalter's historiated initials include scenes with explicitly architectural settings that serve to reinforce and develop the themes established in the opening miniatures and continued in the organization of the psalm folios. In this chapter, I will discuss in detail how these thoughtful compositions develop the architectonic themes.

In the Annunciation scene of Psalm 26 (f. 32r; Fig. 3.1), the arrangement of the figures and objects within and around Mary's pavilion emphasize the Word becoming flesh and thus mediator between humankind and God. The Annunciation composition also identifies the Word as the structure in which prayer takes place and Christ as the Lord of that structure.

The Temple setting for the Presentation (Ps 80, f. 90r; Fig. 3.2) echoes the shape of the letter framing it and thereby emblemizes the function of the Psalter text as a metaphorical holy structure through which the monk advances in his meditation. The intersection of the Word in drawn form, the Word in letter form, and the Temple architecture depicts once again the Word made flesh, as well as Christ's identity as Head of the Church. Furthermore, the Presentation scene, showing Christ's participation in a Jewish rite, is paired with a Psalm written for the Jewish feast of Tabernacles, and these

elements are used to express typological relationships between the Old Testament, the New Testament and the medieval present. This bringing together of all times under one roof is similar in effect to the miniature for Psalm 1, which merges the kingdom of David and the kingdom of Christ and defines the medieval monk's place in the kingdom. Finally, an additional theme of pilgrimage to Jerusalem is explored through the Presentation-Tabernacles typology.

The third initial depicts the blessed in the house of the Lord—one of two initials that draw their subjects directly from the accompanying psalm, here Psalm 83 (f. 92v; Fig. 3.3). The pairing of the house and its praying occupants with Psalm 83 engages quite explicitly the theme of spiritual movement inward toward the heart and upward toward heaven.

3.1 The Annunciation

The Annunciation initial at the head of Psalm 26 contains the earliest event in the gospels to be depicted in the Psalter's historiated initials. It is the first of these to appear in the standard mise-en-page of the psalm text pages, at the bottom left corner of the text block on folio 32r. The initial is almost eight lines high, and the lines of the first verse next to it are written in alternating red and green ink. The fourth line ("Dominus inluminatio"), which proceeds from the initial, is written larger and in capital letters. The Annunciation scene is more clearly connected to the colored text than most of the initial scenes because it is made with almost as much green ink as the standard red ink. The scene also uses gold, blue, and yellow for certain details. Yellow is present

not only within the initial—in the angel's hair and wings, the roof, the lectern surface and base, and the central column capital—but also in the initials for the gloss on the beginning of the psalm and the second verse. That color correspondence further joins the image to the text.¹⁷⁶

Conscious of the Annunciation initial's place at the beginning of the initial sequence, Odbert designed an Annunciation that invites the reader to commence his spiritual journey through the words of the psalms, through the verbal sacred architecture. He journeys from the carnal weakness of humanity towards the spiritual strength of divinity, found in contemplation in the innermost chamber of the soul.¹⁷⁷ Odbert creates that invitation through his placement of the scene within an architectural framework that emphasizes Christ's roles as mediator and as guide who makes the journey possible. The design forms an analogous opening for the reader's journey through salvation history—the allegorical understanding of the Psalter that is present alongside the tropological one. Christ is mediator not only for the individual who battles with sin, but also for all humanity. Incorporating that idea, Christ's identity as Lord and King who conquers evil and keeps order is also expressed in the Annunciation scene.

In order to communicate all these levels of meaning, Odbert creates specific relationships among the figures and architecture through a careful composition. Odbert

¹⁷⁶ The use of color in the gloss in this way only occurs on this folio and on 46r with the Visitation initial and gloss. I have found nothing to indicate why this idea was abandoned.

¹⁷⁷ The reader's journey did begin when he came through the door of Psalm 1, but the material of Psalms 2-25 is like a vestibule before entering the structure proper with Psalm 26/the Annunciation.

is not simply trying to fit all the conventional components of an Annunciation scene into the initial. Odbert certainly moves beyond the conventional to make his point. The Annunciation initial's composition consists of two distinct spaces framed by three main vertical lines: the angel Gabriel, Mary and the left-hand column together, and the lectern with the right-hand column capital, which is the only visible portion of that column. The gestures of Mary and Gabriel extend from their bodies to cross into the spaces between the three verticals. There the gestures are accentuated by the contrast between their parchment beige color outlined in red and the bright blue background.

These gestures are important indicators as to how the viewer is to interpret this scene. On the literal or historical level, the gestures reflect the interaction of Mary and Gabriel as recounted in the Gospel of Luke.¹⁷⁸ Gabriel greets her with a blessing, two fingers raised. The edge of his wing remains in front of the shaft of the letter, suggesting that he has come from the supernatural realm, beyond the earthly realm within the initial. Mary's gesture expresses her acceptance of the angel's announcement, "...be it done to me according to thy word," and perhaps confusion and surprise as well, "How shall this be done, because I know not man?"¹⁷⁹

In this image, Mary functions as a bridge between heaven and earth. Her hand passing the column into the angel's realm communicates the theological importance of what is taking place at the Annunciation—divinity joins with humanity in her body. Within Mary's private chamber, her other hand points to the lectern, and likely to an

¹⁷⁸ Luke 1:26-38

¹⁷⁹ Luke 1:28, 34

open book atop it.¹⁸⁰ Mary's two gestures forge a link between the invisible "power of the Most High" that the angel has said will "overshadow" her and the visible, concrete scripture in which the Virgin daily encounters God. Her body joins those two manifestations of divinity, and the lines of her garment further accentuate the link by pointing to her womb, where the Covenant and the Lord are about to take on flesh.

The lectern and Mary's open-armed gesture are key in expressing the shared identity of those manifestations of God. The iconography of the Virgin's interrupted reading at the Annunciation developed in the ninth century, after several centuries dominated by representations of an enthroned Virgin weaving the Temple cloth.¹⁸¹ The idea that Mary had been reading when Gabriel came to her originated in the apocryphal gospel of Pseudo-Matthew and was perpetuated in the works of Ambrose, Bede and Odilo of Cluny.¹⁸² The praying Virgin was still often seated in Carolingian art, but in Ottonian art, she was usually standing the *orant* pose.¹⁸³

The gesture of Mary and its relationship to the lectern in the Odbert Psalter resembles very closely the Annunciation imagery in the Ottonian Fulda sacramentaries,

¹⁸⁰ As Kelleher notes, it is unclear whether or not the top layer of the lectern or just the yellow area is intended to represent a book, but she argues that the three-sided border can only indicate a book, saying that most of Odbert's other depictions of open books resemble this one. I am inclined to follow her argument, and it would not make much sense for Mary to be at the lectern without a book. Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 237-8.

¹⁸¹ For example, in the Gospels of Saint-Médard de Soissons (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Ms latin 8850, f. 124r).

¹⁸² Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert," 238.

¹⁸³ Eric Palazzo, *Les sacramentaires de Fulda*, 40.

although it is reversed in direction (Fig. 3.4).¹⁸⁴ Mary's garment in the Bamberg sacramentary is almost exactly like that in the Odbert Psalter.¹⁸⁵ The Fulda sacramentaries are the first to depict an open book on a lectern in the Annunciation, and in each of the three manuscripts mentioned here, Mary's hand rests over the book. In the Udine Annunciation, the gestures of the Virgin and Gabriel appear to be linking realms to express the meeting of human being and God, similar to the Odbert Annunciation. An enclosed town representing Nazareth is on the far left of the Udine miniature.¹⁸⁶ The lectern links it to Mary, whose other hand touches Gabriel's wingtip. His right wingtip touches the sanctuary from which he has presumably just come.¹⁸⁷ Odbert deftly adapted several elements present in the Fulda Annunciations and the didactic strategy informing them in order to demonstrate the equivalence between the Word of Scripture and the Son of the most High that Gabriel has announced will be Mary's own son.

The gestures of Mary and the angel function beyond their own interaction to involve a third figure in the scene, Christ, whose appearance here is very unusual indeed. It is rare for Christ to be depicted at the Annunciation, especially in this period,

¹⁸⁴ On this group, see page 32n78. Kelleher briefly discusses one of the Fulda sacramentaries (Göttingen, Universitätsbibliothek, Ms. Theol. 213), but there are three such manuscripts with closely related imagery made in this time period. The other two are Udine, Archivio capitolare, Ms 1, and Bamberg, Staatliche Bibliothek, Ms Lit 1. Kelleher, "Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbey of Odbert," 238.

¹⁸⁵ Bamberg, Staatliche Bibliothek, Ms Lit 1, f. 119v. Palazzo, *Les sacramentaires de Fulda*, figure 14.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁸⁷ Palazzo says simply that the building behind Gabriel is longitudinal architecture. *Ibid.*

and the bust version is unique to the Odbert Psalter.¹⁸⁸ There are later examples in which Christ is given an embodied presence in the moments before he becomes incarnate within Mary, but Kahsnitz describes the Odbert image as the first attempt to depict the pre-existent Logos who is about to become flesh.¹⁸⁹ Thus the bodily image of Christ is an extension of the Virgin's gestural chain. The chain extends to a triangle that connects Gabriel, the Logos, and the lectern. Gabriel's gesture not only blesses Mary, but also points toward Christ, who in turn is linked by the column capital to the surface of the lectern. The modes of God's presence—the Son, the Logos, the Hebrew Scriptures—are united in this shape. The image portrays the idea that the man who will have "...the throne of David his father...[and]...shall reign in the house of Jacob forever"¹⁹⁰ and the God whose covenant is recorded in the Old Testament are one in the same. The Word and the man descended from David are facets of the Logos, the logic ordering all creation.

The alignment of the lectern with the column and the bust of Christ-as-Logos express that multivalence of the Logos. Seen as part of the setting, the column capital is a background structure positioned to connect the lectern and the Logos. The design of the lectern, however, is such that it becomes the bulk of the column, extending from the

¹⁸⁸ Rainer Kahsnitz, "Der Christologische Zyklus im Odbert-Psalter," *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 51, no. 1 (1988), 56. Kahsnitz refers to the figure as a Christ child, but whether it is intended to be a child is debatable. Christ is without a beard throughout the Odbert Psalter, so this cannot be used as a gauge. The Annunciation Christ looks similar to other portrayals of Christ as an infant in the Psalter, but equally as similar to adult portrayals. If the Annunciation Christ is supposed to be the Logos, as I will argue and Kahsnitz himself says, it is unlikely that it was intended to also be Christ as a child.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 57.

¹⁹⁰ As the angel says in Luke 1:32

capital to its decorative base, which aligns with the line of the floor. The base resembles those of the arcade in the psalm authors miniature (Fig. 2.1). In using this architectural element to design the lectern, Odbert departs from the narrow, spindly lectern design used in the Annunciations from the Fulda sacramentaries and the Benedictional of Æthelwold.¹⁹¹ The joint lectern-column structure in conjunction with Christ on the roof represents not only the Scripture made flesh, but also the creative, ordering Logos made flesh. This unusual detail indicates that the entire framing architecture for the scene of the Annunciation embodies the Logos, just as the larger Odbert Psalter architecture does.

The notion of Christ as architecture corresponds with the biblical metaphor of Christ as cornerstone. He is identified as the cornerstone of the Church in the Odbert Psalter's commentary on verse 6 of Psalm 26: "The phrase, 'he hath exalted me upon a rock' pertains to the incarnation of the Lord upon which was founded the church; since Christ, born of a woman, is the corner-stone uniting the peoples."¹⁹² The Church is identified earlier in the commentary as the praying voice of this Psalm.¹⁹³ In verse 6, then, the Church acknowledges that it is founded on the "incarnation of the Lord." In verses 4 and 5, she declares her desire to be in God's house and temple and proclaims

¹⁹¹ Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, plate 8.

¹⁹² "Quod autem dicit 'In petra exultavit me,' ad incarnationem domini pertinet super quam fundata erat ecclesia quoniam de femine natus est christus qui est lapis adunans populos angularis." The psalm verse and commentary are on f. 32v, the folio after that on which the Annunciation initial is.

¹⁹³ "Vox populi ad fidem vocati."

the protection she finds in his tabernacle.¹⁹⁴ These verses are appropriate for a tropological engagement with the Psalter architecture.¹⁹⁵ The reader of the Psalter was meant to join in the Church's declaration of faith in the Incarnation as he entered the Psalter structure. He does this via a book on a lectern, as alluded to by the integration of the lectern into the architecture and its position facing the text to be prayed. The Annunciation initial offers a continuation from the Psalter façade of the Ark/Word typology—the constructed sense of the Ark type here masterfully extends to the Word antitype via Mary's pavilion. Here, too, architecture is presented as a meditation guide, perhaps with Mary as another contemplative model like the Psalm authors and Apostles.

The idea of Christ the King is also developed in this initial, in addition to the inherent lordship expressed by the depiction of Christ as Logos. Christ's kingship is won by his victory over death on the cross. This particular kingship is indicated by the *globus cruciger* that crowns Mary's pavilion. The *globus* is not an insignificant decorative flourish, though it may at first appear to be. This well-established iconography, which had been developing since the Late Antique period, is accentuated in the Annunciation initial and integrated into the action of the scene.¹⁹⁶ Three elements in the scene are

¹⁹⁴ "One thing I have asked of the Lord, this will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life. That I may see the delight of the Lord, and may visit his temple. For he hath hidden me in his tabernacle; in the day of evils, he hath protected me in the secret place of his tabernacle."

¹⁹⁵ Their tone and subject matter is also integral to the initial and text of Psalm 83, discussed later in this chapter.

¹⁹⁶ Leslie Brubaker, "Globus Cruciger," in *Dictionary of the Middle Ages* (New York: Scribner, 1982) 5: 564.

emphasized by gold paint: the *globus*, the head of Gabriel's staff directly beneath it, and the cross in Christ's halo. Two symbols of Christ's authority visually correspond with Christ himself, and all three are integrated into the architecture, which controls the reading process. The visual symbols of authority are drawn into the action of the scene where Gabriel announces the coming of the royal Son. Thus at the outset of the interior initial sequence, the reader is presented with the Lord who will be his leader on the ensuing spiritual journey and the guiding architecture that is intimately related to that Lord.

3.2 The Presentation

The Presentation scene (f. 90r; Fig. 3.2) is not so much within the initial for Psalm 80 as it is intertwined with it, with the figures acting in front of the letterform, and the Temple building both behind and slightly in front of that letterform. Both figures and setting are tied to the opening verses through color in a similar fashion to the Annunciation and Psalm 26. The colors of the first six lines of Psalm 80 do not alternate. Rather, the first line and third through sixth lines are in red ink, the second is in green, and the third is in purple. Details on the upper parts of the Temple, directly to the left of the second and third lines, are also done in purple and green ink. The red ink filling the upper and lower knots on the E links the letter to the red text to the right. The initial is between six and seven lines high, about a third of the height of the psalm text block, and it is placed below the first two lines.

The Presentation initial does not concern itself with the kingship of Christ, but it expresses even more forcefully than the Annunciation initial the shared identity of Word and architecture. It does so through the nearly matching shapes of the letter E and the Temple architecture, both having three columns, two arches. Thus the reader is reminded once again that the written letters can be conceived as a sacred space within which he is praying. The positioning of Christ with respect to the architecture visually expresses the New Testament metaphor of the Body of Christ. Christ's position at the intersection of the Temple architecture and the letter also continues the theme of Christ as the fulfillment of the Ark. That intersection brings together the three ways that Christ is materialized on the page: in his own flesh, in the letter, and in his Body/Foundation, the Church. Furthermore, it seems that the Temple arches are, like the Annunciation architecture, establishing separate spaces, in this case, of carnal and spiritual sight. We will also consider a typological association between the Presentation and the text of Psalm 80, which was probably meant to be sung at the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, a feast requiring pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as was the case for the Presentation ritual.

The Odbert Psalter's Presentation initial is by no means the first depiction of the subject to use the Temple architecture as an integral, organizing element, but Odbert's great innovation was to weave that architecture into a letter with the same basic form, and to alter the relationships of the figures within it. An initial in the Drogo Sacramentary¹⁹⁷ frames a Presentation scene in which Mary hands the Christ child to the

¹⁹⁷ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 9428, f. 32r.

waiting Simeon so that the child is centered under the domed roof, between the parted curtains hung from it (Fig 3.5). A similarly central composition appears in the Presentation scene in the Udine Fulda Sacramentary (Fig, 3.6). Architecture representing the Temple is a feature is nearly ubiquitous in Presentations, albeit with many variations. The altar is another feature found in nearly every example; Mary offers up Christ directly on the altar or above it. This action was thought to prefigure Christ's self-offering on the cross and the memorial of that offering in the mass.¹⁹⁸ The altar is not present, however, in the Odbert Presentation, at least not literally. Mary holding Christ is also part of most Presentation imagery, with Mary and Simeon reaching toward each other. The Odbert Psalter departs from this tradition and instead depicts the rare iconography of Simeon holding Christ.¹⁹⁹ One instance of the type is found in the c. 1060 *Chronicles of Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, in an arch above a genealogy of the kings of France (Fig. 3.7).²⁰⁰ The shape of Simeon's right hand is very close to that in the Odbert Psalter, but the similarities more or less end there.

A comparison with the Presentation in the *Benedictional of Aethelwold*—an Anglo-Saxon liturgical manuscript with an extensive Christological image sequence made c. 963-84—reveals the unique and powerful aspects of Odbert's approach to the altar and Temple architecture (Fig. 3.8). In the *Benedictional*, the image precedes blessings

¹⁹⁸ Robert Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, 39.

¹⁹⁹ Kahsnitz, *Der Christologische Zyklus im Odbert-Psalter*, 77-8.

²⁰⁰ Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, Ms lat. 1211. This Presentation is one of several infancy narrative illustrations that, along with other kinds of images, are placed in the arches of decorative frames for the genealogy. One arch that precedes the Presentation includes a half-length figure of God as architect of the universe.

for the feast of the Purification of Mary, a variation on the Presentation feast deriving from Mary's offering of turtle doves for her purification at the same Christ was presented.²⁰¹ The Temple in the Benedictional Presentation is the version closest to that in the Odbert Psalter; the central space of both is the middle column of a two-arch arcade. The Benedictional does include the altar, but its altar is not the common rectangular table. Its upper part has the appearance of draped arms, making it visually analogous to Simeon's draped arms and emphasizing its role as a receptacle of Christ.²⁰² The base of the altar acts as the base of the Temple column and signifies, along with the action occurring above it, Christ as the cornerstone and foundation of the Church. Thus the Temple structure signifies the Church on earth and in heaven as the New Jerusalem. The obedience of Christ and Mary to the Old Law makes possible the construction of a Church of both Gentile and Jew under the New Law, which requires spiritual offerings. This elaborates on the idea of Christ as the uniting cornerstone, which appears in the context of the Odbert Psalter gloss on Psalm 26.

The arm shape of the Benedictional altar and its relationship to the architecture reflects Ambrosius Autpertus' exegesis of the Canticle of Simeon, the hymn that Simeon pronounced upon taking Christ in his arms:

“Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word in peace;/ because my eyes have seen thy salvation,/ which

²⁰¹ Luke 2: 22, 24

²⁰² Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, 39. The following interpretations of the Benedictional Presentation follow Deshman's complex analysis (pp 39-43), which draws in large part from the Carolingian sermons of Ambrosius Autpertus and Haymo of Auxerre for the feast of the Purification.

thou has prepared before the face of all peoples:/ a light to the revelation of the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.”²⁰³

Simeon’s dismissal “in peace” refers to the unity of the peoples of the Church in Christ’s body, as described in Ephesians 2,²⁰⁴ and between the believer and the Lord. Ambrosius comments thus on “my eyes have seen thy salvation”:

“Indeed, all the elect say this, they who take Christ in their arms, who perceive through eyes of faith the salvation of God...By devout actions as if by arms they daily embrace the same boy himself...With the eyes of faith we have deserved to regard your salvation, that is, the Lord Jesus in his members, and with pious works we have merited to embrace him.”²⁰⁵

As Dushman points out, Ambrosius uses a play on the word “members,” to refer to the arms that mystically embrace Christ, i.e. good works, and to the limbs in the Body of Christ, i.e. believers. The New Testament also uses “members” to construct the metaphor of the Body of Christ: those who belong to the community of believers, members of the Church, are members (limbs) of the Body. Dushman further points to a connection between the revelation to Simeon’s eyes and Psalm 117: 22-23. There the Psalmist declares that the use of the rejected stone for the cornerstone “is wonderful in our eyes.”

²⁰³ Luke 2: 29-32

²⁰⁴ This idea is expressed in several places in the New Testament epistles, but Ambrosius specifically references Ephesians 2:14: “For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and breaking down the middle wall of partition, the enmities in his flesh”

²⁰⁵ Ambrosius Autpertus, In Purificatione, 8, as translated by Dushman in *The Benedictional of Aethelwold*, 40-41.

Ambrosius' reference to Ephesians 2 is developed further by engaging another metaphor for the union of Christ and the Church which has a bearing on the Benedictional and Odbert Presentation scenes: Christians built into "an habitation of God in the Spirit."²⁰⁶ Simeon who "came by the Spirit into the temple"²⁰⁷ to receive Christ represents all believers, who together, "are Jerusalem...and the temple...in whom and by whom Christ is received." Thus Deshman concludes that the Benedictional's arms-altar represents the Church as receptacle for Christ (spiritually and through good works) and the united Body comprised of Christ the Head and the members. Furthermore, by the altar's incorporation into the Temple architecture, it represents believers as components in Christ's body, according to Christ's own use of the Temple as a metaphor for his body.²⁰⁸

One final idea discussed by Deshman which has relevance for the Odbert Psalter is the altar as a symbol for the heart of the believer, "on which the believer offered self-sacrifices of pure body, mind, and deeds to God."²⁰⁹ This metaphor derives from that of the believer as receptacle for Christ, as a temple—which, of course, has an altar at its heart. According to this tropological symbolism, Bede interprets the altars of the

²⁰⁶ Ephesians 2:22. The previous three verses are thematically related: "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and the domestics of God, Built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone: In whom all the building, being framed together, groweth up into an holy temple in the Lord. In whom you also are built together into an habitation of God in the Spirit."

²⁰⁷ Luke 2:27

²⁰⁸ John 2:21

²⁰⁹ Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, 42.

Tabernacle and Temple as the self-sacrificing soul. Thus the altar in the Benedictional Presentation invites the viewer to offer himself interiorly, similar to the way the Odbert Psalter initials invite the reader to follow Christ the High Priest in offering prayers within the textual Tabernacle. There is even an impression of depth in the Benedictional Presentation analogous to that in the Odbert Psalter initials because of the shorter length of the central column with respect to the outer, framing columns.

Deshman presents a richly layered textual background for the Benedictional Presentation. With the aid of that background, a comparison between the two Presentation images can clarify how Odbert conceived of spiritual offerings in the Psalter. The Odbert Presentation scene lacks a literal altar, but the middle bar of the E fills that role at the heart of the letter.²¹⁰ Christ stretches his arms over the center of the Temple architecture and over the center of the letter E. The letterform is the most fitting kind of altar in the context of the Psalter's text-architecture. The gold- and silver-painted bases of the Temple columns match the typically gold and silver letterforms to imply that the text is the base and material of the Temple-Church. This parallels the architectural symbolism of the Benedictional Presentation. The Psalter's texts form both a building and its furnishings; the monk moves through it and offers his sacrifices "on" the letter, i.e. in his constant praying of the letters. In fact, the monk's primary good

²¹⁰ The initial for Psalm 58 forms the house of the Philistines that Samson is about to pull down (Judges 16: 23-30). The middle bar of this E forms the table of the Philistine's feast, at which they offer sacrifices to their gods. Those sacrifices are apparently thought of as related to the Jewish sacrifices replaced by that of Christ, since the first line of the gloss on this psalm states, "Finis legis Christus est ad iustitiam omni credenti." (Christ is the end of the law, to justice for all believers.) Samson was also considered a figure of Christ since by pulling down the house; he sacrificed himself in order to defeat his enemies.

work—the member with which he embraces Christ—is prayer. In the Odbert Psalter commentary on Psalm 26, the recitation of psalms is referred to as a good work.²¹¹ The placement of the hands and arms of all three persons in front of the letterform may be indicating the nature of the work of the monastic members. This positioning also suggests the Mystical Body’s foundation on and unification in the Word. When the monk’s voice gives form to a Psalm, he becomes a stone in the Psalter structure and does his work as part of the Church built on the Cornerstone.

Christ’s arms are the most prominent members, those placed at the intersection of letter and Temple. This is an even more explicit depiction of the Body of Christ metaphor than that of the arms-altar in the Benedictional. Christ’s arms are not as clearly tied to the foundation of the Temple-Church structure as those in the arms-altar, but they are literally members of the body of Christ. Their placement at the base of the column capital and the arcade and at the intersection of the letter and building emphasizes the metaphorical meanings of those forms. In fact, Christ’s arms are positioned similarly to the bodiless arms in the Benedictional if we consider the lower part of the middle column to be a base for the letterform-altar. The Head component of the metaphor (see Colossians 1: 18)²¹² is brought into play by placing the literal head of Christ’s body in front of the center capital of the Temple-Church. Christ’s literal head

²¹¹ Commentary on v6: “Cantabo corde id est Psalmum dicam idem opera bona et laetabor in domino.” Unfortunately I was not able to transcribe more than a few phrases from the Psalm 80 gloss when viewing the manuscript, so I am in the dark as to what it has to say on the matter, if anything.

²¹² Colossians 1: 16-18: “For in him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominations, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him and in him. And he is before all, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he may hold the primacy.”

and members are the only parts of His body in contact with the building, further emphasizing their metaphorical meaning. Finally, the *globus cruciger* atop the center tower of the building confirms that this is the Church as much as it is the Temple.

Although Christ is the primary carrier of the Body metaphor, it is likely that Simeon's arms are also supposed to represent the Body, as they do in the Benedictional. The arms do not visually correspond to the altar in the same way, but they are in front of the altar, and in that position they express the work of the believer and his faith. Simeon's full body embrace of Christ is unique even among the small group of early medieval Presentations in which Simeon is the bearer. This suggests that Odbert knew Ambrosius' commentary or one that similarly related the embrace of Simeon and his sight of salvation to believers' vision by faith and devout works. In fact, Simeon's right hand unites his embrace with his eyes by pointing to his own face. This gesture may have been copied from a model like the Chronicle of Saint-Germain (Fig. 3.7) in which the extended finger secures Simeon's grasp, but in the Odbert Psalter he is undoubtedly pointing, giving the gesture new meaning. Simeon has taken Christ in his arms as described in Luke, and he acts out fairly closely the Canticle text. In addition to visualizing the embrace and sight of salvation, Odbert has depicted the salvation "prepared before the face of all peoples." Simeon is the symbol of the Church of unified Jews and Gentiles who receive Christ, so it is his face before which salvation has been prepared: Christ's head is directly in front of his own. Simeon's left limbs suggest his exit from the Temple and the letter, depicting his dismissal according to the word of God, and his hand alone suggests an *orant* gesture.

The rarity of Presentations in which Simeon holds Christ indicates that this iconography may have had a particular significance for Odbert and his brothers at Saint-Bertin. Simeon is another model for the monastic reader as bearer of the Word and one who sees by faith. Like David and the Psalm authors in the Psalter's first miniature, Simeon, holding Christ in the Temple-Church, embodies the role of the monks as special custodians of the Word for the Church. Simeon is the liturgical minister of the Jewish presentation rite; the monks are the primary liturgical actors in the medieval Church, bringing the Word to believers in their performance of the liturgy.²¹³

Simeon's sight of salvation continues the contemplative theme of seeing God spiritually in the process of meditation that was established in the Psalm 1 Pentecost initial. Simeon does indeed see the Christ child in a carnal sense, but the revelation of salvation that he declares in the Canticle is something he could only see by faith through the Holy Spirit, as indicated in the Ambrosius commentary. One last peculiarity of Odbert's Simeon is that he is without a beard or long hair.²¹⁴ It is possible that this departure from tradition is meant to make Simeon appear more monastic, similar to Odbert's depictions of monks in other manuscripts.²¹⁵ Without a tonsure on Simeon, we

²¹³ Isabelle Cochelin, "When Monks were the Book," 61. Susan Boynton, "The Bible and the Liturgy," in *The Practice of the Bible in the Middle Ages: Production, Reception, & Performance in Western Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011), 27. It is interesting to note, as Boynton does in note 19, that the Canticle of Simeon was a part of Compline in cathedral and collegiate churches.

²¹⁴ Cf. Drogo Sacramentary (Fig. 3.5) or any of the Presentations in the Fulda Sacramentaries (Fig. 3.6). See Palazzo, *Les sacramentaires de Fulda*, figures 6, 33, and 108.

²¹⁵ For instance, the monk presenting a book to Saint Bertin in the Odbert Gospels (Pierpont Morgan Library, MS M. 333, f. 84r; see the online image collection in Morgan's online Corsair catalog at <http://corsair.morganlibrary.org/>)

cannot be sure that that is the case, but we can note that in the initial for Psalm 41, Zechariah, who is also usually depicted with long hair and a beard, does have a tonsure. Furthermore, Zechariah, like Simeon, is a Jew praying to God at the Temple altar.

The reason for depicting Christ reaching back to Mary and her meaning in the scene are less clear than Christ's relationship with Simeon. Kahsnitz suggests that Christ's unusual action—non-existent in early medieval Presentation iconography and next appearing in the twelfth century—is an early example of the representation of the depicted persons' psychological states. Thus, Christ is acting as a normal child might act: scared of the man holding him, he tries to get back to his mother.²¹⁶ This may be the case, but there is no way to know for sure. Additionally, it is difficult to say if Mary's gesture indicates that she is letting Christ go or if she is reaching up to take Him back from Simeon. With reference to Simeon as an exemplar of contemplative vision, Mary might be a figure of the contrasting carnal vision. She and Joseph both reacted with incredulity to the Canticle of Simeon. They "...were wondering at those things which were spoken concerning [Jesus]."²¹⁷ The relative heights of Mary and Simeon support this interpretation; Mary is securely grounded in the world, while Simeon steps upward and outward. The Virgin is also the flesh by which Christ took on His human nature, while Simeon recognizes His divinity. On the other hand, it seems unlikely that the Virgin would be used as a symbol of banal sight without faith. Perhaps Mary's meaning was left ambiguous to provide many avenues for meditation.

²¹⁶ Kahsnitz, *Der Christologische Zyklus im Odbert-Psalter*, 78.

²¹⁷ Luke 2: 33

Although neither scripture nor the Psalter gloss makes a specific connection between the Presentation and Psalm 80, there are indications that the two were paired with a more specific intent than the general arrangement of a Christological narrative in the division initials. Both the psalm and the image are related to going on pilgrimage to Jerusalem to make an offering, and this is yet another image of the spiritual pilgrimage through the Psalter. The phrase “for the wine presses” in the title verse of Psalm 80 and the mention of the full moon in verse 4 suggest that the psalm was written for the Jewish feast Succoth, also called the Feast of Tabernacles or Booths.²¹⁸ The Israelites gave thanks for the autumn grape harvest at this joyful autumn feast, which began on the fifteenth day of Tishri, the seventh month.²¹⁹ Leviticus specifies that holocausts be given to the Lord throughout the seven days of the feast and on an eighth day of congregation.²²⁰ Furthermore, the Israelites were to live in booths or tabernacles built from branches during this feast, hence its name. That custom is a commemoration of Israel’s dwelling in the desert after being brought out of Egypt.²²¹ Additional customs of Succoth were the lighting of four torches in the Court of the Women and the pouring of water from the pool of Siloam over the altar.²²²

²¹⁸ Mitchell J. Dahood, *Psalms II, 51-100* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968), Ps 81.

²¹⁹ Adolf Adam, *The Liturgical Year: Its History & its Meaning After the Reform of the Liturgy* (New York: Pueblo Pub. Co, 1981), 11.

²²⁰ Leviticus 23: 33-36

²²¹ Leviticus 23: 39-43. Adam, *The Liturgical Year*, 12.

²²² Christ is presented as the fulfillment of the light and the water in John 7-9. *The Catholic Study Bible*, ed. Donald Senior (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 1417.

Jerome begins his commentary on Psalm 80 by saying that there are three solemn feasts in Jewish law: Passover, Pentecost, and Booths.²²³ According to Deuteronomy 16:16, all Jewish men twelve and older were required to go to Jerusalem for each of these feasts, and “[n]o one shall appear with his hands empty before the Lord.” Jerome explains that there are three psalms entitled “for the winepresses” because of the three solemn feasts, though he does not associate each psalm with a particular feast. He emphasizes, however, that these are the eight, eightieth, and eighty-third psalms, a point in his commentary that is paraphrased in the Odbert Psalter commentary on Psalm 83. In that commentary it is also noted that Psalm 80 “fulfills the law and the gospel,” though this is not a statement found in Jerome.²²⁴ Jerome mentions that shortly before Succoth, there is a day of fasting on which a trumpet sounds; this is part of the observance of Yom Kippur. He interprets this saying, “Remove the veil that was placed over the eyes of Moses, and see that we cannot become Tabernacles unless we have fasted beforehand.”²²⁵ One must empty oneself of evil in a penitential fast in order to receive the Lord in one’s heart. This idea ties in with the themes of believers receiving and embracing Christ in the Presentation image.

The Presentation did not occur during the Feast of Booths and is not directly tied to it in scripture, but the Holy Family did obediently travel to Jerusalem to make an

²²³ Saint Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 93.

²²⁴ “Tres sunt psalmi qui pro torcularibus describantur id est octavus et octuagesimus atque octuagesimus tertius. Octavus namque pertinet ad resurrectionem christi et sanctorum oppressionem. Octuagesimus implet legem et evangelium. Octuagesimus tertius ad fidem sanctae trinitatis quoniam lex et euangelium nos in fide sanctae trinitatis informat.” (Gloss, Psalm 83:1)

²²⁵ Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 93.

offering to God under the law. That is, they consecrated Christ to God and offered the turtledoves (not pictured in the Odbert Psalter) for the purification of Mary.²²⁶ The text of Luke makes a point of the Holy Family's obedience to the law of the Lord.²²⁷

Numerous Christian commentators wrote that the Family was obedient to the law so that the law could be properly fulfilled in Christ, freeing Christians from literal obedience to it. Indeed, the more general idea of Christ as the fulfillment of the entirety of Jewish law is first found in the New Testament epistles, and it has been elaborated since then.²²⁸ This teaching with respect to the Presentation is encapsulated in the central part of the blessing for the Feast of the Purification in the Benedictional of Æthelwold: "And may [God], who wanted [His Son] to be made a servant of the law in order to fulfill it, instruct your minds in the spiritual teachings of his law. Amen."²²⁹ The literal offering of turtledoves can be replaced by spiritual offerings in the life of the Christian. It is also possible that the gathering of grapes at the Feast of Booths was connected to the Presentation as a Eucharistic symbol.²³⁰

The commentary of Jerome on Psalm 80 raises additional possible connections among Psalm 80, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the Presentation. In his discussion of the

²²⁶ The law (Leviticus 12:6-8) prescribes the sacrifice of a yearling lamb and a pigeon or turtledove for a sin offering in the purification rite, but makes an exception for those who cannot afford a lamb—they can bring two of either of the birds.

²²⁷ Luke 2:22-24, 39

²²⁸ For instance, in 1 Corinthians 2:16-17 or 10:1.

²²⁹ Deshman, *The Benedictional of Æthelwold*, 37.

²³⁰ See 83n198.

number symbolism behind the wine press psalms being the eighth, eightieth and eighty-third, he explains that the eighth refers to Christ's resurrection. From the earliest existence of Christianity, believers had called the day of Christ's resurrection the Eighth Day, and this interpretation appears in the Odbert Psalter's gloss on Psalm 83.²³¹ Jerome continues: "...the eightieth in eight decades is a different and greater number...these wine presses are superscribed only on the day of Resurrection, the eighth day and the eightieth."²³² This symbolism of multiples of eight is a response to the Jewish week of seven days, continuing the idea of Christ as one who fulfills and supersedes Jewish law. The seven day week was associated with the first creation story in Genesis, so describing the Resurrection as occurring on the eighth day, reported as the day after the Sabbath in the gospels, designates it as the beginning of a new creation that broke away from the seven-day cycle, ushering in the age of the Messiah. At the Presentation, Simeon recognizes Christ as the Messiah, he who is "set...for the resurrection of many in Israel."²³³

When the commentary states that Psalm 80 fulfills the law and gospel, perhaps it refers to these typological interpretations of the Jewish rites alluded to in the psalm. These liturgical typologies are an integral component of the Psalter's decoration, for they reinforce two central devotional themes: psalm offerings on the altar of the soul and the spiritual pilgrimage through the Psalter toward the Heavenly Jerusalem, during

²³¹ See note 93n224.

²³² Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 95.

²³³ Luke 2:34

which those offerings take place. When the monk does make it to Jerusalem, temporarily in contemplation and eternally after death, then he can embrace Christ and see him as Simeon does.

3.3 The Abject in the House of God

Five folios after the Presentation initial, on folio 92v, the initial for Psalm 83 is located at the upper left corner of the text block (Fig. 3.3). Unlike the layout used with most of the psalms, the number and title verse in colored ink are not next to the initial, but at the bottom of the previous folio, and the corresponding gloss for that verse is there as well. Thus the initial begins the phrase “Quam dilecta tabernacula tua...” at the top of the folio. The initial does not mark a division, so it does not include any gold or silver paint, but is drawn mostly in red ink—both the initial itself and the image within it. A dragon-like beast with a foliate tail that reaches far into the text block forms the tail of the Q. The interior image is decorated with some purple and green details, and the five figures within it are drawn in black. Four of them are mere heads looking through the windows and doorway. The fifth sits just within the doorway in a contemplative posture much like that of one of the apostles in the Pentecost initial for Psalm 1 (Fig. 2.4).

In Psalm 83, the speaker’s expressions of longing for the tabernacles, the courts, and the house of the Lord convey the theme of pilgrimage more overtly than Psalm 80 does. Modern commentary suggests that Psalm 83 was also written for pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles, and Jerome’s commentary associates the feast

and prayer in a non-specific way, as was the case for Psalm 80.²³⁴ The Odbert Psalter gloss discusses Psalm 83 in terms of spiritual pilgrimage, an ascent to the house of the Lord by means of faith in the Holy Trinity. This journey out of the “vale of tears” is rewarded by a vision of Christ. The image within the initial Q—a church-like building inhabited by five figures—is one of only two or three historiated initials in the Odbert Psalter to directly illustrate the text of the Psalm.²³⁵ This rarity seems to indicate the thematic importance of Psalm 83 and its image in the decorative program, and indeed the desire to dwell in God’s holy architecture expressed by the psalmist is exactly the attitude of the pilgrim monk that the Odbert Psalter’s decorative program promotes. The image is an emblem of that decorative program.

Jerome’s commentary on Psalm 80 examines the numerological symbolism of the three wine press psalms and explains that although 83 is not a multiple of 8 like the other two, it shares their title because “these winepresses belong to the mystery of the Trinity.”²³⁶ The eighty-third is the third of the winepress psalms and brings the digits eight and three together. This is echoed in the Psalter gloss on Ps 83:1, which says that

²³⁴ Carroll Stuhlmueller, “Psalm 84,” in *The Harper Collins Bible Commentary*, eds. James Luther Mays, Beverly Roberts Gaventa and Joseph Blenkinsopp (San Francisco: Harper, 2000), 427.

²³⁵ The other initial that clearly illustrates the psalm is that at the head of Psalm 81 (f. 91r), which begins, “A psalm for Asaph. God hath stood in the congregation of gods (in synagoga deorum); and being in the midst of them he judgeth gods.” The initial includes five faces in roundels or half-roundels that form part of the letter itself, and Christ, holding a book and a cross staff, stands in the midst of them. Christ is God standing in the congregation, in a position of authority elaborating on the royal typology established in the façade.

²³⁶ Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 95. This is also said to be the reason for three different “choirmasters” for the wine press psalms: David, Asaph, and the sons of Core.

the law and the gospels inform us in faith of the Holy Trinity.²³⁷ Jerome makes a point commenting on verses 2-3 and 5 that the psalmist expresses a progression of desire for three kinds of divine dwellings of increasing solidity: tabernacles (in the sense of tents or booths), courts and house.

The Psalter gloss on verse 5 states, “The house of the Lord is understood to be the Heavenly Jerusalem in which the blessed are dwelling.” Concerning verse 6, the gloss paraphrases only Jerome’s statement in the first half of the verse: “Indeed we desire the tabernacles, the courts and the house of the Lord, but that we are able to attain these things is not by our strength but by the help of the Lord.”²³⁸ Referring to the second phrase, Jerome says these who find their strength in the Lord “have set their hearts upon pilgrimage...[and]...determine to ascend step by step.”²³⁹ The gloss says that the Lord’s help makes ascent possible, thus “...we ascend to faith; from faith to love, from love to hope, from hope to the kingdom.”²⁴⁰ This is an ascent based on the theological virtues (again a triad), by which one conquers vice and arrives at the kingdom that is not of this world. Verse seven is treated with additional paraphrasing of Jerome, saying that he is happy who daily ascends to higher places, for God put us in

²³⁷ See 93n224.

²³⁸ “Nos quidem desideramus tabernacula et atria et domum domini, sed hoc ipsum ut capere possimus non est virtutis nostrae sed auxilii domini.”

²³⁹ Jerome, *The Homilies of Saint Jerome*, 122.

²⁴⁰ “Per domini quidem auxilium ascensio ista disponitur ut...ascendamus ad fidem; a fide ad caritatem, a caritate ad spem, ab spe ad regnum.”

this world, a valley of tears where we must constantly fight for the prize.²⁴¹ The gloss on verse 8 speaks of virtue again, and the reward in the kingdom: “Since they conquer by increasing virtue, so they are crowned by the justice of reward. And that God of gods that will be seen is the Christ of the Christians, as it is written: blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God.” This last part of the gloss is derived from Augustine’s commentary, in which, before explaining “God of gods,” he writes,

“The psalm prophesies, *They will walk from many virtues to one single virtue*. What virtue is that? The virtue of contemplating. And what does ‘contemplating’ imply? *The God of gods will be seen in Zion*.”²⁴²

Once again, the destination of the pilgrimage, the peak of this ascent, is to see God in deepest prayer.

The image in the initial seems to illustrate those who dwell in the house of the Lord. Kelleher suggested that the figures in the doorway are the “abject” in the house of God, and that the smaller heads in the windows are people dwelling in the tabernacles of sinners, acknowledging the oddity of combining those two structures.²⁴³ The only similar image is found in the Utrecht Psalter illustration for Psalm 83, in which four figures are arranged in arches, which appear to belong to the house of the Lord. The morose expressions of the Odbert Psalter figures are appropriate for travelers in the

²⁴¹ “Felix est qui cotidie proficit et ascendit in sublimiora...lacrimarum vel locus dispositionis ubi deus nos posuit ad certamen ut semper pugnemus.”

²⁴² Augustine, *Expositions of the Psalms, 1-32*, ed. John E. Rotelle, trans. Maria Boulding, Vol. III/15 (Charlottesville, VA: InteLex Corp, 2000).

²⁴³ Kelleher, “Illumination at Saint-Bertin at Saint-Omer Under the Abbacy of Odbert,” 250.

“vale of tears” or the “abject.” The largest figure is perhaps just beginning his ascent in contemplative prayer. The building does not, however, have a cross or *globus cruciger* at the peak of its gable, as one might expect on the house of God. The figures are drawn in brown ink, used in the Odbert Psalter only for most of the Old Testament initials and to distinguish evil figures in New Testament scenes.²⁴⁴ This use of color suggests that these figures are depicting the original singers of the psalms in the Davidic era, explaining the lack of cross on this house of God. It seems unlikely, however, that the tabernacles of sinners would be depicted in the context of a decorative program whose design is based on holy architecture.

Another indicator that the image indeed depicts the house of God is the building’s interaction with the beast that forms the tail of the Q. The pillar and columns in conjunction with the circular part of the letter pin the creature down, practically impaling it. The order, peace, and unity of the kingdom of God and the Word in all its meanings destroy the beasts of hell that try to ensnare believers in sin. That message is similarly communicated in the Psalm 1 arch, built on David’s defeats of evil. The conquering architecture motif also appears in the Odbert Psalter’s Nativity initial, where the stable/manger on which Christ lies pins down a beast like that in the Psalm 83 initial (f. 58v; Fig. 3.9). An initial historiated with the Crucifixion in an Odbert hagiographic manuscript (Fig. 3.10) provides a variation on the motif: the bottom edge of the cross is behind/inside the body of the beast (also the tail of a Q) and the feet of Christ are

²⁴⁴ Don Denny, “The Historiated Initials of the Odbert Psalter,” 68.

positioned so that he appears to stand atop the beast. The meaning of these motifs is embodied in a different way in the historiated initial for Psalm 90 (f. 101r; Fig 3.11). Here the first temptation of Christ in the desert is combined with the iconographic tradition of Christ trampling the beasts, which is based on Psalm 90:13.²⁴⁵ This well-established imagery is yet another depiction of Christ's defeat of evil, here amplified by its inclusion in the temptation scene, which depicts the same thing with the added dimension of specifying that scripture is the weapon against evil.

In the Psalm 83 initial, the prayer of the abject in the house of God becomes a weighty pillar crushing the head of sin. The monks, mirroring this activity, are thus carrying out the mission first entrusted to them at their entrance into the Psalter architecture, set before them in the form of Pentecost. That mission is to pray fervently in order to see God, to increase in virtue, and to build up Christ's Church so that it might defend its members from evil.

Each of the three initials discussed in this chapter depict that central monastic activity of offering prayer, placed within architecture. These depictions, then, are microcosms of the Psalter macrocosm. They use iconographic elements in such a way as to remind the reader of the larger context in which his prayer takes place while he focuses on a particular text and image. The meanings he gleans from focused study of an image-text pair are informed by the overarching themes of the manuscript's structure and decoration, and the themes are more fully fleshed out through application

²⁴⁵ "Thou shalt walk upon the asp and the basilisk: and thou shalt trample under foot the lion and the dragon." See Kathleen M. Openshaw, "Weapons in the Daily Battle," for examples of this type and a more detailed discussion of the iconography.

to different contexts. Each image will not be fully understood if it is analyzed in isolation from the structure it helps to build, and the structure would be impoverished objectively if lacking one of its original parts, and subjectively if not all parts are viewed. We can also say that the images do not run like a stream parallel to that of the text with only a vague sense of depicting the fulfillment of the psalm prophecies. That the Psalter gloss usually does not explicitly discuss the images—because its purpose is to explain the text—is no reason to deny that the images were placed deliberately and with specific intentions. The explicitly architectural initials are about the attitude with which one prays the psalms (i.e. tropological concerns) as much as they are about historical and allegorical relationships between text and image. The readers are invited to dwell in the refuge of the Word where “they shall praise thee for ever and ever.”²⁴⁶

²⁴⁶ Psalm 83:5

CONCLUSION

Odbert and those who worked with him on the Psalter for Saint-Bertin built the contents of this manuscript into a multifaceted structure that guides the reader's engagement with the psalms. The creators unified biblical narratives, devotional traditions, and decorative traditions into a work of scribal architecture through innovations in initial decoration and iconography. The decision to design the psalms as a structure was particularly inspired by the place of the psalms in the monastic life. Through the Divine Office, the psalms directed the lives of the monks of Saint-Bertin in the natural, temporal world by structuring their daily actions. The psalms literally filled the sacred buildings of the monastery when chanted aloud, enveloping those who prayed in a scriptural space. The psalms simultaneously filled the monk's interior, spiritual world, directing the movement of the soul as the subject of its prayer. The monastic life is a Christian life, so the scribes and artists of Saint-Bertin imagined and created their formative text as an image of the Lord they followed and the sanctuary in which they walked with him.

The Odbert Psalter is made into a sanctuary through the formal characteristics of its mise-en-page and historiated initials and the overall organization of the manuscript's contents. The full-page miniatures give the Psalter a façade that is elaborated in the structural body of the psalm text. The experience of viewing the body is like that of

viewing a church while walking through it because consistent page design is combined with the directional development through discrete narrative moments. The reader can also get the sense of inward and outward movement through the window-like initials and the frame-and-picture *mise-en-page*. The life of Christ in the historiated initials marks the Psalter's dimensions, thereby being the motivation for penitential prayer of the psalms and the foundation on which the psalms and gloss are integrated into the reader's memory, his mental *arca*. The Psalter is a manifestation of the measured biblical structure trope that originated with the Exodus Tabernacle. The monks create a Tabernacle for Christ, the Ark of the new covenant, in the most skillful way they can as scribes and artists—by forming it on a page.

The imagery of the Psalter's façade establishes Christ as the fulfillment of the original Ark, which is depicted as the inspiration for the composition of the psalms. The psalm authors (f. 2r) and the apostles (f. 11r), whose meditation is inspired by the new Ark, are exemplars for the monastic reader, showing him the way into the Psalter architecture and the contemplative objective of his prayer. Odbert introduces his concept of the texts and images of the Psalter as architecture through the form and content of the acrostic poem and through the architectural motifs that are used to connect one façade miniature to the next. This explicit architecture frames the rulers, David and Christ, who lead the monks just as they led the authors and apostles: as victors over evil and as singers of psalms.

The themes of authority and prayer offerings in connection with sacred architecture are expanded on in the specific contexts of Psalms 26, 80, and 83. In the

Psalm 26 Annunciation initial, the divine Logos is embodied in the architecture where the Virgin extends her arms to represent the joining of man and God. The reader begins to follow Christ through the Psalter architecture by following his movement from outside the Virgin's pavilion to within the Virgin herself. Odbert used the shape of the Psalm 80 initial to form an intersection of and equivalency between letter and Temple architecture, and he placed Christ in the Presentation at this intersection. The intersection represents the Church through the Body of Christ metaphor and as the Temple that is founded on Christ and is his dwelling place. The Church is invited to go on a spiritual pilgrimage to the Heavenly Jerusalem through obedient offerings of the self to God, like those given by Mary and Simeon. Odbert uses the letterform of the Presentation initial to represent the altar at the heart of the Temple-Church upon which the Church makes its offerings. The use of the psalm letter as an altar refers specifically to the monks' constant offerings of psalms. The monks' model in this initial is Simeon; his offering is his canticle, and he is granted a vision of Christ because of his obedience. The monks likewise hope to see Christ in contemplation by dwelling in their textual temple. That attitude is expressed in the initial for Psalm 83, in which the pillar that crushes the beast of hell also portrays the victory over evil for those dwelling in the house of God. Each of the smaller buildings in these initials refer back to the Psalter structure of which they are a part, developing a particular way in which the reader can construct a Tabernacle for Christ in his mind and heart.

The Odbert Psalter is a profound expression of early medieval monastic identity and of the specific communal identity of the monks of Saint-Bertin. The monastic life

was defined by enclosure in a particular built environment and the structuring of time in that environment by the psalm-filled Divine Office. The monastic mind was conceived in architectural terms, with memorized texts organized according to structural imagery. Therefore, in the Psalter, Odbert combined an essential image of the monastic life, architecture, with its essential text, the psalms, and placed at the heart of this building Christ the Logos. He is also the divine plan by which the Psalter-building is formed and the foundation on which it is built. The images of Christ are equally representations of the life he lived according to his human nature, an example that the monk is supposed to keep in his heart and follow through his prayer. Christ's human nature and self-offering made it possible for him to act as High Priest in the heavenly Tabernacle on behalf of humankind, sanctifying those who follow after him. The monk using the Odbert Psalter is directed to model his life on Christ's offering by praying within the written Tabernacle.

For the monks of Saint-Bertin under Odbert, the manuscripts they created were offerings as important as psalmody. The dedication in the Psalter, and those in other books of the scriptorium, demonstrates the monks' conception of their creations as offerings by which they hope to find favor with God.²⁴⁷ Their particular role within the body of Christ was to give form to texts through both letter and image. The historiated initials of the Psalter are a harmonious expression of that role. When one considers the

²⁴⁷ This excerpt is telling: "I pray that there may be great peace for Father Odbert arising from this book and that there may be every health for all those living in Saint-Omer./ May he flourish in Christ, whoever lent assistance to me." Gameson, "'Signed' Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders: Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 68.

Psalter architecture as a figure for the Church, the Temple with Christ as cornerstone,
the initials represent the stones offered by the monks of Saint-Bertin to build that
Temple.

APPENDIX A:

FIGURES

A.1 Figures in Chapter 1

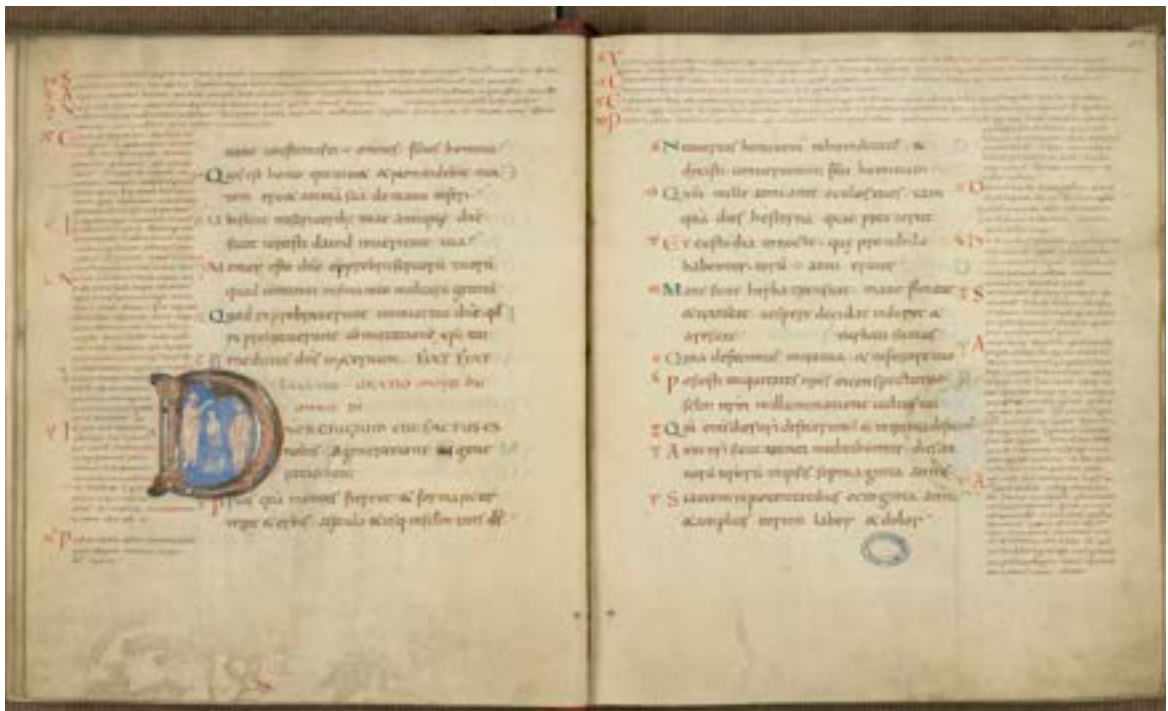


Figure 1.1: Page spread with Baptism initial (Ps 89), Odbert Psalter, Boulogne-sur-mer, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 20, ff. 99v-100r (All photos from this repository: IRHT, enluminures.culture.fr)



Figure 1.2: Paschal Sequence (Ps 101), Odbert Psalter, f. 109r



Figure 1.3: Annunciation (Ps 26), Odbert Psalter, f. 32r

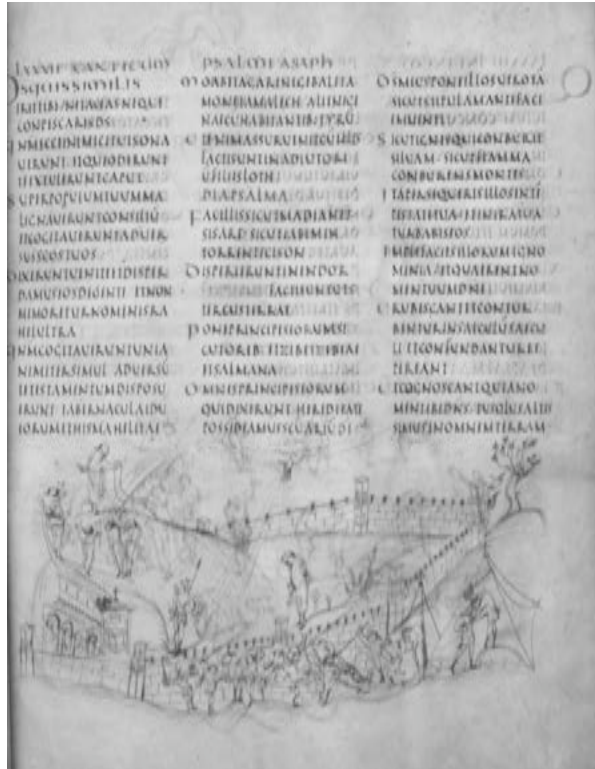


Figure 1.4: Psalm 82 and image for Psalm 83, Utrecht Psalter, Utrecht, Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversitet, Ms 32 (photo: <http://bc.library.uu.nl/node/599>)



Figure 1.5: Epiphany, Drogo Sacramentary, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 9428, f. 34v (photo: gallica.bnf.fr)

A.2 Figures in Chapter 2



Figure 2.1: David and Psalm Authors, Odbert Psalter, f. 2r



Figure 2.2: David Playing the Psalterium, Odbert Psalter, f. 2v



Figure 2.3: Davidic Scenes and Pentecost (Ps 1), Odbert Psalter, f. 11r



Figure 2.4: Detail of Figure 2.3

HUNC PETRE DAVIDICUM LIBRUM. CONSCRIPSIT HABEN DUCI
FECIT SACER. TIBI. CUI CLAVES CONCESSIT OLIMPI.
REX XPC SIMUL ACTERUAE. SUPPLEX HERIUS.
IN PATRIS. EGRECH. BERTINI. FIDUS. A. MORE.
VNICA SPES. OMNIBUS. NAM XPC. IN HOC. TITULATUS.
ECCLISIAM. SIBI. MET. SPONSAM. SANCIUIT. IN. CHAM.
VNUS. ET. HIC. RERUM. PATER. EST. QUI. CONECTA. GUBERNAT.
SPIRITUS. SACRUM. DEScriptus. HONORE.
SIC. PATER. **ODBERTUS**. XPI. SOLA. OMNIF. AL. TUS.
COENOBII. QUE. SITHIENSIS. SIC. CONCIO. SANCTA.
RITE. DEO. PSALLIT. QUORUM. PENETRALIBUS. ALTUS.
ISTUD. OPUS. COEPTUM. DNO. PATRANTE. PER. EGI.
PAX. SIT. MULTA. PATRI. PRECOR. **ODBERTO**. SUP. ER. ALBUO.
SIT. Q. SALUS. CUNCTISSIMU. DECENTIBUS. OMNIS.
IN. XPO. VALEAT. OMNI. QUI. QUE. VIU. OMNI. AD. AR. CIT.
TARTARA. POSSIDEANT. ME. QUI. Q. FUR. AU. ERIT. EX. HINC.
ME. COMPSIT. HERIUS. ET. **ODBERTUS**. DECORAVIT.
EX. CERP. SIT. DODOLINUS. ETHOS. DS. ART. ET. OLIMPO.
SCA. COHORS. LETARE. MONACHORUM. SITHIENSIS.
COENOBII. MODULANS. DNO. GRATISSIMA. DAVID.
ORGANA. QUE. CECINIT. SCO. SPIRA. OMNE. PLE. NUS.
BERTINUS. TIBI. NAM. QUE. MANU. TERT. CON. GEMINATIS.
CATIONIS. FOL. QUINO. SIL. QUINO. QUE. PATRONIS.
REGNA. BEATA. POL. ET. **ODBERTUS**. SOCI. ET. **ODBERTUS**.
TEMPLANT. ENT. TIBI. CANT. PAPIS. RED. OMNIT. CAN. ORIS.
IN. NUMERIS. LIBRIS. SUPERAS. VICINIA. SEPTA.
NEC. QUI. S. Q. I. A. M. NUMERARE. VALET. QUOT. PIGNORA. COPTA.
OPTINEAS. MERITO. SCARUM. RELIQUIA. RUM.

Figure 2.5: Dedicatory Acrostic Poem, Odbert Psalter, f. 1v



Figure 2.6: David and a Musician, Angers, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 18, f.13v (All photos from this repository: IRHT, enluminures.culture.fr)



Figure 2.7: Musicians and Scribes, Angers, Ms 18, f. 14r

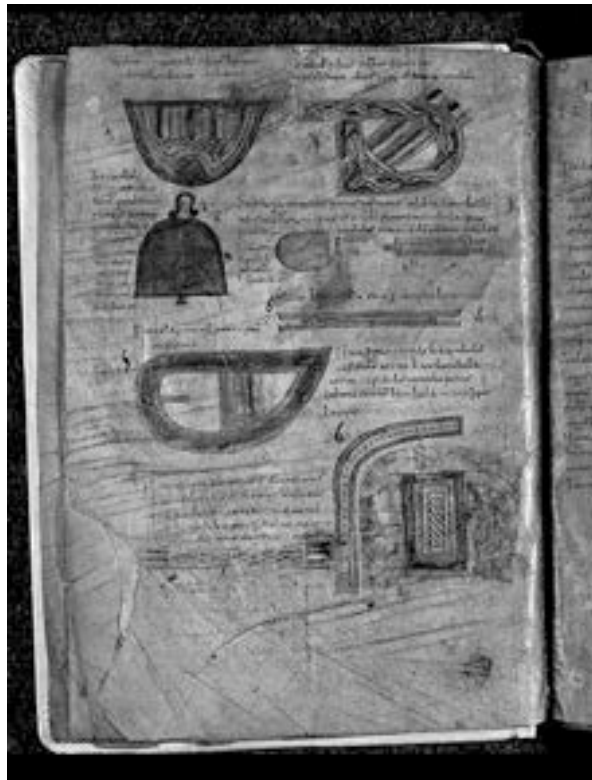


Figure 2.8: Musical Instruments/Letter to Dardanus, Angers, Ms 18, f. 12v



Figure 2.9: Instruments and David Playing the Psalterium, Angers, Ms 18, f. 13r



Figure 2.10: David and Scribes/Authors, Eberhard Psalter, Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Clm 7355, f. 5v (photo: Münchener Digitalisierungszentrum: Digitale Bibliothek/Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, http://daten.digitalle-sammlungen.de/0005/bsb00056552/image_1)

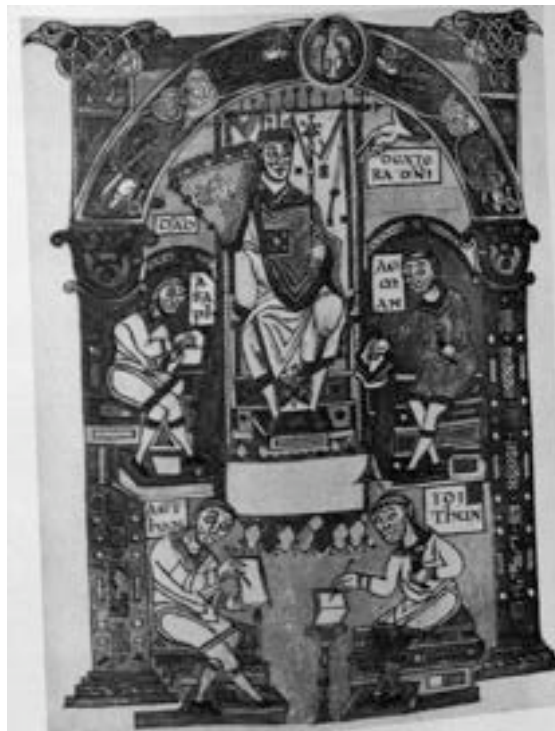


Figure 2.11: David and Scribes, Rome, Biblioteca Vaticana, Cod. Lat. 83, f.12v (after Steger)



Figure 2.12: David as Musician, Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod Nr. 774, f. 30v (after Steger)



Figure 2.13: The Musicians, Leipzig, Universitätsbibliothek, Cod. Nr. 774, f. 31r (after Steger)



Figure 2.14: David Playing the Psalterium, Tiberius Psalter, London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius C. VI, f. 17v (after Wormald)



Figure 2.15: Psalm 1 Initial, Corbie Psalter, Amiens, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms 18, f.1v (IRHT, enluminures.culture.fr)



Figure 2.16: David Beheading Goliath, London, British Library, Ms Arundel 155, f. 93r

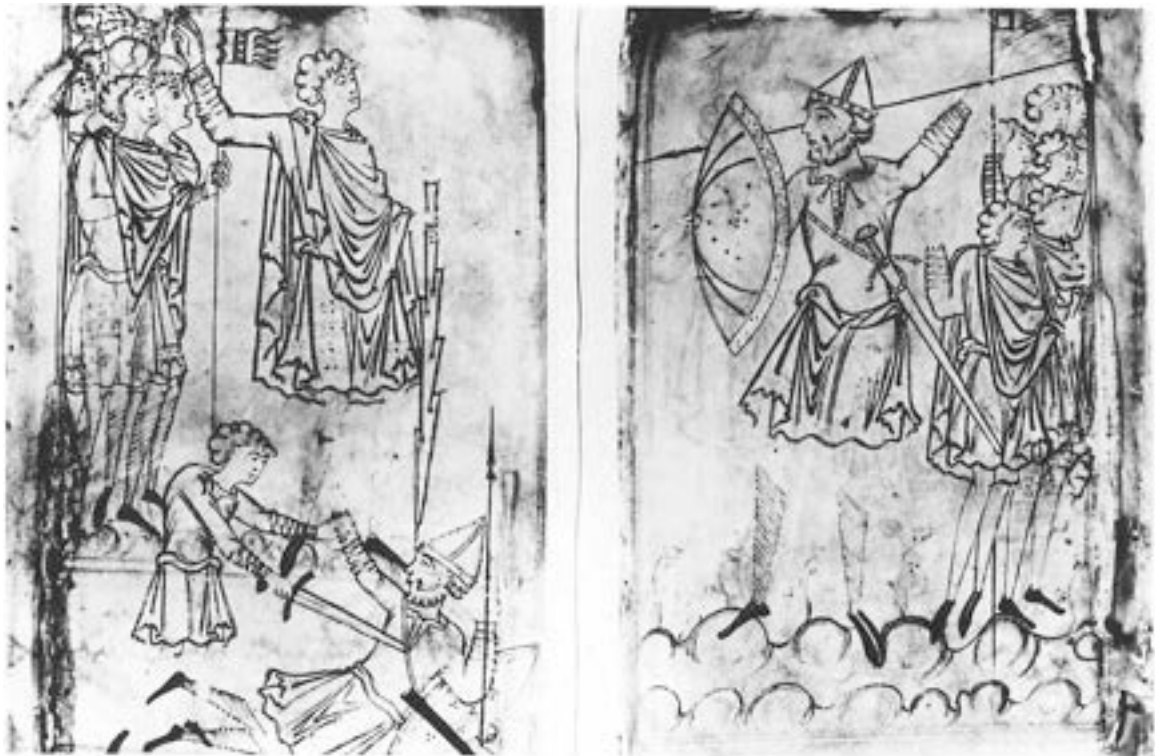


Figure 2.17: David Lines Up Against Goliath, Kills Goliath, Tiberius Psalter, ff. 8v-9r (after Wormald)



Figure 2.18: David Rescues a Lamb from a Lion, Tiberius Psalter, ff. 8v-9 (after Wormald)



Figure 2.19: David Fights the Lion, David the Shepherd, Southamton Psalter, Cambridge, St. John's College, MS. C.9, f. 4v (after Openshaw)



Figure 2.20: Ascension (Ps 109), Odbert Psalter, f. 124v

A.3 Figures in Chapter 3



Figure 3.1: Annunciation (Ps 26), Odbert Psalter, f. 32r, detail



Figure 3.2: Presentation in the Temple/Meeting of Christ and Simeon (Ps 80), Odbert Psalter, f. 90r



Figure 3.3: Abjact in the House of God (Ps 83), Odbert Psalter, f. 92v



Figure 3.4: Annunciation; Sacramentary, Udine, Archivio capitolare, Ms 1, f. 24v (after Palazzo)



Figure 3.5: Presentation in the Temple; Drogo Sacramentary, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 9428, f. 32r (photo: gallica.bnf.fr)



Figure 3.6: Presentation in the Temple; Sacramentary, Udine, Archivio capitolare, Ms 1, f. 23v (after Palazzo)



Figure 3.7: Presentation; Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms lat. 1211, f. 107r (photo: gallica.bnf.fr)



Figure 3.8: Presentation; Benedictional of Æthelwold, London, British Library, Additional MS 49598, f. 34v (after Deshman)



Figure 3.9: Nativity and Annunciation to Shepherds (Ps 51); Odbert Psalter, f. 58v



Figure 3.10: Crucifixion; Lives of Saints Bertin, Silvain, Winnoc and Folquin and texts for Office and Mass of St. Bertin, Boulogne-sur-mer, Bibliothèque municipale, Ms. 107, f. 108r



Figure 3.11: First Temptation in the Desert and Trampling of the Beasts (Ps 90); Odbert Psalter, f. 101r

APPENDIX B:

TABLE OF HISTORIATED INITIAL SUBJECTS AND ASSOCIATED PSALM NUMBERS

	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Division Marked</i>	<i>New Testament Subjects</i>	<i>Old Testament Subjects</i>	<i>Psalm/Other Subjects</i>	<i>Folio</i>
1.	1		Pentecost			11r
2.	13				Fool	20r
3.	26	8	Annunciation			32r
4.	28			Offering of Abel		34r
5.	38	8	Visitation			46r
6.	41	5	Annunciation to Zechariah			49r
7.	43			Adam and Eve		50v
8.	49			Cain Kills Abel		56r
9.	51	3	Nativity			58v
10.	52	8	Angel comes to Joseph in Dream			59r
11.	58			Samson Destroying the House of the Philistines		63v
12.	59				Earth and Ocean	65r
13.	62		Christ Healing a Woman			67r
14.	68	8	Adoration of the Magi			72v
15.	71			Solomon with Scales		77r
16.	72	5	Massacre of the Innocents			78r

	<i>Psalm</i>	<i>Division Marked</i>	<i>New Testament Subjects</i>	<i>Old Testament Subjects</i>	<i>Psalm/Other Subjects</i>	<i>Folio</i>
17.	80	8	Presentation in the Temple			90r
18.	81				Christ as Judge of the Gods	91r
19.	83				Abject in the House of the Lord	92v
20.	89	5	The Baptism			99v
21.	90		First Temptation			101r
22.	91		Second Temptation			102r
23.	92		Third Temptation			102v
24.	93		Christ Ministered to by Angels			103r
25.	95		Raising of Jairus' Daughter			105r
26.	96		Christ Calls Andrew and Peter			106r
27.	97	8	Miracle at Cana			106v
28.	98		Beheading of John the Baptist			107v
29.	100		Arrest of Christ			108r
30.	101	3	Paschal Sequence			109r
31.	106	5	Descent from the Cross			119v
32.	108		Christ Appearing to the Apostles			122v
33.	109	8	Ascension			124v

APPENDIX C:

FUNDAMENTUM IPSIUS CAMERAE AND DEDICATORY ACROSTIC POEM

Fundamentum ipsius Camerae est Fides.
Altitudo ejus est Spes. Latitudo ejus est
Caritas. Longitudo ejus est Perseverantia.
Latera ejus sunt Concordia et Pax. Frontes¹
ipsius sunt Justicia & Veritas. Pulchritudo ejus
est exemplum bonorum operum.
Fenestrae ejus sunt dicta sanctorum.
Pavimentum ejus est humilitas cordis. Camera
est conversatio coelestis. [P]ilastri² ejus sunt
spiritalis virtutes. Columnae ejus sunt boni
pontifices & sacerdotes. Interlegatio ejus est
vinculum pacis. Tectum ejus est fidelis
dispensator. [I]sces ejus sunt meditatio
caelestis. Mensa Christi est in camera bona
conversatio. Ministerium Christi in camera sua
est bona memoria. [F]acinus Christi est bona
voluntas. Canterellus Christi est nitor
conscientiae. Cathedra Christi est serenitas
mentis. Sponsa Christi est sancta anima.
Camerariae Christi spiritalis virtutes sunt.
Prima Sancta Caritas dicta est; illa Christi regit
cameram. Secunda est Sancta Humilitas; illa
est thesauraria in camera Christi. Tertia est
Sancta Patientia; illa facit luminaria in camera
Christi. Quarta Sancta Puritas; illa scopat
cameram Christi.

The foundation of the Chamber (vault, room)
is Faith. Its height is Hope. Its width is charity.
Its length is persistence. Its sides are concord
and peace. The façades are truth and justice.
Its beauty is the example of good works. Its
windows are the sayings of the saints. Its floor
is humility of heart. The chamber is the
heavenly monastic life.³ Its pillars are spiritual
virtues. Its columns are good priests and
bishops. Its *interlegatio* [?diplomacy] is the
bond of peace. Its roof is a faithful steward. Its
[I]sces are heavenly mediation. The table of
Christ in the chamber is good monastic life.
The ministry of Christ in his chamber is a good
memory. The deed of Christ is good will. The
song⁴ of Christ is the gleam of conscience. The
chair of Christ is serenity of mind. The bride of
Christ is the holy soul. The chamberlains of
Christ are the spiritual virtues. The first is
called Love; that of Christ rules the chamber.
The second is Holy Humility; that is the
treasurer in the chamber of Christ. The third is
Holy Patience; that lights the lamps in the
chamber of Christ. The fourth is Holy Purity;
that sweeps the chamber of Christ.

¹ Fronti, the dative singular form, is used
in the manuscript.

² Neale and Webb give "Pilastri" for this
word. Although that makes some sense, the first
letter is missing, leaving these six and making it
unclear what word was intended.

³ Meanings of *conversatio* include "way of
life," "monastic life" specifically, or "conversation."

⁴ « Canterellus » (par les
Bénédictins de St. Maur, 1733–1736), in du Cange,
et al., *Glossarium mediae et infimae latinitatis*,
éd. augm., Niort : L. Favre, 1883-1887,
t. 2, col. 104b.
<http://ducange.enc.sorbonne.fr/CANTERELLUS>

Hunc Petre daviticum librum conscripsit
 habendum
Ecce sacer tibi cui claves concessit Olympi,
Rex Christus simul ac terrae, supplex Heriveus
 In patris egregii Bertini fisus amore.
Unica spes mundi nam Christus in hoc titulatus,
 Ecclesiam sibimet sponsam sancivit in evum.
Unus et hic rerum Pater est qui cuncta gubernat,
 Spiritus et sanctus summo descriptus honore.
Sic pater ODBERTUS Christi solamine fultus,
 Coenobique Sithiensis sic concio sancta
 Rite Deo psallit, quorum penetralibus altus
 Istud opus coeptum, Domino patrante, peregi.
Pax sit multa patri, precor, ODBERTO, super
 album
 Sitque salus cunctis Sithiu degentibus omnis.
 In Christo valeat mihi quisque iuvamen adauxit.
 Tartara possideant me quisque furaverit ex hinc.
Me compsit Heriveus, et ODBERTUS decoravit,
 Excerpsit Dodolinus, et hos Deus aptet Olimpo.
 Sancta cohors letare monachorum Sithiensis
 Coenobii, modulans Domino gratissima David
 Organa, que cecinit sancto spiramine plenus.
 Bertinus tibi namque manum fert, congeminatis
 Eximiis Folquino Silvinoque patronis.
 Regna beata poli retinent qui sorte perhenni
 Templa nitent, tibi campanis redimita canoris.
 Innumeris libris superas vicinia septa ;
 Nec quisquam numerare valet, quot pignora
 compta
 Optineas merito sanctarum relliquiarum.

Behold, O holy Peter, the suppliant Heriveus,
 trusting in the love of the illustrious father
 Bertinus, wrote this book of David for you to
 have—you to whom Christ the king granted the
 keys of heaven together with those of earth./ For
 Christ is entitled the one hope of the world in
 this [book]/ He [Christ] sanctified the Church as a
 bride for himself for ever./ Here too is the one
 Father of everything, who governs all things /
 and the Holy Spirit described with the greatest
 honour. / Thus father Odbert [is] supported by
 the consolation of Christ, / And thus the holy
 company of the monastery of Saint-Omer /
 solemnly sings psalms to God, the clear sound of
 which [is] in the sanctuary. / That work which
 was begun, the master [Odbert] executing it, I
 finished. / I pray that there may be great peace
 for Father Odbert arising from this book and that
 there may be every health [?complete salvation]
 for all those living in Saint-Omer. / May he
 flourish in Christ, whoever lent assistance to me.
 May Hell possess whoever shall have stolen me
 from here. / Heriveus arranged, and Odbert
 decorated me / Dodolinus made the selection;
 and may God fit them for heaven. / Rejoice holy
 band of monks of the monastery of Saint-Omer
 Performing the chants of David that were most
 pleasing to the Lord / which he [David] sang full
 of divine inspiration. / For assuredly Bertinus
 offers his hand to you / Along with the
 outstanding twin patrons Folcuinus and Siluinus
 who possess the blessed kingdoms of heaven by
 eternal lot. / Your churches sparkle enwreathed
 with tuneful bells / You outstrip the neighbouring
 cloisters with your innumerable books / Nor can
 anyone enumerate how many elegant pledges /
 You obtain through the merit of your holy relics.

The acrostic: Heriveus wrote me for St. Bertin.⁵

⁵ Reproduced from Gameson, "'Signed'
 Manuscripts from Early Romanesque Flanders:
 Saint-Bertin and Saint-Vaast," 69.

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