

Medieval Academy of America

Allégories et symboles dans l'Hortus deliciarum by Gérard Cames

Review by: Eleanor Greenhill

Speculum, Vol. 48, No. 3 (Jul., 1973), pp. 553-557

Published by: [Medieval Academy of America](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2854456>

Accessed: 05/02/2014 09:19

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at
<http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



Medieval Academy of America is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Speculum*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

comes closer to the original source. Levison's suggestion (p. 288) of Higelac for the Ingalice in the title of the letter on ff. 23^v-24 also seems worth considering. In another appendix (VII) Levison deals with St Boniface and cryptography, but he does not appear to provide any new elements that throw further light on the riddles of the Vienna manuscript.

The present edition is sure to be of great use both to the historian and paleographer and it provides an ideal tool for introducing students to the delights and problems of medieval text studies.

PAUL MEYVAERT
 Cambridge, Massachusetts

GÉRARD CAMES, *Allégories et symboles dans l'Hortus deliciarum*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971. Pp. 153; 141 illustrations on 79 plates.

"LIKE a bee, I have, under the inspiration of God, composed this book, called *Hortus deliciarum*, out of the honey of many flowers drawn from Holy Scripture and works of philosophy," wrote Herrad of Landsberg, abbess of Mount Ste Odile in Alsace (1167-1195), in her introduction to that enormous illustrated florilegium of more than three hundred leaves, which, transferred after the dissolution of the monasteries to the Bibliothèque Municipale of Strasbourg, was destroyed in the bombardment of that city in 1870. But the *Hortus* was preserved in part at least by the efforts of the Comte Auguste de Bastarde d'Estaing, who borrowed the codex in 1831 to have copies of the paintings made, at the same time recording page by page the texts Herrad used or in some cases composed. Today in the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, Bastarde's notes remain scarcely touched, except by a few specialists, although the sketches made from the paintings were published with commentary by the canons Straub and Keller in an elephant folio at the turn of the century. But this rare and expensive work is accessible in few libraries, at least in this country. When, therefore, a new study of Herrad's masterpiece appears, promising as does that of Mr Cames, to re-establish the link between image and text, it is cause for rejoicing on the part of the medievalist. But Cames will discuss, as we are told in the introduction, only those images based on "conceptions allegoriques and mystiques," excluding "historical" ones illustrating the Old and New Testaments. The themes which interest him are well known and in many cases have been the subject of specialized studies: The Microcosm, the *schemata* of the Muses and the Liberal Arts, the *pêche au Leviathan*, the Tabernacle of Moses, the Ark of the Alliance, the Vision of Zacharias, the — so-called — Tree of Jesse, the symbolical Crucifixion with Ecclesia and Synagoga, the Coronation of Ecclesia by Christ, the Psychomachia, Solomon as a type of Christ, the Wheel of Fortune, the Heavenly Ladder, the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Mystical Winepress, Antichrist, the Last Judgment, the Elect in the bosom of Abraham, among others. But Herrad, who was composing a history of Salvation, from the fall of the rebel angels to the final triumph of Christ, the Church, and the individual soul, moved effortlessly between the modes, allegorical and historical. Thus Ecclesia is led to Christ by the Apostles and crowned by Him as the culmination of a series of scenes dealing with the life

of the Savior. One questions then whether she would have accepted Mr Cames' separation of images into two categories; his doing so only contributes further to the dismemberment of her work.

If, however, we agree to accept for the moment Mr Cames' rather arbitrary choice of images, the question is, has our understanding of them been deepened? Can we now, at least for them, accept his book as a substitute for Straub and Keller? It is the perverse habit of this reviewer to begin all books by examining their bibliography. That of Mr Cames, it must be said, reveals vis à vis specialized and current scholarship an equanimity rarely encountered. A Vienna dissertation by N. Meyer devoted to the *Hortus* and complete by 1966 appears to have remained totally unknown to him. For much of his knowledge, he relies on iconographical and theological handbooks and encyclopedias. Of the immense literature devoted to the Liberal Arts, Mr Cames cites two titles, the later one a summary treatment of less than a column in the *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche* (1957). While in recent years there has been a rash of studies on Martianus Capella, Mr Cames draws his information on that gentleman from Emile Mâle. Most dismal of all, however, are the errors of orthography and syntax contained in the bibliography (and repeated throughout the notes). The following list attempts to correct only the most obvious ones:

Allers, not Alles, was the author of an article on the Microcosm published in *Traditio*, II.

Lexicon in German is spelled with a *k*.

Peter Bloch contributed to a catalogue called *Nachwirkungen des alten Bundes* (not *Bandes*) . . .

Bloch's study of the seven-branched candlestick appeared in the *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch* (not *Walfrat-Richartz*).

F. Deuchler, not Deutschler, is the author of the monograph on the Ingebourg Psalter. Endres wrote on the Jakobsportal at Regensburg (not *Jacobsportal*).

Goldschmidt's study of early medieval illustrated encyclopedias was published by the Bibliothek Warburg (not *Wartburg*).

Nagel's publication was on Hrotsvit (not *Hroswit*) von Gandersheim.

F. Piper wrote a book entitled *Die Kalendarien und Martyrologien* (not *Martyrologium der Angelsachsen*) . . .

Sauer's book, *Symbolik des Kirchengebäudes*, was published in Freiburg im Breisgau or Fribourg en Brisgau, but not *Fribourg am Brisgau*.

Schnitzler contributed an article to the *Kunstgeschichtliche Studien für* (not *zum*) *Hans* (not *Hanns*) *Kauffmann*, which appeared in 1956 (not 1951).

Arabic and Roman numerals indicating centuries (or anything else) are, in German, followed by a period, standing for the abbreviation of an adjective (cf. Steinberg, Wilpert).

Volbach's book was entitled *Frühchristliche Kunst. Die Kunst der Spätantike in West- und Ostrom*.

Weitzmann's article in the *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, xx, was entitled "Icon Painting in the Crusader (not *Crusades*) Kingdom."

Wilpert's book was entitled *Die römischen Mosaiken und Malereien der kirchlichen Bauten vom* (not *von*) *IV. bis XIII. Jahrhundert*.

Zellinger's article was entitled *Der* (not *Das*) *gekoederte Leviathan* . . .

While it may appear ungrateful to upbraid a Frenchman for these flaws in English and German, correct usage does not seem too much to ask of a book

which bears the imprimature of the University of Strasbourg and of the Centre National français de la Recherche Scientifique as well. Mistakes of a similar nature occur in the text. P. 52, *sine macula et riga* should be corrected to *sine macula et ruga* (after Ephes. v 27). The illustrated treatise *Laudes* (or *De Laudibus*) *Crucis* found in codex latinus monacensis 14159 is not identical with that by Rhabanus Maurus, but is an anonymous work written at Prüfening in the third quarter of the 12th century. And the medieval author mentioned p. 138 is Gerhoh (not Geroh) von Reichersberg.

It is the unpleasant task of the reviewer, then, to report negatively on a work obviously written out of love for the *Hortus* and a laudable desire to rejoin text and image, but it is not always easy to tell for what audience this book was written. The specialist, at least, will find the author's knowledge of the monuments and literature too limited, his method of attack inconsistent. In an iconographical investigation printed in 1971, one is astonished to find only a single reference to *anything* published by the Warburg Institute since its removal to London in the thirties. And why is the reader referred to the excellent but popularizing study of Carolingian art by Porcher, Hubert, and Volbach in connection with the *Psychomachia*, cod. 264 of the Burgerbibliothek, Berne, and not to Homburger's catalogue? One misses as well any reference to Rosalie Green's study of the *Hortus* Genesis cycle or to her publication of the Flabellum of Hohenbourg, the latter a product of the *Hortuskreis*, concerning which Cames has otherwise a good deal to say.

Moreover, Cames' effort to redate the three leaves of a *Skizzenbuch* preserved in Freiburg im Breisgau cannot be regarded as successful. Agreed by all to be closely related to the *Hortus* in content, style, and date, the fragment contains a sequence to the Virgin by Adam of St Victor, which provides Cames with his sole evidence for redating the lost codex to which the leaves once belonged to c. 1150. But Adam of St Victor, although his dates are not precisely known, lived well into the second half of the twelfth century, dying as late as 1195 according to some authorities. He can scarcely have more than begun his career as hymn writer in Paris by 1150. His dates, then, as well as the Byzantinizing style of the two drawings, which presuppose the mosaics of Monreale, make it impossible to accept Cames' argument.

In his discussion of the individual miniatures, Cames frequently fails altogether even to mention the most obvious visual elements, again and again neglecting to transcribe inscriptions on the miniatures and giving only snatches of the unpublished text. And the reader, unless he is armed with magnifying glass and much patience, will not be able to decipher the inscriptions for himself. As a case in point, we may refer to Cames' discussion of the *schema* of the Liberal Arts. One awaits an immediate allusion to the central medallion, where the enthroned and crowned matron *Philosophia* holds sway, seven streams issuing from her breast, inscriptions to her right and left. But we are told nothing of all this. Cames begins: "Au-dessous de la *Philosophia* . . . on remarque quatre personnages assis . . .," referring to the four pagan poets and writers, at the bottom of the miniature, totally outside the charmed circle of the Liberal Arts. Although he returns later

to the figure of Philosophia, it is only to remark upon the three sub-divisions Ethica, Logica, Physica, which adorn her crown, never alluding to the curious feature of the streams nor providing the reader with the inscriptions which might elucidate their meaning. That to the right of Philosophia goes as follows, "Septem fontes sapientiae fluunt de philosophia quae dicunt liberales artes." The implied identification of Philosophia and Sapientia Comes does not find worthy of comment, nor the obvious identification of the Liberal Arts with streams. The reader is, therefore, left mystified unless he happens to know Mlle d'Alverny's fundamental study of the identification of Philosophy and Sapientia in Christian tradition (Melanges F. Grat, I, 1946), nor does Comes help the reader by a footnote, although he knows this article. It is there that one finds the explanation of the figure of Philosophia-Sapientia: a tradition going back to John Scot Erigena compared the sciences, natural and liberal, to streams converging in the single figure of Christ-Sapientia. While Herrad's miniature, then, shows a knowledge of the tradition based upon Martianus Capella personifying the arts as young ladies, it also is based upon the tradition studied by Mlle D'Alverny, whose discussion of Herrad's miniature and its place in Christian tradition is then still definitive. (Though now it should be supplemented by Michael Evans' London dissertation of 1970 on the Liberal Arts.)

Toward the end of his discussion Comes does assert the identity of Philosophy and Sapientia but in a curious roundabout way, which the reader finds difficult to follow. The schema of the Liberal Arts, he believes, represents a *domus sapientiae*, with seven columns (after Proverbs ix 1). Cited to support this view are two quotations from the *Hortus*, one from f. 171^v, the other from f. 168^v (the Liberal Arts are on fol. 32^v). Having made these assertions, Comes goes further to identify Philosophy with "la Reine-Eglise de la Jerusalem Celeste," depicted on fol. 225^v, and with the Bride of the Song of Songs as well. If he is correct in this view, Philosophia is the *Bride* of Wisdom, not Wisdom, the Second Person of the Trinity. Can we accept this interpretation? Not, I submit, in view of the inscriptions on the face of the miniature (and there is another, also unmentioned by Comes, on a scroll held by Philosophia, stating "Omnis sapientia a domino deo est . . .") and the ancient Christian tradition equating Philosophia-Sapientia — Christ. The depiction of a crowned female figure identical with Christ-Sapientia should surprise no student of medieval allegory and symbolism. Comes, who believes that the miniature is permeated with the bridal symbolism of the Song of Songs, may be right, but the bride here is he who drinks of the streams of the Liberal Arts, which lead to union with Wisdom, not the figure of Philosophia-Sapientia herself. Many of the other discussions are more acceptable than this one — that dealing with the Tabernacle of Moses, for example, or that devoted to the Vision of Zacharias. The analyses of the *pêche au Leviathan*, however, and the so-called Tree of Jesse suffer from a similar inattention to visual and textual evidence, while those devoted to Solomon and Sheba and Ecclesia and Synagoga lean heavily on the pioneering studies of A. Weis on the sculptural programs at Strasbourg-south. In sum it must be said that all of these images will have to be re-examined in the light of their context when in a year or so the eagerly awaited reconstitution of the *Hortus* appears under the auspices of the Warburg Institute.

Now being prepared by Rosalie Green (Index of Christian Art, Princeton), Christine Bischoff (Strasbourg), and Michael Evans (London), its aim is to reconstruct the Hortus "page by page, with text and pictures in proper relationship" (letter from Miss Green). Only with that edition in hand will the scholar have the evidence necessary to the correct interpretation of one of the major masterpieces of that golden age 'autour du douze cent.'

ELEANOR GREENHILL
University of Texas, Austin

ALAN B. COBBAN, *The King's Hall within the University of Cambridge in the Later Middle Ages*. (Cambridge Studies in Medieval Life and Thought, Third series, 1.) Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press, 1969. Pp. xvi, 355; 26 tables, appendix, 7 plates. \$11.50.

IN 1317 Edward II sent twelve boys from the household chapel to be educated at Cambridge and to be supported by issues from the exchequer. This act probably marked the founding of the Society of King's Scholars which became the King's Hall in 1337 when Edward III moved them from their rented quarters to a house of their own. Basing his study to a large extent on the twenty-six volumes of accounts of the King's Hall which have never been systematically explored, Mr Cobban has carried the story of the second oldest Cambridge college to 1546 when Henry VIII dissolved it and the neighboring medieval hall of Michaelhouse, and established Trinity College in their place. In the course of his investigation, he has made several discoveries concerning the significance of the King's Hall within the medieval English college system.

Most medieval colleges were small houses with limited financial means, and they usually supported fewer graduate scholars than is generally assumed. While the statutes of the eight Cambridge colleges in the fourteenth century provided for a total of 137 fellowships, rarely more than eighty of these were filled. At Oxford the six secular colleges, before New College was founded in 1379, provided for about sixty-three fellows. The college system accommodated a very small number of students, considering the mass of undergraduates and graduates at both schools in the fourteenth century. Within this system, the King's Hall with its thirty-two fellowships was the largest at Cambridge; it and Merton were the two largest in England before New College.

A generally accepted argument has held that until William de Wykeham established New College, all English colleges partook of the Mertonian character in being predominantly graduate societies. There may have been a few undergraduates at Merton, and two each were permitted in Balliol and Exeter. But only with the appearance of New College did a primarily undergraduate college come into existence. Mr Cobban demonstrates convincingly that this was not the case, and that the King's Hall was originally completely undergraduate. Later, graduate students were added, and by 1350 that college was a mixed society of the type that became the standard form of English college organization in the sixteenth century. The author believes that Wykeham himself may have been inspired by the King's Hall when he created New College, even to the extent of using Winchester College as a preparatory grammar school for New College in the way that the royal chapel produced boys trained in grammar to begin the A.B. curriculum in the King's Hall.