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Medievalists who want to open up questions about “periods and boundaries” can do so with confidence that their material will not run out. The thousand-year-long, continent-wide world which we medievalists claim as ours is so full of awakenings, consolidations, collapses, movements, declines, reawakenings, and all the other buffers and points which articulate the historical model railway, that we can debate forever, without going outside the medieval period at all, just how and when these awakenings (and so on) began and ended. But any questions we put about these must be overshadowed by a greater one, about the “Middle Ages” as such. Was there really such a period? Are the “Middle Ages” what Ockham would have called a mere *nomen* as distinct from a *res*? Are they a mere mind-set (as we might put it), as distinct from an entity really there in history *wie es eigentlich gewesen*? And if so, in the interests of getting at that history, should the concept of “the Middle Ages” go? That is the question I shall address in this paper.

It is more than a question: it is a trial, its defendant a mind-set. And any trial begins by identifying the defendant. So here goes.

The Middle Ages: what

In the fifth and sixth centuries, as every schoolboy knows, the Roman Empire was plagued by illegal immigrants, whom literate people found appallingly violent. In 410 an army of Goths caused mayhem in Rome, some women got raped, and to equip his readers for a change in the times Saint Augustine wrote *The City of God*. But times changed even more. Six generations later, in 593, Gregory the Great told a congregation in the Lateran basilica how:

All round us we see weeping and hear groans. Cities are destroyed, fortresses are ruined, fields depopulated. The male population is a fraction of what it was. Of that fraction, some

become serfs, others are mutilated, others killed. What is left, then, of Rome, which once seemed mistress of the world? Where is the Senate, where its people? All their pride and worldly dignity have gone; the Senate has collapsed, the people have perished, but for a few whose pitiful state gets worse every day, while the city itself stands empty amid the general conflagration. Young and ambitious people used once to flock here from all over the world to make their careers. Not now. Furthermore, whatever we say of Rome and its calamities we know to be true of all other cities in the world. We hear how this one has fallen into decay, that one is invaded and put to the sword, another struck by famine, another destroyed by earthquake.¹

Late Latin was given to superlatives; and Gregory was a rhetorician. But his pessimism would not have been lost on his audience.

For the world was indeed changing, for further ahead than any of them could see. For the next thousand years certain facts would obtain in western Europe which had not obtained before nor would again afterwards. An area to the west of a line roughly from the Elbe to the Adriatic, and at the other end reaching unsteadily over the Pyrenees, became an entity on its own, its mainland majority saying as much, after 800, by calling itself the western “Empire.” Its main peculiarity was that it was Catholic, as had been decided by Clovis the Frank, whether he knew it or not, when in 496 he chose Catholic Christianity rather than Arian as his religion: for the choice made him an ally rather than a persecutor to the resident bishops, allowing his people to intermarry with theirs, so successfully that the other new kingdoms either followed Clovis’s example or perished. As a result, for the next thousand years, western Europe would become a collection of nations under a “spiritual” hegemony—eluding precise definition then as it still does—of the bishop of Rome.

Those thousand years were marked off socially and politically, as well as religiously, from all before and after. In both the macro- and microcosm loyalty to a person, rather than an abstract state, became the glue of society. Latin, the language of a geographical region, was renamed Romance, the language of a tribe—the “Romans,” as the newcomers called the resident population, remolding them in their own image.² In the microcosm, one strong man bound himself to a stronger one as his servant, Celtic *gwas* (a word motorists can still see on the signs for Welsh service stations: *gwasanethau*), or “vassal,”³ accepting payment in the form of a *feodum*, a word of common Indo-European descent this time, related both to Latin *pecunia* and to Anglo-Saxon *feoh*, or wealth. From it, once the system it implied was manifestly crumbling in the eighteenth century, an English lawyer would coin a word for the whole network, “feudalism.”

The pattern would be no different in economics. Gregory the Great’s gloom about cities is confirmed by archaeology. Most Roman cities had by his time dwindled into shells, for bishops and their dependents. After the millennium these

anomalies in the feudal world would start forcing their way back onto the political high ground. But the toil was long and hard. Even in Italy, the late-fifteenth-century swagger which called itself the “Renaissance” concealed residual anxiety about the very legitimacy of free urban government, while elsewhere, under a tough monarchy as in contemporary France, town governments might have to sit and listen when told that the king could turn their town into a garden, if he wished.⁴

But around 1500 big changes were happening in the other direction. Here some of them are, listed in 1545 by a French physician, Jean Fernel, in the opposite mood to that of Gregory the Great, reflecting on the changes which had happened in his own lifetime:

the world sailed round
the largest of the earth’s continents discovered
the compass invented
gunpowder, revolutionizing the art of war
ancient manuscripts rescued, and the restoration of scholarship.⁵

He would not have had to go much beyond his lifetime to include the most obvious change of all, so obvious, to a writer or reader, as almost to be unnoticeable: an explosion of the production of books, because of printing. It brought about *The Gutenberg Galaxy*, to quote the title of a book which had a *succès d’estime* when I began lecturing, by Marshall McLuhan (who put the word “media” into circulation); which told of the unprecedented circulation of religious texts, of religious and political polemic, of the erosion of professional monopoly in access to legal texts, of the wide reproduction of maps and biological drawings (impossible before), and of the innumerable other consequences of printing.

That, ladies and gentlemen of the jury, is the Middle Ages. Do not let museum directors squeeze the period down to the years 1000-1500 as some of them are misled into doing by an urgency to fit things into cases. Do not, for now anyway, be drawn into squabbles about whether the “High” Middle Ages were early, as in Italy and France, or late, as in Germany, or for that matter whether the “Central” Middle Ages means the tenth or the thirteenth century. We have enough work on hand with the Middle Ages, *tout court*. That is our defendant, as just identified. Now it is a question of looking at his birth, background, and place of residence.

The Middle Ages: birth and early life

No participant in this 2004 colloquium needs telling that no one in the Middle Ages called it that. They did not think they were in the middle of anything. Some thought they were at the end. A few *moderni* (as they styled themselves) thought they were at a beginning. But in so far as most people thought historically at all they thought the Roman Empire was still going on, bringing Christianity and all that along with it. The notion of “middle age” creeps in faintly and surreptitiously in fourteenth century, first as a corollary of a purely literary Renaissance, as humanists improved their Latin to serve the new bureaucracies, and discovered—as their Carolingian

predecessors had done long before, with comparable consequences—that the Latin everyone was using was not Cicero’s. So they began using verbs like *revivere* and *reflorescere* about their own efforts, which necessarily meant thinking of previous Latin as dead ground. This covert idea of rebirth, following a negative middle period, stayed with pen and ink at first. In 1435 it spread to architecture, when Alberti, whose history was confused, but extended to knowing that those transient rapists of 410 had been Goths, made lexical history by using the term “Gothic” to designate everything between imperial times and himself (the term was imported into English by Sir Christopher Wren, and got its more confined definition in the nineteenth century).

As a structure for historical thought as a whole, as distinct from belonging to the professional idiom of writers and architects, the idea of rebirth after a gap had to wait for major religious upheaval, which it got in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Luther and his reformers in one sense eliminated history. They went straight back to the Gospel, rejecting all the later excrescences that had muddied its message. But reformers bred more reformers, so that by the second and third generations, reform in its turn had a history, itself not an altogether unmuddy one. That required a recasting of historical software. The term *medium aevum* duly appeared in 1604, coming over into protestant English in 1621. (It came over as “the Middle Age.” In European languages it has stayed in the singular, but by 1722 the English had begun to recognize how many middle ages there were and had pluralized it, allowing religious romantics to hang on to its Latin original when coining the word “mediaeval”—with the “a” of course, until our own vulgarizing days—in 1827).

That history of words is related, but not identical, to the incorporation of the *medium aevum* idea into historical thinking. This is linked with the history of another word, “century,” which had the advantage, very handy if you wanted to divide history into good and bad eras, of cutting it up into manageable arithmetical chunks. The word “century” entered historical vocabulary in the wake of the Lutheran reform, in the multivolume history that came to be known as the “Magdeburg Centuries,” of 1559-74, which put Church history from Constantine to 1400 into a black plastic bag for what I believe you call here the trash collector. Ten plastic bags, rather. It was the Leiden historian Georg Horn, in 1666, who thought they might as well all be in one, as the *medium aevum*. That definition had the further consequence of requiring recognition of history *since* the reformers. So in 1688, Christoph Cellarius of Halle, another protestant historian, acknowledged that history fell into three parts, Ancient, Medieval, and Modern, which it is still in.⁶

Those three parts had not, of course, grown from absolutely nothing. Far from it. Medieval thinkers might not have known they were medieval. But they knew they were a lot of other things, being intensely historically minded. To be that, you have to have an appropriate “software”: ways of articulating time. It was this history-mindedness which produced its most consequential memorial in the “AD” dating

system, born at the beginning of the Middle Ages (with Dionysius Exiguus, soon after Gregory the Great), growing up in a family of older dating systems *during* the Middle Ages, and destined to come into its sole inheritance just *after* the Middle Ages, in (of all people) Machiavelli.⁷ Among other things it made those “centuries” possible (never mind all those papal jubilees). But in feeding the idea of “ages” other medieval legacies were more important. Some were pre-medieval, like the notion of a succession of empires (with horns, as in Revelation), which Jerome had fixed as the Babylonian, Persian, Greek, Roman. That scheme provided a model for others, like those of *translatio imperii* (which justified Charlemagne and Otto), *translatio studii* (giving Paris its self-image), or even for the three dynasties of the French monarchy (Merovingian, Carolingian, Capetian).

Underlying all of these, in the Middle Ages, was the great Christian division of time into Old Testament and New Testament periods. Since the New Testament period had been going on for countless generations, medieval religious thinkers had the problem of those later Lutheran reformers: the age of the New Testament had to be divided up. Norman Cohn’s *Pursuit of the Millennium*⁸ tells us how this often happened in unorthodox ways, as reformers *avant la lettre* imagined they were inaugurating a new age and could dispose of history. But the most influential version managed to hold most of its enthusiasts just within orthodoxy—or at least out of trouble—namely Joachim of Fiore’s division of time into the three ages of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The Ancient-Medieval-Modern scheme of 1688 was therefore less an invention than the reorientation of an old concept on revised principles.

“Revised,” only because the most fundamental of the principles was as old as Christianity, and older. It was that history moved in a straight line from A to B, or shall we say Alpha to Omega. The term of art for that is “vectoral,” from “vector”: a line going in a certain direction for a certain length. Without careful corporate reflection, and a leap or two in the dark, it is not clear whether time is ultimately vectoral or circular—like the day and the year. “Ultimately,” because to the senses it is usually both, as on our birthdays, which come round annually but progress in one direction, like a bed spring (a “gyre,” W. B. Yeats would call it). The question is whether the lines are enclosed in a circle or the circles ranged along a line. The first alternative was embodied in the “Great Year” attributed to Plato, but probably of Babylonian and Indian origin, according to which we shall all be here sitting in this hall when the stars get round to the same places they are in now, which will happen in 36,000 years (that happens to be ten times what the Babylonians would have conceived as “100,” their base of sixty replacing our base of ten: i.e. $10 (60 \times 60) = 36,000$. That is one pointer to its Babylonian origin).⁹ Since you and I may not be around to test that cycle it requires some sophistication to reject it in favor of an ultimately vectoral notion. It also requires faith, especially of the Judeo-Christian kind. Vectoral history does not have to be Judeo-Christian. High and mighty people have often seen history as leading towards themselves

at the time of writing, like lines of perspective. That is roughly Virgil's view of Roman history, though Virgil was essentially "saved," in a Christian sense, by the prophetic element he put into the Fourth Eclogue, which allowed the dovetailing of his Rome-focused vectoral history into the Judeo-Christian kind. While it does not, therefore, have a monopoly of vectoral history, the Judeo-Christian tradition remains much its most powerful proponent. The tradition would make no sense without it: God made the world, as in Genesis, and there will be a Messiah, coming for the first, or second, time. The irresistible vigor of this concept explains why modern thinkers like Marx and Darwin, with no overt reference to religion, can preserve it in their schemes of evolution.

Now the idea that a Renaissance and Reformation followed a *medium aevum* remains vectoral, but with modifications. What these modifications were would be a subject for endless debate. The very notion of Renaissance carries a faint implication that there had been a golden age and would be again; and golden ages are stable, in that kings die and succeed but everything goes on happily. (It was precisely that kind of trust in Roman civilization which *The City of God* was written to scotch.) A lot of Renaissance thought embraced progress, which you might say is not stable. But it is, if the progress is *steady*, because stability has simply been digested into the progress. If you still doubt me, look at the last pages of the *western* part of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*. He expressed there his belief in steady human progress in the civil arts, and finished writing just before the French Revolution made him run for his life.¹⁰ We can debate forever, I say, about post-Renaissance ideas of progress. What no one can debate is that, with its *medium aevum*, the Renaissance effectively excluded the medieval Church from whatever notion of progress it had. The Church had not been part of it and had indeed resisted it. To assure you I am not inventing, let me confess my glee as a novice lecturer to discover a recently reprinted book on the current reading list for philosophy students which contained some of the juiciest versions of this view I have seen in any book published after 1900. It was in the pages about medieval philosophy, or lack of it, and it made a perfect "Aunt Sally" (the name rough English boys give to the cardboard target at a fairground) to start this novice off on his career. The author's pages on the period ended (I tell no lie): "after a thousand years of tillage, the soil bloomed again."¹¹

All that is about our defendant's birth and early life. It remains to say something about his present lodgings.

The Middle Ages: how lodged

In England, landlords or planning committees sometimes want the resident of a particular property to move, and that is sometimes easy and sometimes difficult. In the case of our defendant, it is difficult, for two reasons. The first is historical, and extends what I said about the idea's birth and early life. This time the history brings in the nation state, the *stupor mundi* of post-Renaissance Europe. No one would deny that the nation states have worked miracles. The miracles came to a head in the late nineteenth century, when European states lorded it over most of the

globe. How lucky we are at Oxford that our Lecture Schools were built then! What pokey boxes they would be if they were built now! I do not interject that example fortuitously. For the two miracles I want to focus on were both connected with those Schools. First, in the late nineteenth century, these nation states produced massive historical research: Ranke, Stubbs, the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, the Rolls Series, and so on. The other was their huge expansion of universities, to supply all those governments and colonial administrations. The research and the universities united to create history courses. Someone had to decide what sort of history courses. And what else could they decide but to adopt that 1688 division of history into Ancient, Medieval, and Modern?

In the twentieth century those miracle-working giants went to war, twice. In the mess that was left, yet *more* hope was put in education, so that the number of universities and history courses multiplied by ten; and, as they multiplied, that threefold division was built deeper and deeper into university fabric. Literally: the partitions between classical, medieval, and modern history departments are there in plasterboard, bricks and mortar. The same partitions are there in our contracts of service, journals, specializations, PhD examination boards, common rooms, coffee shops. It is even there in marriages. Members of the Illinois Medieval Association do not need me to identify medievalists who are married to medievalists, or even, if you think about it, medievalists' medieval *children*.

Point number one, then: our defendant is hard to shift. He has enough cultural inertia behind him—I did not say “vested interest” because this is not politics—enough inertia behind him to make a jury tremble—any jury less upright than ourselves, that is. Do we *dare* abolish the Middle Ages? Of course we do. But there is a second reason why the defendant may be hard to budge. It has nothing to do with cultural inertia. It is matter of the technology of learning, or at least the learning of history. We historians often have to remind ourselves that the past does not exist, nor do any of us remember it, so far back. We have to find out about it, like Sherlock Holmes, from the scraps of evidence we have. This involves technology or rather, if I have to use foreign words (that one—*τεχνολογια*—happens to be Greek), then *Geschichtswissenschaften*. These allow us to journey backwards through time and discover what people were like who are long dead. And when this journey gets to 1500, plus or minus some fifty years, we have a problem.

If *Geschichtswissenschaften* has not exhausted your capacity for hearing strange terms, let me insert one of my own, which I hope is plainer. When we go backwards over the Renaissance-Reformation boundary line we find ourselves on the edge of what I think of as The Cliff. To explain both this term and the reason I have one of my own, let me illustrate it from my own experience, when writing about the medieval suicide. I was trying to estimate suicide statistics around 1500, in France, England, and Germany (those for Italy were altogether too elusive). The number of suicide cases from criminal records soars up almost vertically from the last one or two decades of the fifteenth century into the first three or four of the

sixteenth. But did this indicate a correspondingly explosive rise in the number of suicides—in response, perhaps, to all those upheavals in religion and politics? Or did it reflect only an explosion in judicial records, an explosion itself reflecting the rising profile of the state (cause of one of the upheavals)?¹² There were two variables, one in the documentation, the other in the underlying history. How relatively easy it was, I thought, to study suicide after 1500, with all those records (and suicides). In a word, there was a cliff, and I had been groping around at the bottom of it.

We can all think of examples of that problem, but let me point to its most general manifestation. It has to do with books. That means it has to do also with printing, but more essentially it is a matter of books, and what happened to them when they were printed. Thanks to McLuhan and others we know the spread of printing had deep effects on contemporary culture. It also had, or contributed to, deep effects on our modern access to historical documents. This is partly a matter of sheer quantity. There were more contemporary copies of books reproduced, so, compared with earlier manuscript production, a text is more likely to have survived until today, *and* surviving copies are more likely to have been identical, *and* (whether they are or not) they are likely to be easier of access today than earlier literary productions, because printed versions will be available in libraries around Europe. That all renders easier, today, our study of history *via* books.

But that is far from the end of the matter. Besides quantity, there are the matters of the books' appearance and style. For an initial period, as you know, typefaces reproduced as nearly as possible the manual scripts that preceded them, complete with abbreviations which had been devised to make writing quicker but which had suddenly become pointless, but continued for the same reason that early motor cars looked like horse carriages. These abbreviation marks mostly died away with the fifteenth century. Sixteenth-century books thus, as a general rule, have a typeface easier for us to read than any medieval hand.

But I mentioned also style. Writers who wrote specially for new, large readerships favored rhetorical forms easier for those readerships to understand, and hence easier for us, too. They also wrote often in the most widely used language. Major national vernaculars had already acquired literary respectability by the fifteenth century. Printing added a new impulse towards their uniformity, an impulse which in turn coincided with, if it did not precipitate, changes in the languages themselves—so that Shakespeare's English (*post* the vowel shift), Montaigne's French, Luther's German, and Ariosto's Italian, are measurably closer to their modern descendants, and further from mere local dialects, than their fourteenth- and fifteenth-century predecessors, so that quotations from them are less in need of "translation."

Finally, and perhaps most important, is the matter of a book's identity. New productions tend to be "books" as such, in the form of treatises or dialogues, suitable for an expanded public, which had to rely more on reading rather than hearing; as distinct, that is, from the commentaries-on-commentaries and the summarized

records of vocal exchange which helped make the study of scholastic texts so abhorrent to the humanists, and, for the same reasons, to us. These changes in the form of books marked a crystallization, as it were, in a book's identity. We identify a book by author and title. Since around 1700, a web of copyright laws has grown up to defend both. There is today a positive cult of authorship, a cult which Burckhardt numbered among the traits which Renaissance Italy recovered from antiquity (as with Petrarch's crowning with laurels). This author cult directly opposed an opposite custom in the Middle Ages, a custom often breached, to be sure, but remaining the norm, which went with a partly related tendency towards a book's anonymity and misattribution (medieval productions often have no author's name, or an author's name we know to be wrong). This all affects us. For, besides depriving the authors of posthumous glory—an end thought positively desirable in religious circles and which was a main reason for the custom—this lack of attribution was to produce nightmares for scholarly editors in the post-*Geschichtswissenschaften* period; of which nightmares, I shall say more in a moment.

For now, I ask you to recognize that these changes in the world of book production, at all stages, and reacting on each other, not only answered to contemporary social and technological changes, to which they in turn contributed; but also, on top of those contemporary consequences, had a lasting result in altering the nature of evidence available to modern scholarship. As we go back we come to this Cliff, down whose face only the determined medievalist will climb, and which has consequently come to be the source of an *apartheid* that separates medievalists and modernists. It has made them, *pari passu* with the growth of scientific history, into different kinds of animal, writing history differently and standing in different relationships to the general public, all helping to make their periods seem so different.

Because the centuries beyond The Cliff are generically harder to study than those on this side of it, they remain relatively dark.¹³ Where there is darkness, myths flourish. Myths are a function of the values and fears of the people who nourish them. In the present case that means the makers of the Renaissance and Reformation, who, like most young people who think they are discovering and changing everything, blackened the *ancien régime* they thought they were overthrowing. How we judge these myths depends on how we judge revolutions, because revolutions depend on them. For Alexander VI's contemporaries, thirsting for a new age of Gospel observance, there *had* to be a gap-millennium, in which the Church *had* to be timeless, inert, slavishly obedient to a papacy ruling over a corrupt clergy and superstitious populace, an inquisition at their beck and call to suppress opposition. The only people with any claim to learning, for the same reason, *had* to be equally inert time-wasters, debating nothing more consequential than the numbers of angels who could dance on a pin: in a word, "a thousand years of tillage."

These, then, are the nature and origin of our defendant, and of his present

residence, fortified by long establishment and inaccessibility. I shall now make the case for the prosecution.

The case against: medieval change

The case will be in two parts. The first will show that there was change in the Middle Ages. The other will show that in an important respect there was *no* change at the end of it. Since the first part is the positive part I can act as mere librarian, waving his hand over the books of the people who have done the hard work in demonstrating change. The second part is negative, which means I must do the positive work myself, and that means, in turn, choosing a small strand, offering my demonstration, and waiting to discover what you think about it.

The part of the librarian would in fact never be finished. If I had to point to a single book which proved the point, what better choice than Sylvia Thrupp's 1965 collection of essays entitled *Change in Medieval Society*?¹⁴ Its nineteen contributors took single subjects, over Europe as a whole or in particular areas—population growth, currency depreciation, the laicization of society, nationality, democracy, quantification in physics, the influence of Islamic culture, and others—and identified change in them all. Added to the specific impact of each essay, that of the collection as a whole had a collective impact greater than the sum of its parts: the impact proclaimed in its title. To the public at large, its message must then have been new or the title would not have sold the book.

That was to the public at large, victims of The Cliff. To medievalists who work below it the message cannot have been new, since almost every item of medieval research for at least a century before then had carried the same message. Rather than run through *all* this research let me just indicate two spheres, in which the two concepts which were once supposed to have ended the Middle Ages have been gradually projected back into it. I refer to the Renaissance and the Reformation. I am guilty. I used to teach an Oxford course called "The Early Italian Renaissance," which covered the years 1280 to 1348. I could never explain to students why the Renaissance could be regarded as an event, like the ten days of the Russian Revolution, when the event I was affecting to expound had begun in 1280 and ended, well, in the 1640s with Galileo. My early Italian Renaissance was itself an illegal immigrant, this time into the Middle Ages, bringing the "renaissance" idea well within the medieval time scale. But of course there had been illegal immigrants before. It was Hastings Rashdall, whose three-volume classic on medieval universities was published first in 1895, who first applied the term "renaissance" to the culture of the twelfth century; and it was Charles Homer Haskins, in his book of that title in 1927, who made "the twelfth-century renaissance" part of our everyday academic language.¹⁵ Thus made bold, other historians started finding renaissances up and down the Middle Ages: first, the Carolingian renaissance, which has by now almost stopped looking like an immigrant at all, so many books and articles are written about it. Then a Northumbrian renaissance, of Bede and Alcuin, and all that; and then two more renaissances from the Germanic world, the Ottonian, in the late

tenth century, and the Hohenstaufen renaissance under Frederick II.

Once these renaissances had been established and their academic infrastructure built, explorers were in a position to get inside them and discover something else. The Carolingian and twelfth-century renaissances proved also to be *reformatio*s. The same culture which rediscovered the classics was also trying to make a reality of the Gospel message. Indeed, it was in most cases precisely their evangelical aspirations that inspired their desire for scholarship, and a wish to lay hands on all the ancient texts that might help,¹⁶ it being one of the paradoxes of medieval culture that the more diligently you sought to acquire the language of the universal Church the more exposed you were to the influence of its greatest masters, the Stoics Cicero and Seneca. Meanwhile other scholars had begun calling a spade a spade by applying modern derivatives of the term *reformatio*, which had actually been little used before the late fourteenth century, to earlier medieval periods. Their first object was what we all now call the Gregorian “reform,” that term being first used of it in 1889-90 by Odon Delarc, in his three-volume study *Saint Grégoire VII et la Réforme de l’Église au onzième siècle*. Again, the term was made general by another book (also in three volumes), Augustin Fliche’s *La Réforme Grégorienne*, published between 1924 and 1937.¹⁷ Let us recall that in French the word “Réforme,” with capital “R,” means what we call the Reformation. Its use about Gregory VII, who himself is never known to have used it,¹⁸ was the act of a militantly illegal immigrant, setting out to say that the Reformation was nothing new.

Both reforms and reformatio

Those renaissances and reformatio

proper historical places. Then direct them to A. J. Gurevich's chapters in *Categories of Medieval Culture*,²¹ where the author's knowledge of Germanic philology reveals the early evolution of our concepts of time and space; or to Patrick Geary's *Phantoms of Remembrance*,²² where, like closed-circuit police cameras, tenth-century witness lists are used to plot the shifts in dynastic power in the darkest of dark centuries. And if your challenger does not even know when the early Middle Ages *were*, sit him down with that neglected classic, first published in 1932 and still recommended in the best universities, Christopher Dawson's *The Making of Europe*.²³ It stops dead at the year 1000. Europe was made by then, however invisible the process to the naked eye. But then, inevitably, change went on, including *more* making of Europe; for that is the title also of Robert Bartlett's book, which starts at the year 1000.²⁴

I must stop; the discovery of change proves to be what "research" is mostly about. The sea looks static from above, from The Cliff, until we go down and swim in it and discover the waves and the currents. This is true of natural science. The consternation caused by Galileo arose from his insistence that the earth *moved*. Biology began with Adam's naming of species once and for all, and later melted away into a moving picture of evolution. Chemistry once had unchangeable "elements," which physical chemists have now discovered, likewise, to be changeable after all. And nuclear physicists have shown that the once unsplitable "atom" (which means "unsplitable") can be split. And this is to say nothing of our *continents*, which have now been found to be on the move. In a word, the story of the science of nature, just like that of history, is that of Sinbad the Sailor, who went to sleep on what he thought was dry land and woke to find it was the back of a whale.

Eppur si muove. So Galileo's grunt must be a motto for historians, too, not just *laudatores temporum actorum* like Gregory the Great or technological racers like Jean Vernal. We look down on previous ages as a mass of ὕλη [hyle], *silva*, inert matter, of the kind that came into the minds of twelfth-century commentators on Genesis when they read that "The earth was without form and void," until the God of change moved it into action. They addressed, and we address, the same problem, at bottom, as those modern physicists who debate whether the cosmos began with primeval material, *Urstoff*, or whether that apparent material was not really made of energy, *alias* change. Πάντα χόρει [panta chorei], in a word, to quote T. S. Eliot (or do I mean Heraclitus?): all is flux. Or, to come back to our own Latin, let me ask if you have ever, when leafing through the *Metamorphoses* in search of a mythological source, let your eye run on to the late passage where Ovid confesses to the same experience I have just acknowledged, of being swept away by the recital of individual changes to reflect on change itself. In the last book of *Metamorphoses* he suddenly burst out:

Et quoniam magno feror aequare plenaque ventis
 vela dedi: nihil est toto, quod perstet, in orbe.
 Cuncta fluunt, omnisque vagans formatur imago;

ipsa quoque absiduo labuntur tempora motu,
non secus ac flumen.²⁵

He went on to reason from the presence of seashells in mountain rock that the mountains must once have been under the sea [l. 264]. Hutton of Edinburgh had to remake that observation in the late eighteenth century. Cocooned in its post-Renaissance assumptions, Hutton's was a world which had forgotten that truth because it had stopped *looking* at things in that way, no doubt because it was discovering so much movement elsewhere.²⁶ Something has to stay still. Something had to be *hyle*, and the role went to the Middle Ages. Medieval people did not mind. They were all dead. But the view that nothing changed in them was simply wrong, and it has passed down to our own generation.

So much for demonstrating change in the thousand years before 1500. I shall now show that, in one important element of European culture, there was *no* change around that imagined frontier, that the medieval and early modern periods were, in this respect, fused together.

The case against: the post-medieval continuity of “best-sellers”

I now have to be more particular, and look at this one element in some detail. So let me go back to printing. The invention of printing around 1450 was in some ways revolutionary. In others it was conservative. To explain why, I must begin my story in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, with the introduction of paper manufacture to western Europe, at Fabriano in the papal state. This cut the cost of writing things down by about a half. Actually, like all stories, this one begins even earlier, with the people who *wanted* to write things down. And of course it goes on afterward when they wrote *more* things down once the cost of doing so (at their behest) had become cheaper. At the same time, throughout the thirteenth century, universities expanded, and went on doing so until the Black Death, and, after that big hiccup, again afterwards. The same generations therefore, not surprisingly, saw an upturn in the amount of administrative documentation, and, as part of the same development, in the output of books. This made the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries a heroic age for the production of new books: philosophical *summae*, pastoral and legal handbooks and compendia, as well as political treatises and the sort of lofty literary contrivance which would be called in to prove a “renaissance.” Some of this rush of books would become classics for the generations of and just after their composition, each classic to be honored by the survival, in modern libraries, of between a hundred and a thousand manuscripts, unquestionably a remnant of more at the time, lost in the six or seven centuries in between.

Let me give a few examples. We can start with the most productive of the religious orders, the Dominicans and Franciscans, their full writers' roll-call given in those big volumes of *Scriptores ordinis praedicatorum* and *Scriptores ordinis fratrum minorum*. From the Dominicans, for instance, comes Guillaume Peyraut's *Summa virtutum et viciorum*, an ethical handbook written around 1240. It is still

extant in some 500 manuscripts.²⁷ Another Dominican production is the *Postilla in totam bibliam*, the vast biblical commentary written in the 1230s and 40s by a team under Hugh of St. Cher. Again, it was copied in hundreds of manuscripts, destined for every serious conventual or academic library in Europe.²⁸ From the Franciscan order we could pick out, again as just one example, David of Augsburg's *De compositione hominis exterioris et interioris*, an Imitation of Christ before its time, written ca. 1250. It survives today—under a variety of titles, translations, selections, and aliases—in some five hundred manuscripts.²⁹ A Franciscan work with probably an even bigger contemporary circulation was Pierre Bersuire's *Reductorium morale*, a moral encyclopedia composed in the second quarter of the fourteenth century. It still exists, again, what with excerpts, translations, and revisions by the author and others, in several hundreds of medieval manuscripts.³⁰

We could go on adding examples from outside those orders. Guillaume Durand Senior, bishop of Mende, wrote a *Speculum judiciale* and a *Rationale divinorum officiorum*, each destined to become a standard manual, one for lawyers, one for liturgists, and each still extant in hundreds of manuscript copies (an exact count of those of the *Rationale* has passed 250).³¹ Or turn to history, in Matthew Paris's *Chronica maiora*, whose abridgement, the *Flores historiarum*, would become one of late medieval England's most widely-copied books.³² The most prolific of such thirteenth-century compilations was nevertheless Jacobus a Voragine's *Legenda aurea*, composed ca. 1263-7. A team is still identifying manuscripts of it now existing, and has got to well over a thousand, not counting its translations into a dozen or so medieval vernaculars.³³

To have heard of most of these late-medieval favorites is to betray one's profession. With the just-possible exception of *The Golden Legend*, one has to be a medievalist to have heard of them. Not many medievalists will have done more than hear. A bottle of claret on it: no one here has read Guillaume Durand's *Speculum judiciale*. There are various reasons for this general ignorance, but again I wish to focus on just one. It is a general law about medieval literature, which states that the more widely copied a work was in the late Middle Ages the less likely it is to enjoy a modern critical edition. Think about it. Earlier in this lecture I mentioned that a medieval book usually had a weak identity: its form, text, title, and authorship were not firmly fixed. Combined with the large number of manuscripts, this weakness of identity presents any prospective modern editor of texts with all the ingredients of a nightmare. Go back to that treatise by David of Augsburg. It lurks under no fewer than twelve different titles and twelve different attributions, not matching the titles.³⁴ No wonder a full edition is still awaited. Very few of these "best-sellers," in fact, are given just one author and one title, and even if they are, the multiplicity of manuscripts brings its own train of problems in variant readings and transcription errors. For instance, those hypothetical conditions are approximately met by the *Legenda aurea*. But to study the original text, today's scholars still use the edition made by Graesse in 1846, from a fifteenth-century printed version. No one has had

the temerity, or the huff and the puff, to produce a better one since.

That is my law. You might think that the conditions of modern scholarship would weaken its effect. Actually they add to it. For as editing standards have risen, so the security of academic employment has fallen, so that an academic aspirant to “tenure-track” must fall off it long before finishing an edition of any of these books. Even in religious orders, which have their own kind of “tenure,” an editor has to think about the limits of a human lifetime: one Benedictine scholar ends his proposal for such an edition with “pourvu que Dieu me prête vie.”³⁵ State-of-the-art editors meanwhile tumble over each other for medieval works represented by just one or two surviving manuscripts, like *Beowulf* (one manuscript), *Sir Gawain* (one), Salimbene’s *Chronica* (one),³⁶ Roger Bacon’s *Opus maius* (two), and more.

So The Cliff casts its shadow here, too, hiding from us the very books the late medieval reader *did read*, or at least possess. Once we make an adjustment for that effect, a whole library of late medieval favorites comes into view. As it does, we notice something which was there at our feet all the time but largely unnoticed. It is that these medieval favorites *remained* favorites after printing. This again stands to reason. Technological innovation, socially revolutionary, is culturally conservative. Technology affects business algebra, sharply raising capital costs. To get their presses working, Gutenberg and Caxton had an investment to pay off and skilled workers to retain. This was not a moment for risks. So they went for the best-sellers, and most of what got printed was established canon.

The figures bear this out. Peyraut’s *Summa virtutum ac viciorum* would get thirty-seven printed editions. At least that number have been identified for Bersuire’s *Reductorium* by Berchorian specialists;³⁷ (my own two-minute soundings in the Bodleian and British Libraries produced early editions whose places and dates betrayed them as a few of many: Cologne 1477, Paris 1509, Nuremberg 1517, Lyon 1538, and Venice 1583 and 1589). Between 1487 and 1732 at least fourteen editions appeared of Hugh of St. Cher’s *Opera omnia*, not to mention separate editions of his *Postilla*.³⁸ I should have mentioned Petrarch’s *De remediis utriusque fortunae* among the best-sellers; in his own day it was his most widely copied work, with well over two hundred surviving manuscripts; and duly got more than twenty printed editions.³⁹ Liturgy was a special case, because most early printed books were liturgical. So we should not be surprised that Durand’s *Rationale* got no fewer than 111 printed editions,⁴⁰ nor that the coyness of modern editors towards the *Legenda aurea* was conspicuous for its absence among its earliest printers, who had produced more than 156 editions of it by 1500—more than of the Bible.⁴¹

I am sure all of you could suggest additions to the list. You will also, I hope, suggest refinements to its profiles, charting these medieval books’ posthumous fortunes. The main refinement I have to offer is that these printed editions tend to fall off during the seventeenth century. I learned this lesson twice with pain when looking for usable copies of Peyraut’s *Summa* and Petrarch’s *De remediis*. The thirty-seven editions of Peyraut included none after 1668. When I first looked for

Petrarch's *De remediis* (things may have changed since) I found no edition after the seventeenth century, except one mid-eighteenth straggler too feeble to swim into the British Library. (Put away your handkerchiefs. Soon afterwards, when the late, great Denys Hay moved to a retirement home, I bought a 1649 edition from his library, complete with his signature and a kindly note when I told him.) This is all personal experience. But the trend goes much further. Those hundred-plus editions of Durand's *Rationale* include none after 1672. Even Matthew Paris, the reproduction of whose *Chronica majora* (source of the *Flores*) was facilitated by printing and which was duly pounced on by Bishop Parker and others for at least four distinct editions, enjoyed none after 1685, until the late nineteenth century. Different kinds of book had different trajectories. Fibonacci's and Sacrobosco's thirteenth-century classics on arithmetic were often printed until the late sixteenth century but eclipsed then, no doubt by modernizers. (The long reign of Sacrobosco's *Arithmetica ecclesiastica*, for instance, was ended abruptly by the 1583 calendar reform.) Astrological works of tainted orthodoxy survived medieval persecution, only to suffer from tighter standards in the sixteenth century. Thus Cecco of Ascoli's *L'Acerba*, which got him (and it) burned in 1327, would go on to enjoy enough sixteenth-century printed editions to help Giordano Bruno to the same fate in 1600;⁴² but none afterwards.

To summarize: the publishing history of these medieval favorites forms an arc, like a rainbow, an *arc de ciel*. The arc rises from the ground within three decades of 1300 and comes down again between 1600 and 1700. In its middle, like a support holding the structure up, is printing. There are reasons why this had to be so. Around 1500, what was conceived as "learning" was preserved in a corpus of often-copied manuscript books, many of them considered modern in the sense of being between one or two centuries old. The new printing presses opened this canon to a broader public than would have dreamt even of aspiring to it earlier. So its readership expanded, much as that of Jane Austen has done in the age of paperback classics and films. Then, after two more centuries, the arc comes to earth again for a complementary reason. The new, expanded readership had by then read, marked, learned and inwardly digested the old canon, to a point where learned taste had begun to transmute it into something new, which we call the Enlightenment. The old texts were then sent to the trunk-makers, fishmongers, and other voracious devourers of old books in the age of Hogarth (in whose print, *Gin Lane*, keen eyes will see evidence of the process)—except, that is, for the few lucky survivors given refuge in libraries.

A sample of these lucky few, set along the shelves of the old library of Saint John's College, Oxford, show this effect to the naked eye. The early benefactors of that college wanted its library, in its age of expansion in the generation after 1595, to have all the books appropriate to a first-class college library at that epoch. It was a largely protestant epoch, so it is no surprise to see Anglican divines on the shelves, or even early Church fathers down to Gregory the Great and Bede. But

they are far from stopping there. Medieval favorites are prominent, and conspicuously late medieval favorites. There is Nicholas of Lyre's early fourteenth-century biblical commentary, beside Hugh of St. Cher's *Postilla*. We see a papalist as high as Aegidius Colonna, mystics as monastic as Liudolf of Saxony and Denis the Carthusian, and philosophers as scholastic as Alexander of Hales and Albert, Aquinas and Bonaventura, Scotus and Durand of St Pourçain, and a dozen more, all there, in recent editions, by the time Charles I's head was chopped off.⁴³

A recognition of this arc, extending for two centuries on either side of the years 1450-1500, must transform our understanding of that half-century. It stops being a no-man's-land between two stages of a metamorphosis, and becomes a tie-beam between two ages which, for all their differences, shared much of their reading and of the assumptions that lodged in it. To grasp this is to explain the puzzlement some of us may have felt (I did) when reading E. M. W. Tillyard's *The Elizabethan World Picture*,⁴⁴ to find that most of its material predates Queen Elizabeth's grandfather, or when reading C. S. Lewis's *The Discarded Image*,⁴⁵ and Arthur Lovejoy's *The Great Chain of Being*,⁴⁶ books conceived mainly in respect of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to find they say quite as much about the ten previous ones. Books at the earlier end of the rainbow were in the canon for readers in the later. The earlier, in a word—E. R. Curtius's word—was “enclosed” in the later,⁴⁷ the medieval, deeply and all but ineradicably, within the modern.

Conclusion

Very early on New Year's Day 1940 the poet W. H. Auden found himself reflecting, with pen in hand, on the outbreak of a new World War. It sent his mind spinning through history. Among its conundrums one certainty stood out, which the poet believed to be shared by every soldier in both armies, high and low, and the diplomats who had failed them. It was that an era had come to an end:

That all the special tasks begun
By the Renaissance have been done.⁴⁸

One of those tasks was the invention of the Middle Ages. It was a rhetorical accessory, a more or less necessary one, to those innumerable miracles of reason and initiative which characterize modern European history.

But the task has been done; and *my* task, now, has been to show that the conception of a *medium aevum* was in many ways, some serious, a misguided conception, open to exceptions, adjustments, and nuances. It is one way of looking at history, and there are others. Should the prisoner then be executed? The answer must be “no.” Our gathering resembles one of those frustrated courts, where the defendant has a pack of misdemeanors proved against him but walks out unpunished because of a quirk in the law. The quirk here arises from the nature of our academic enterprise. We did not begin it. We are heirs, and cannot—unless we opt to be impotent eccentrics—do other than thank our inheritance, before we set about reshaping and reinterpreting it in the light of our own insights. It is like correcting

a parent. We do not execute parents. We could as soon rename the Middle Ages as rename America, on the ground that the name originated in Renaissance “spin.” (Think how many international treaties, company names, and letter headings would need changing.) To attempt it would be to repeat the mistake of the inventors of the Middle Ages, to reject a great chunk of the past without trying to understand it. We know about the past *through* the past, the earlier through the later; and to appreciate our medieval history we have also to understand that other “middle period,” the one dividing the end of the Middle Ages from our own. Only through doing so, as we constantly refine and reinterpret our inheritance, can we aspire to get a true understanding of the Middle Ages, and, with that, of ourselves.

Notes

- 1 *Homilia in Ezekielem*, II, Hom. 6, para. 22-4. Edited by Marcus Adriaen in *Corpus Christianorum Latinorum, Series Latina*, vol. 142 (Turnhout, 1971), pp. 310-313. A translation which takes fewer liberties than mine is to be found in George G. Coulton, *Medieval Panorama* (Cambridge, 1949), 9-10.
- 2 On the linguistic process, the pioneering work, taken up and nuanced by more recent authors, remains Reinhard Wenskus, *Stammesbildung und Verfassung. Das Werden der frühmittelalterlichen gentes* (Cologne, 1961), esp. pp. 513-537.
- 3 The origin and fortunes of the term “vassal” and some of its analogues are examined by Karl Bosl in “Über soziale Mobilität in der mittelalterlichen ‘Gesellschaft,’” reprinted in his collected *Frühformen der Gesellschaft im mittelalterlichen Europa* (Munich, 1964), pp. 156-79, esp. pp. 162-3.
- 4 See, for instance, Aldo Mezzacane, “Law and Jurists in the Formation of the Modern State in Italy,” in *The Origins of the State in Italy, 1300-1600*, ed. Julius Kirshner (Chicago, 1996), pp. 62-73. First published in *Journal of Modern History*, 67 (December, 1995), supplement. For more information on towns turned into gardens, see Peter S. Lewis, *Later Medieval France* (London, 1968), pp. 256 and 270.
- 5 Quoted by Marie Boas in *The Scientific Renaissance, 1450-1630* (London, 1962), p. 17.
- 6 The basics of these semantic changes can be read in standard etymological dictionaries. Informative comment can be found in relevant entries of the *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 9 vols. (Stuttgart, 1999). See especially those by Otto Brunner (“Mittelalter,” 6:684-5) and Joachim Poeschke (“Renaissance,” 7:710-7).
- 7 Donald J. Wilcox, *The Measure of Times Past* (Chicago, 1987); Arno Borst, *The Ordering of Time*, trans. A. Winnard (Oxford, 1993).

8. Norman Cohn, *Pursuit of the Millennium* (London, 1957).
9. John D. North, "Chronology and the Age of the World," in the same author's *Stars, Minds and Fate* (London, 1989), pp. 91-117, esp. pp. 98-9.
10. Christopher Dawson, "Edward Gibbon," *Proceedings of the British Academy* 27 (1934), 159-80. The dangers of Jacobin France imposed an anxious detour on Gibbon's last journey home from Lausanne, in 1793.
11. William Durant, *The Story of Philosophy* (London, 1927; repr. New York, 1961), p. 116.
12. Alexander Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (Oxford, 1998), 1: 368-78.
13. The great historian of later medieval science, Annaliese Maier, has summarized the "Cliff" effect in her own field in words too appropriate to be ignored in this context: "Es handelt sich bei diesen Problemen [that is, concerning natural philosophy] um Forschungsaufgaben, die aus mancherlei Gründen nicht ohne weiteres zugänglich sind. Zunächst aus äusserlich: die in Betracht kommende Quellenliteratur ist fast ausschliesslich—wenn wir von einigen ganz Grossen, wie Albertus Magnus, Roger Bacon, Thomas von Aquin usw., absehen, deren Werke in modernen Ausgaben vorliegen—nur in Handschriften und bestenfalls in seltenen alten Druck erhalten, so dass es nur wenige Bibliotheken in der Welt gibt, die das erforderliche Material für derartige Arbeiten bieten. Andererseits lassen sich Manuscripte und Inkunablen nicht einfach lesen wie die Bücher der Folgezeit: zur Erschliessung ihres Inhalts ist in den meisten Fällen ein mühsames Entziffern erforderlich, das gründliche paläographische Kenntnisse und oft auch gute Augen voraussetzt. Und nicht geringer sind die inneren Schwierigkeiten dieses Forschungsgebiets. Das Material liegt nicht zusammenhängend und systematisch geordnet in bestimmten Literaturgattungen vor, wie es in den späteren Jahrhunderten in den einzelnen Wissenschaften üblich wurde, sondern es muss von überall her, oft aus den heterogensten Zusammenhängen heraus, gesucht werden." "Die Stellung der scholastischen Naturphilosophie in der Geschichte der Physik" in her collected *Ausgehendes Mittelalter*, 3 vols. (Rome, 1964), 1:415.
14. Sylvia Thrupp, ed., *Change in Medieval Society* (London, 1965).
15. Poeschke, in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 7:717.
16. Reflections inspired mainly by Wolfram von den Steinen, "Der Neubeginn," in *Karl der Grosse*, ed. Helmut Beumann, 5 vols. (Düsseldorf, 1965-8), 2:9-27; and Rosamund McKitterick, *The Frankish Church and the Carolingian Reforms* (London, 1977).
17. In vols. 6, 9 and 16 of Fliche's and Martin's *Histoire de l'Église* (Paris, 1924-37). The word had already been repeated in the less influential Joseph Brugerette, *Grégoire VII et la réforme du XIe siècle* (Paris, 1906).

- 18 It is absent from the index to Erich Caspar's edition of the Register. For the history of the word see Gerhart B. Ladner, *The Idea of Reform* (Cambridge, MA, 1959).
- 19 Brenda Bolton, *The Thirteenth-Century Reformation* (London, 1983).
- 20 Lynn White, Jr., *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford, 1962).
- 21 A.J. Gurevich, *Categories of Medieval Culture*, trans. G. L. Campbell (London, 1985).
- 22 Patrick Geary, *Phantoms of Remembrance* (Princeton, 1995).
- 23 Christopher Dawson, *The Making of Europe* (London, 1932); repr. Washington, DC, 2002.
- 24 Robert Bartlett, *The Making of Europe* (London, 1993).
- 25 "And since I am swept away on the great sea/and I have opened my sail fully to the wind: there is nothing in the world that does not change./Time itself slips away in constant movement./All things flow; change is implanted in things' very form." Ovid, *Metamorphoses* XV, 176-80.
- 26 Stephen E. Toulmin and June Goodfield, *The Discovery of Time* (London, 1965), esp. pp. 155-9: excellent on Hutton; nothing (of course) on Ovid.
- 27 Antoine Dondaine, "Guillaume Peyraut. Vie et oeuvres," *Archivum Fratrum Praedicatorum* 18 (1948), 189-97.
- 28 *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*, ed. Friedrich Stegmüller, 7 vols. (Matriti, 1940), 3: 3631-3784.
- 29 See the preface to the Quaracchi Fathers' edition: David ab Augusta, O.F.M., *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione secundum triplicem statum incipientium, proficientium et perfectorum libri tres, castigati et denuo editi a patribus Collegii s. Bonaventurae. Ad Claras Aquas (Quaracchi) ex typographia eiusdem collegii 1899*, p. xxii. In addition to the manuscripts there listed, a total of sixteen more were identified in the Cologne archive by Father Clément Schmitt, in *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum*, 79 (1986), 608. More recent discoveries can be traced through the indices of the same periodical, and through references in Domenico Pezzini, "La tradizione manoscritta inglese del *De exterioris et interioris hominis compositione* di David de Augusta," in *Editori de Quaracchi 100 anni dopo. Bilancio e prospettive*, ed. Alvaro Cacciotti and Barbara Faes de Mottoni (Rome, 1997), pp. 251-9.
- 30 Joseph Engels, "Berchoriana. Notice bibliographique sur Pierre Bersuire," *Vivarium* 2 (1964), 62-124, and 3 (1965), 128-49, referring to earlier "Berchorian" bibliography.
- 31 Roger Reynolds, "Guillaume Durand parmi les théologiens médiévaux de la liturgie," in *Guillaume Durand, Évêque de Mende (v. 1230-1296). Canoniste, liturgiste et homme politique. Actes de la Table Ronde du C.N.R.S., Mende*

- 24-7 mai 1990, ed. Pierre-Marie Gy (Paris, 1992), pp. 158-9.
- 32 Richard Vaughan, *Matthew Paris* (Cambridge, 1958), pp. 152-5.
- 33 The textual fortunes of the Golden Legend are chronicled, summarily for the Latin and thoroughly for the Germanic vernaculars, in the three volumes of Ulla Williams, Werner Williams-Krapp, and Konrad Kunze, in *Würzburger Forschungen. Texte und Textgeschichte*, vols. 3, 10, and 20 (Tübingen, 1980-6). The first volume (*Die Elsässische Legenda Aurea*, ed. U. Williams and W. Williams-Krapp), pp. xiii-xiv, gives a summary.
- 34 See note 29 above.
- 35 Dom Anselme Davril, “Les États successifs du texte du Rationale de G. D., et la préparation de l’édition critique,” in *Guillaume Durand*, p. 42.
- 36 It is true that parts of the *Chronica* are represented in eight manuscripts other than the autograph Cod. Vat. Lat. 7260, but none of these others dates from earlier than the late sixteenth century: Giuseppe Scalia, “Nota filologica,” in his edition of the *Chronica* for *Scrittori d’Italia* (Bari, 1966), 233:1004.
- 37 See note 30 above.
- 38 Stegmüller, as in note 28 above.
- 39 C. Nicholas J. Mann, “Petrarch and the Transmission of Classical Elements,” in *Classical Influences in European Culture A.D. 500-1500*, ed. Robert R. Bolgar (Cambridge, 1971), pp. 217-24.
- 40 See notes 31 and 35 above.
- 41 Robert F. Seybolt, “Fifteenth Century Editions of the *Legenda Aurea*,” *Speculum*, 21 (1946), 327-38; and “The *Legenda Aurea*, Bible, and *Historia scholastica*,” *ibid.*, 339-42.
- 42 Frances Yates, *Giordano Bruno and the Hermetic Tradition* (London, 1964), p. 197.
- 43 Contemporary inscriptions in the medieval books identify many of them as gifts or bequests from two knightly *alumni*, coming into the library (respectively) in the early 1600s and in 1634—the former perhaps after the owner’s execution. A shelflist of the old library at Saint John’s College, Oxford, is in preparation from the records on OLIS (Oxford Library Information Service). The list should be definitive and will be available in computerized form. Meanwhile some information is provided by John Fuggles, “A History of the Library of St. John’s College, Oxford from the Foundation of the College to 1660” (B. Litt. thesis, Oxford University, 1975), esp. Chapter 4: “Benefactions, 1595-1612,” and the same author’s “William Laud and the Library of St. John’s College, Oxford,” *The Book Collector* 30 (1981), 19-38.
- 44 E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (London, 1943).
- 45 C.S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image* (Cambridge, 1964).

- 46 Arthur Lovejoy, *The Great Chain of Being* (New York, 1936).
- 47 E.R. Curtius, *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* (London, 1953), p. 15.
- 48 W.H. Auden, *New Year Letter*, in *Collected Longer Poems* (London, 1968), p. 116.

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