

ABSTRACT

ELLIOTT, SERENA NOELLE. *The Twelfth Century Renaissance and the Religion of Intent: Interiority and the Emergence of Selfhood Across Religious Boundaries*. (Under the direction of Dr. Julie Mell).

This thesis explores the emergence of faith statements in both Jewish and Christian culture in the long twelfth century (c. 1050-1200). Such faith statements, found in both cultures in Late Antiquity, emerged during the high middle ages with a new emphasis on the definition of right belief, as opposed to right practice; stressing the relationship of the individual with God, as opposed to intercession. These statements of faith are expressed in three cultural forms: the defining of right belief through textualization, the intent to self-sacrifice, and the confessionalization of twelfth-century discourse. Examples of these three cultural forms in both Jewish and Christian culture will be analyzed in the three central chapters of the thesis.

Chapter one will focus on the language of right belief expressed in both Christian scholasticism and Judaism. Following the revival of Aristotle, and the imperative of competing religions, this century saw a particular rise in the defining of orthodoxy, illustrated by Moses Maimonides, Christian scholastics and the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council. Chapter two will focus on the intent to self-sacrifice: martyrdom in the Kiddush HaShem of 1096, and the heresy of the Christians in Cologne in 1144. In the martyrdoms of both Jews and Christians is a language of intention out of which selfhood emerges. Chapter three will focus on this language of intent, through Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum*, as well as the Jewish *Sefer Hasidim*. Looking at the similarities and differences of both exempla, a shared culture of intention emerges, in which the ecstatic love of God permeates religious boundaries. All three statements of

faith require the ecstatic love that Roland Barthes has identified as *jouissance*.¹ Barthes has argued that the term *jouissance* indicates a unique space that is situated between pleasure and despair; a place where I would argue the actual events described in the examined statements of faith take place, making the move from pleasure in God, towards a crisis of ecstasy in which traditional forms explode, and the individual, unmediated relationship with God takes primacy, out of which selfhood emerges.

A deeper understanding of faith-statements in twelfth-century culture has significance for three debates. First, Colin Morris and Caroline Bynum, debated whether or not "the individual" emerged within the new religiosity of the twelfth century. Morris had argued for the emergence of a modern, Western, notion of the individual in which *humanitas* once again became a positive term. Bynum later argued for a more complex view of twelfth-century society, claiming that the corporate group had been just as strongly emphasized by the definitions of orthodoxy and that the attempt to advance oneself toward God was a movement of interiority that argued for a discovery of self. I believe that it is imperative to look beyond either of these definitions, and utilizing Bynum's notion of interiority, I would argue that the *intentio* of the twelfth century is the most critical aspect of these emergent statements of faith, in which a modern sense of "self" does in fact become imminent.

Secondly, Max Weber has argued that all religions must make the transition from ecstatic right belief to the maintenance of right practice in order to remain viable. While I agree that religions make this movement from orthodoxy to orthopraxy, I see it rather as ebb and flow throughout history. While the statement of faith had been of importance in

¹ Roland Barthes, *Le Plaisir du texte*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: MacMillan, 1975). Barthes takes Jacques Lacan's theories of *jouissance* and applies them to textual analysis.

Late Antiquity, it waned in the Early Middle Ages, and again becomes critical in the twelfth century. Throughout these structural similarities, new trends surface, and I would argue that a sense of selfhood emerges in this particular period.

Third, faith statements have significance for discussions of shared culture. Much of the current historiography of a shared culture between Jews and Christians is focused on political and social similarities. I am engaged in mapping out a shared religious culture, which would ignite fears of competition – between differing cultures, as well as between individuals and communities.

The Twelfth Century Renaissance and the Religion of Intent: Interiority and the
Emergence of Selfhood Across Religious Boundaries

by
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I have shouted to God and the Virgin, but they have not shouted back and I'm not interested in the still small voice. Surely a god can meet passion with passion?

She says he can.

Then he should. – Jeanette Winterson, *The Passion*.²

² Jeanette Winterson, *The Passion* (New York: Grove Press, 1997).

INTRODUCTION

In the third decade of the twelfth century, the master of the school at the Abbey of St. Victor set down a lengthy treatise *On The Sacraments of the Christian Faith*. Hugh was born in 1096, most likely at the manor of Hartingham in Saxony, and at the urging of his uncle, Reinhard, then Bishop of Halberstadt, traveled in 1115 to the monastery of St. Victor, located just outside of Paris, where he spent the remainder of his life engaged in study, teaching, and writing. A product of an increased emphasis in Europe on education, Hugh was an ardent admirer of Augustine, as well as a proponent of the utilization of philosophy and rational in bringing the theologian closer to God. Hugh's work betrays a concern with a new type of world, in which right practice no longer was enough; but the reasons behind right practice, right belief, were of critical interest to all believers. When asked the question, "What is God?" Hugh writes that "God is unthinkable. Whatever is said or is thought, is according to something. For what cannot be said or thought according to something cannot be said and thought at all."³ God is unable to be thought of, because he is unimaginable and all encompassing. The omnipotence of God however is not necessarily a new idea, but the manner in which faith is discussed betrays a new

³ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, trans. Roy Deferrari, (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1951), p. 166. "Ergo Deus credi potest, comprehendi omnino non potest. Dicis mihi: Quid dicam? Quid est Deus? Ego tibi respondeo quod indicibile omnino est quid est Deus. Saltem, inquis, quid cogitabo quando cogitare volo quid est Deus? Amplius dico quia incogitabilis est Deus. Quidquid dicitur vel cogitatur, secundum aliquid dicitur vel secundum aliquid cogitatur. Quod enim secundum aliquid dici vel cogitari non potest, dici omnino et cogitari non potest."

concern with the nature of the believer, in which “faith is a kind of certainty of the mind in things absent, established beyond opinion and short of knowledge.”⁴

Writing about the nature of those who have faith, Hugh lays out the four types of believers. He begins with the first three, writing that

Certain men are faithful who elect to believe by piety alone what, however, they do not comprehend by reason – whether it ought to be believed or ought not to be believed. Others approve by reason what they believe by faith. Others by purity of heart and by pure conscience within already begin to sense what they believe by faith. Among the first piety alone makes the choice, among the second reason joins approbation, among the third purity of intelligence apprehends certainty.⁵

The third of these believers, the man who can *know* that faith is unknowable, is the man who has promoted his faith to the highest state of perfection. He is a man who must “direct faith itself through *intention*.”⁶ It is this question of intention with which my project is ultimately concerned, tracing what I would call selfhood through this language of faith, defined by intention.

The search for a modern sense of self has plagued historians, sociologists, anthropologists – all scholars interested in humanity – it is a search for origins; for identity. Yet, this very term, the *self*, is so tricky, and difficult to identify as to make

⁴ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, trans. Roy Deferrari, p. 168. “*Fidem esse certitudinem quamdam animi de rebus absentibus, supra opinionem et infra scientiam constitutam.*”

⁵ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, trans. Roy Deferrari, p. 170. “*Quidam enim . fideles sunt qui sola pietate credere eligunt, quod tamen utrum sit credendum an non credendum sit ratione non comprehendunt. Alii ratione approbant quod fide credunt. Alii puritate cordis et munda conscientia interius jam gustare incipiunt quod fide credunt. In primis, sola pietas facit electionem: in secundis, ratio adjungit approbationem; in tertiis, puritas intelligentiae apprehendit certitudinem.*”

⁶ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis* in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 176, col. 0332A. “*Ipsam fidem per intentionem dirigit.*” Translation mine.

scholarship of it nearly impossible. Jerrold Seigel, a historian who has argued that a modern sense of self emerged out of the French Revolution, has noted that

Few ideas are both as weighty and as slippery as the notion of the self...the nature and meaning of the self are subject to constant redefinition, as it is ever-again taken up on behalf of some partisan aim or project. And yet, the question does not lose its force from being appropriated in these ways. Faced with outdated, self-interested, malign or inadequate answers to it, people have over and over responded with a desire for better ones if only to counter the effects of those that will not do.⁷

This need for both a definition of the *self*, as well as the search for what *self* might contain, are two markers that seem to define the modern age for most historians, anthropologists and sociologists. As Seigel remarks, historians are certainly among those who have taken up this concept of the self on behalf of a variety of aims and projects.⁸

Yet historians have often narrowed the question of selfhood to one of the emergence of individualism. The individual, as distinct from the corporate group seems to hold particular interest for the historian, who attempts to see in this distinction an entity that can exist outside of the polis. Yet, philosophers and anthropologists have dismissed this attempt to see the individual in a vacuum. Charles Taylor has argued, in an appeal to Aristotle, that human beings are not self-sufficient outside society; agency can only be achieved and identity defined only through the subjugation of oneself to a

⁷ Jerrold Seigel, *The Idea of the Self: Thought and Experience in Western Europe since the Seventeenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Printing Press, 2005), 3. Although Seigel is arguing for the emergence of selfhood from the seventeenth century, I would argue that this is much more pertinent to a medieval emergence of self.

⁸ John Bossy, in an echo of Jacob Burckhardt, has argued that a modern individual emerged out of the Reformation.⁸ John Bossy, *Christianity in the West: 1400 – 1700*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985.

shared culture.⁹ Yet this type of engagement theory renders the individual with very little of the internal *intention* that Hugh of St. Victor noted characterizes the man of faith. Katherine Little, a literary theorist, successfully negotiates the conflict between the individual agent and the pressures of the corporate group in *Confession and Resistance: Defining the Self in Late Medieval England*¹⁰ when she argues that the term

Self-definition...responds to both of the concerns with subjectivity...the variability of discourse for speaking about and shaping the self and the possibility of choice and resistance...this term is, therefore, more inclusive in that it allows for definitions one is forced to accept as well as those that one chooses. After all, one can be defined by force as a heretic, a married man, or a sinner, just as one can be 'individualized by power'...In other words, *self-definition* recovers...that being a self is a constant negotiation between the historical forces that shape the self and the choices that one makes.¹¹

I would argue that the space negotiated between historical forces and the internal choice is where statements of faith take place. A statement of faith is any discourse by which an agent demonstrates his or her commitment to the infinite, to the absolute. I agree with Kierkegaard, who argued in *Fear and Trembling* that "faith is the highest passion in a human being."¹² Kierkegaard's hero, the "Knight of Faith," is able to move past reason and rationality, and unite "piety," "reason," and "truth;" just as Hugh of St. Victor's man

⁹ Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989). I would argue that Taylor is correct in noting that a shared culture creates the necessity of a definition of identity; certainly the need to define oneself against the *other* is critical in looking at Jewish and Christian cultures in the Middle Ages.

¹⁰ Katherine Little, *Confession and Resistance: Defining the Self in late Medieval England*, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. Note that Little is concerned with Lollards and Wycliffe, which occurs well after the twelfth century, which is my own area of concern. Nevertheless, this application of textual analysis that does not shy away from issues of interiority appears to me critical of pushing twelfth century historiography into new frontiers. Also, see Allan Frantzen, *The Literature of Penance in Anglo-Saxon England*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

¹¹ Little, p. 12.

¹² Soren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, (New York: Penguin Classics, 1986), p. 146.

of perfect faith does. In doing so, the Knight of Faith makes the movement of selfhood, negotiating the internal agency and historical context.

The Discovery of the Individual: Colin Morris

I have already suggested that the search for self and origins is of critical importance to the historian, but has long been equated with the emergence of the individual.¹³ While many historians have often seen the emergence of individualism as an indicator of modernity, this has also become a debate amongst historians of the middle ages, particularly during the time period known as the “long twelfth century,” from approximately 1050-1200. What has commonly become known as the twelfth century renaissance,¹⁴ a time of increased urbanization and prosperity in Europe with a renewed

¹³ Historians’ increased reliance on anthropology, (and the particular influence of social anthropology on historical analysis) has also risked much in this direction: usage of the concept of a corporate group (*Gemeinschaft* or *communitas*) risks giving coordination to what might be inconsistent rites and beliefs.¹³ Scholarship that sees historical evidence as an attempt to resolve social conflict often degenerates into a search for origins, see Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, trans. J.W. Swain (New York, 1915).

¹⁴ The twelfth century has attracted a wealth of scholarship that illuminates an anxiety of the time period. Historians utilize the words like *persecution*, *reformation*, and *renaissance* in order to describe the changes that took place in medieval society during this definitive century. From Charles Haskins argument that the twelfth century was a revival of classical learning (*The Twelfth Century Renaissance*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927), to Giles Constable, who argues for a reformation in the twelfth century (*The Reformation of the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Gavin Langmuir who defines this century as the critical fulcrum for the change in Jewish and Christian relations (*History, Religion and Antisemitism*, Berkeley: UC Press, 1990; and, *Towards a Definition of Antisemitism*, Berkeley: UC Press, 1990); and R.I. Moore’s argument that the literati, the new class of educated administrators, initiated persecution in order to consolidate their own social standing (*The Formation of a Persecuting Society. Power and Deviance in Western Europe, 950-1250*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1987), we are constantly left with a tension that manifests itself throughout the time period. Looking at the amount of change that we can see at all levels of society in the time period, this tension doesn’t necessarily seem uncalled for. The continued rise of monastic orders allowed for a greater dispersal of education, and the thirteenth century rise of the mendicant orders allowed for a diffusion of evangelization in an attempt to capture the hearts and minds of the individual. Urbanization was on the upswing, creating an increased tension between disparate groups in the growing towns, and we see in the twelfth century the beginnings of a shift in power, and the friction implicit in the relationships between local and higher

emphasis on scholarship assisted in part by the continued rise of the monastic orders, was already well established in the community of medieval scholarship by the time Colin Morris argued that a modern concept of individualism actually emerged in the twelfth century in *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050-1200*.¹⁵ Morris' definition of the "individual," one with a renewed interest in *humanitas*, owed much to the work of R.W. Southern who had previously claimed that the twelfth century was a distinctive age of

authorities. These relationships are mirrored in the ecclesiastical realm as well, with clerical reforms that ultimately culminate in the Fourth Lateran council. In the wake of the Investiture Controversy, the power of the state was growing exponentially, and the rise of orthodoxy seems to be directly linked to the rise of political power. Within the monastic orders, education was on the rise, and was even being opened to the populace through the rising cathedral schools that ultimately became the universities of the thirteenth century. These schools embodied the rise in learning; the increasing emphasis on classical education, with an incredible resurgence of Aristotle – through the influence of both the Carolingian court, and Islamic conquerors in the west, the transmission of new texts was unparalleled, as Christianity struggled to grapple with the larger academic non-Christian world. What is particularly interesting is that within a short span of a century, we see Aristotle being reconciled with Islam (Ibn Rushd), Judaism (Maimonides), and Christianity (Peter Abelard and Aquinas). This rush to claim the older scholarship of the Greeks and Romans, led to the resurgence of the liberal arts, of the language of logic, and ultimately, to a new way of thinking about the relationship of self to the larger body of religion and a monotheistic deity.

¹⁵ Colin Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual: 1050 – 1200*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press in association with the Medieval Academy Reprints for Teaching, Reprinted 1987). Original publication occurred in 1972. Morris accepted that the preoccupation with individuality was for western culture "a matter of common sense that we stand apart from the natural order in which we are set, subjects over against its objectivity, and that we have our own distinct personality, beliefs, and attitude to life." Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 1. Charles Haskins first utilized the term "twelfth century renaissance" in 1927. He argued that the twelfth century saw the rise of towns, the revival of Latin and literature, the recovery of science and philosophy, and was particularly influential in areas of education, scholasticism, law, architecture, sculpture, drama, Latin, and poetry. Charles Haskins, *The Twelfth Century Renaissance*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1927). By the time Morris published *The Discovery of the Individual* in 1972, great attention had already been paid to scholarship on the twelfth century and reclaiming this period of the Middle Ages as a time of *renewatio*. Ultimately, with the Castellan revolution and the rise of lordship, spiritual and profit economies, mass urbanization, the peace movement, the Schism with the Eastern Church of 1054, and what Kathleen Cushing has called the crowd as a force in Western Society, (Kathleen Cushing, *Reform and the Papacy in the Eleventh Century: Spirituality and Social Change*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005)), a *societas Christianus* emerged that many historians have argued created the first attempts at a "European" identity. In the thirteenth century, the eleventh and twelfth century issues of *renewatio* and *reparatio* came to fruition when, in 1215, the Fourth Lateran Council defined doctrines of the Trinity, of the universal (*catholic*) church, that God created the devil, the ability to achieve salvation while living in the world, the incarnation, transubstantiation, and explicitly mandated auricular confession. These doctrines were ultimately the product of the debates between ecclesiastical and scholastic authorities, and what Morris has argued is the preoccupation with self-examination.

humanism, debunking contemporary scholarship that claimed humanism was driven out by scholasticism only to reemerge in the fifteenth century.¹⁶ Morris agreed with Southern in *The Discovery of the Individual* that this is a gross oversimplification, arguing that

If our main interest is in the role of the individual citizen within the political community, we shall certainly not find that this was a major achievement of the twelfth century. If we concentrate more on the development of self-awareness and self-expression on the freedom of a man to declare himself without paying excessive attention to the demands of convention or the dictates of authority, then we may well find that the twelfth century was in this respect a peculiarly creative age.¹⁷

For Morris, the problem is not about the individual in the state,¹⁸ rather, he rests his entire argument on the self-awareness and self-expression he finds in twelfth-century literature, scholastic argument, and even art; maintaining that men of the past were concerned with their perception of antiquity, to which they looked for guidance.¹⁹ He argues that

Above all they turned to Christianity and to the classical past for guidance. It is at once obvious that the Western view of the value of the individual owes a great deal to Christianity. A sense of individual identity and value is implicit in belief in a God who has called each man by name...Self awareness and a serious concern with inner character is encouraged by the conviction that the believer must lay himself open to God, and be remade by the Holy Spirit. From the beginning, Christianity showed itself to be an “interior” religion.²⁰

¹⁶ R.W. Southern, “Medieval Humanism,” in *Medieval Humanism and Other Studies*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970, p. 29-60.

¹⁷ Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 7. Interestingly, while Morris agreed with Southern, his definitions of humanism owed a great deal to the monastic scholar David Knowles and R.R. Bulgar, a literary critic, who wrote that in the twelfth century we see “for the first time the lineaments of modern man,”¹⁷ R.R. Bulgar, *The Classical Heritage and its Beneficiaries*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, p. 188). Both scholars however, were of the type that Southern had argued against, claiming that scholasticism had expelled humanism until it resurfaced in the Italian Renaissance.

¹⁸ Work that he notes had already been done by Walter Ullmann, who ultimately placed the emergence of the individual in the fifteenth century Renaissance, while acknowledging the importance of medieval thought. Walter Ullmann, *The Individual in Medieval Society*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1966.

¹⁹ This is something that historians seem to rely heavily on. Scholars of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and even nationalism have argued that preoccupations with antiquity were a driving force.

²⁰ Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 10-11.

Morris contends that a unique combination of Christianity, classicism and Germanic roots contain many of the foundations for European conceptions of the individual. Both Christianity and classicism assigned a high value to the individual – stressing the virtue of self-knowledge, while the loyalties of Germanic society were personal, as opposed to institutional, laying the grounds for an interest in the individual and his relationships with others.

Morris confirms that the twelfth century emerged from a quick rise in urbanization that had as both cause and effect an increase in the emphasis placed on formal learning. He also notes that a changing aristocracy placed new emphasis on not only society, but also culture. Patronage was not limited to monasteries and abbeys, but also encouraged scholastic learning.²¹ In this society, “disturbed by the rapid emergence of a whole series of new groups or classes, all of them requiring an ideal on which to model themselves and an ethic to guide them,”²² clashes of values would have emerged, which gave the twelfth-century individual choices “unimaginable” even one hundred years earlier.²³

²¹ I would argue that the two are quite similar. While perhaps *individual* scholasticism outside of the monastery may be unique to patronage at this time, Carolingian monastic patronage undoubtedly funded one of the sole sources of education and the preservation of culture.

²² Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 47.

²³ Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 121. I would say reservedly that this might perhaps be the case, although Duby has argued much more persuasively that the classes of those “who work, those who pray, and those who fight” emerged much earlier out of the crisis of feudalism, although this is a paradigm that I feel has been relied on far too heavily by subsequent historians. Georges Duby, *The Three Orders: Feudal Society Imagined*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer, (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982). Regardless, Morris is severely limited here in not discussing heresy, which necessitates the defining of an “other.” I would argue that faith statements represent this anxiety most clearly and serves as what I consider more substantial evidence of the shift that Morris is noting.

Morris is careful to note that while humanism and the individual were closely connected, they are nevertheless distinctive. Humanism comprises two types of definitions: first, the technical scholasticism that is illustrated by facility with Latin, which allowed for the verbalization/ expression of a more sophisticated discourse. Not only was the twelfth century a time of Latin revival, but also the establishment of the vernacular languages for literary (and even ecclesiastical) expression. As pertinent, if not more so, to Morris' argument is his second definition of humanism: "it expresses a sympathy with, and delight in, mankind."²⁴ Such a delight in man was addressed specifically in theological discourse, in which the *Vita Apostolica* was once again revived. Poetry too concerned itself with the personal, in which the poet attempted to express a common human experience, which Morris asserts was something new in Latin verse.²⁵ The possibilities of man, as well as the extent to which man was the embodiment of sin and misery, show a profound concern with the nature of man and, subsequently, the individual.²⁶ Morris himself observes that the term "individual" did not have the same

²⁴ Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 9. Morris goes on to note that the word *humanitas* had been used from the seventh century as a pejorative term, which then recovered its "former dignity" in the twelfth.

²⁵ Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 69.

²⁶ Morris utilizes the rhetoric of self-knowledge, noting the theme of "know-thyself" running through ecclesiastical literature, as well as scholastic debate, and the troubadour literature and poetry of the age, acknowledging that much of this was owed to the revival of Augustine. Twelfth-century reformers like Peter Damian and the Bernard of Clairvaux argued that the path to God was through knowledge of oneself, something that Morris claims was prompted by an overwhelming interest in psychology across all strata of society. Here he gives as evidence the self-questioning in everything from the liturgical expositions of Anselm of Canterbury to the troubadour stories of Chretien de Troyes. Morris shows that the autobiography was a development of self-exploration, noting that the *Confessions* of Augustine had no successor for several centuries, until the late eleventh century and the twelfth. In addition to the works of Suger, abbot of Saint-Denis (1122-51), and Aelred, abbot of Rievaulx (1146-66), letter collections in which the individual detailed personal experiences gained popularity. In art, Morris claims that portraits began to take on more and more personal details after the first millennium, arguing "the twelfth century saw a distinct shift in the visual arts towards sensitivity to nature, and a more characteristically modern way of

connotations in the twelfth century that it does today. He argues that the nearest equivalent were terms of logic: “*individuum*, *individualis*, and *singularis*” which for Morris suggests a preoccupation of the place of man.

From Individual to Self: Caroline Bynum

The reaction to Morris’ publication was immense. Still utilized as a keystone for scholarship on the twelfth century, it inspired an incredible amount of research in the late 1970’s, as well as the early 1980’s. Peter Brown took up the question of the individual and expanded this to a question of the public and private, arguing that the twelfth century illustrated a private and individualistic piety that operated independently of ecclesiastical hierarchy,²⁷ while John Benton denied the phrase “discovery of the individual,” yet

seeing the human form,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 90). Morris traces this shift into personal relationships, arguing that self-awareness was accompanied by an intense interest in love and friendship. Here Morris utilizes the examples of the letters of Bernard of Clairvaux, Anselm of Canterbury, Peter the Venerable, and many others, to illustrate the preoccupation with friendship, and yet, as already mentioned, almost fit into the category of the autobiography. He suggests that for the twelfth century “fathers” of the Church, friendship was the highest aspiration of earthly relationship, given the increased emphasis on celibacy; although friendship could be expressed as passionately as the troubadour love, which, for Morris, expressed a new cultural pattern. Morris proposes that the longing with which sexual love was expressed in the twelfth century, indicates an “uncertainty about the nature and identity of the individual self,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 120). This argument seems a bit forced to me; Morris himself acknowledges that troubadour poetry is not his focus, given the amount of scholarship it had already inspired. His inclusion seems almost out of a feeling of necessity given the very fact that such a large volume of work exists on the subject. Other forms of literature suggest a surfacing of individualism to Morris; satire, reborn in the twelfth century, gave men the ability to express themselves as outsiders, “men who have lost hope in cause of reform and confidence in their own prospects,”²⁶ (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 126.). Chretien de Troyes, an entirely different sort of poet, was, Morris argues, ultimately concerned with questions of individual behavior, and of the character that lay behind it. I would argue that the issue of an emerging selfhood seems intimately bound up in the practice of orthodoxy and this definition of oneself through the other, by adoption of right practice, i.e. orthopraxy.

²⁷ Peter Brown, “Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change,” in *Society and the Holy Man in Late Antiquity*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 302-332.

argued for a twelfth century consciousness.²⁸ Engagement with the work reached its apex however with Caroline Bynum's article in the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, asking "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?"²⁹

Bynum objected to scholarship on the twelfth century that had become focused on the emergence of an individual in the twelfth century. She argued that while several historians were concerned with "capacity of the individual for achievement,"³⁰ such a focus implied the loss of community – both community support and community control.³¹ She argued that attempting to place the individual in the center of religiosity of the twelfth century did not do justice to a notion of corporate identity that she argued still exists in the twelfth century. Bynum maintained that modern notions of selfhood misled scholarship into thinking that the quest of looking inward meant the development of a sense of self. Rather, she argued that it more likely illustrated a sense of turning towards a corporate identity, which would have acted as a model for both "salvation and evangelism."³²

Bynum contended that the twelfth century did not emphasize individualism over corporate awareness, but

²⁸ John Benton, "Individualism and Conformity in Medieval western Europe," in *Individualism and Conformity in Classical Islam*, ed. A. Banani and S. Vryonis, Jr. Wiesbaden: Undena Publications, 1977, p. 145-58.

²⁹ Caroline Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?," in *Jesus as Mother*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), p. 83-109, was originally printed in the *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*.

³⁰ She notes R.W. Southern, John Benton, and most specifically Colin Morris, Bynum, "Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?," p. 83.

³¹ She argued that this is eminent in both Burckhardt's view of individualism in the fifteenth century, as well as Morris' view of the individual in the twelfth, with which she is more particularly concerned.

³² Bynum 105

Rather twelfth century religion exhibited great concern with how groups were formed and differentiated from each other, how roles were defined, and evaluated, how behavior was conformed to models. If the religious writing...practice...and orders of the twelfth century are characterized by a new concern for the ‘inner man’ it is *because* of a new concern for the group, for types and examples, for the ‘outer man.’³³

Complicating Morris’ work, she maintains that a twelfth century meaning particularly circumscribed the notion of the “individual.” Bynum argued that the twelfth century may have discovered a sense of self (or, as she offered, rather *rediscovered*),³⁴ however, it also discovered the group. In the articulation of how a variety of individuals would become a part of the *societas Christianus*, the twelfth century saw a new “language of ‘conforming to a model’”³⁵ in which the group developed a particular language that defined how the individual might become a part of the corporate group. For Bynum, this is particularly important, for

If twelfth century authors were more aware of their motives for acting, of the process of making a choice, of interior change, it was not only because there were in fact a wider variety of social roles and a new diversity of religious groups that made choice necessary; it was also because people now had ways of talking about groups as groups, roles as roles, and about group formation.³⁶

The development of oneself was toward God, in whose likeness man was made, as opposed to the process of development, which Bynum claimed was the goal of a contemporary manifestation of selfhood. Bynum suggested that the term, “discovery of self,” would create a more complicated approach to the twelfth century as opposed to

³³ Bynum, “Did the Twelfth Century Discover the Individual?,” p. 85.

³⁴ I would entirely agree with Bynum here; one of the particularly problematic aspects of Morris’ argument is how much of what is “new” about the twelfth century is actually renewed from Late Antiquity.

³⁵ Bynum, 107.

³⁶ Bynum, 107.

simply an alternative timeline to what Burckhardt had once imagined for the fifteenth century.³⁷

The Language of Selfhood: Intention and Shared Culture

Bynum's complication of Morris' work is critical for considering the emergence of a new type of religiosity in the twelfth century, and seems to point towards the intentionality that I suggested was critical in Hugh of St. Victor's definition of faith. She argued that

People felt an *urgency*, unlike anything we see in the early Middle Ages, about defining, classifying, and evaluating what they termed 'orders,' or 'lives,' or 'callings'...throughout the period there was intense competition...not merely...for resources and influence; it was also an effort by *each of the competing groups to define itself*.³⁸

The search for selfhood did not come through shaking off inhibition, but rather, through the adoption of right patterns.³⁹ The question of selfhood seems to be at the heart of the potential for Morris' argument, which Bynum appropriately complicates. Yet, Morris to some extent, and Bynum far more, hint that intention is critical – and yet, never totally engage the concept.⁴⁰ Bynum's thought-provoking critique of Morris, and consequent

³⁷ I would argue that Bynum's complication is ultimately critical, as Bynum herself noted, the period immediately following the publication of Morris' book saw a fantastic amount of scholarship working to link twelfth century piety to fifteenth century piety in an excited attempt to discredit Burckhardt. Nevertheless, Bynum argued for a discontinuity between the two periods that unfortunately she failed to ultimately substantiate. Such periodizations often result in gross overstatements, leading to a number of exceptions, problems, and ultimately, the re-periodization of history over and over again.

³⁸ Bynum, 89. Italics are mine.

³⁹ I agree with this, but believe it to be much more complicated than Bynum, or subsequent scholarship, has allowed for, as noted earlier in the discussion of Chretien de Troyes.

⁴⁰ Ultimately Morris has changed the nature of a medieval scholarship that now accepts, without question, the twelfth century as a major shift. Scholarship on everything from shifting notions of penance and confession to the eleventh century investiture controversy between the Germanic Emperor Henry IV and

scholarship, ultimately begs the question: why does a concern with selfhood emerge out of the twelfth century? I would argue that selfhood, marked out by *intention*, comes about as competing cultures engage in the discourse of faith statements. Due to the pressures of competing ecstatic religions, I would contend that people were not only forced to transcend themselves as an objective individual,⁴¹ but even, at times, the community in order to achieve closer communion with God. Christians and Jews living side by side were increasingly forced to define themselves against one another in order to maintain distinctive communities in a world that was quickly urbanizing. This thesis explores the emergence of faith statements in both Jewish and Christian culture in the long twelfth century (c. 1050-1200). Such faith statements, found in both cultures in Late Antiquity, emerged during the high middle ages with a new emphasis on the definition of right belief, as opposed to right practice; stressing the relationship of the individual with God, as opposed to intercession. These statements of faith are expressed in three cultural forms: the defining of right belief through textualization, the intent to self-sacrifice, and the confessionalization of twelfth-century discourse.

Shared Culture: Across Religious Boundaries

Scholarship on shared culture has emerged out of the attempt to understand Jewish history and the origins of anti-Semitism. This work is particularly critical in

Pope Gregory VII is concerned with the shift away from the public/community towards an individualism that nevertheless defines itself in terms of the community. Again, see, Constable for further work on the twelfth century renaissance, as well as Anna Sapir Abulafia, *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth Century Renaissance*, London: Routledge, 1995.

⁴¹ This is Morris' problem, he defines the individual as an object.

understanding the rise of selfhood in the twelfth century, as we see that there is a major shift in the attitudes of the intention of the individual that spans across the three major Abrahamic religions.⁴² With the increasing need to define oneself against competing communities, statements of orthodoxy were not only far more prevalent, but increased what was at stake. Heresy or wrong belief could no longer be considered a simple matter of misguidance, but transgressed boundaries that were all too fluid for comfort. In doing so, the transgressor became an independent agent, punished by banishment, death, or even eternal damnation. Ironically, with the conflicts of violence on the rise, and an increased tension between cultures becoming ever more apparent through crusades and fantasies of ritual murder, Jews and Christians began defining themselves by extremely similar, parallel, movements.

This thesis owes a great deal to this particular methodology suggested by the Jewish historian Ivan Marcus, who has recently suggested that

Studies of public ritual and ceremony, gestures and celebrations, as well as narratives, images, and other sources, may offer a way of bridging the gap that usually exists between the study of Jewish and Christian comparative cultural history and the study of Jewish–Christian social interactions...it seems...that a similar dynamic is at work in many of the Jewish cultural movements that emerged in the twelfth century, not only in northern Europe, but also in the south and Muslim east as well. This dynamic exhibits the process of recovering ancient traditions and of reshaping them in a twelfth-century context familiar from Christian culture.⁴³

⁴² I would argue that work that has already been done on the textual influences of Muslims on Jews and Christians suggests this, yet this work limits itself to considering the culture of Jews and Christians as I do not intend to examine Spanish sources, and wanted to look at cultures that existed side-by-side.

⁴³ Ivan Marcus, *The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*,” p. 31-2.

Marcus suggests that in the revival of ancient traditions, once more the dynamic competition between Christians and Jews emerged, in the face of an “increase of individual choice among religious groups.”⁴⁴

Contemporary scholarship has begun to seek a shared culture between Jews and Christians across a variety of boundaries: economic, social, and, especially, cultural. Yet, the similarities are just beginning to be explored, and the heart of what was once perceived as the reason for the parting of the ways – religion – has yet to really be considered. Even historians like Anna Sapir Abulafia, who’s critical work on *Christians and Jews in the Twelfth-Century* makes the move to look across cultures, ultimately ends up emphasizing the differences in experiences, and particularly the polemical debate that raged amongst the two cultures. In the first part of *Communities of Violence*,⁴⁵ David Nirenberg traces the cataclysmic violence of the attacks on Jews, lepers and Muslims in the Crown of Aragon – results of the Shepherds Crusade and the accusations of well-poisoning in the early fourteenth century. Interestingly, Nirenberg argues that most violence took place within religious communities, as opposed to across religious lines, and that violence was often quite “rational” in following a pattern of self-interested motive. He also argues that violence does not imply intolerance, and expands his definition of violence to include juridical violence. In a virulent critique against “structuralists”, Nirenberg argues against a medieval origin of modern anti-semitism that can be followed through to the holocaust.

⁴⁴ Ivan Marcus, *The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*,” p. 31-2.

⁴⁵ David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

Jonathan Elukin follows up on Nirenberg's thesis regarding the nature of medieval violence against Jews, noting that historians are used to seeing this violence as "completed actions,"⁴⁶ a sentiment that he argues against. He sets himself against the argument of the "Other" noting that this creates the one-dimensional narrative of victimization that hardly recognizes the complexities of the Jewish-Christian relations. Utilizing various Christian and Jewish accounts, Elukin seeks to elucidate the dynamic nature of those relations from Late Antiquity, through to the medieval world, in an attempt to debunk the myths of rapid change in persecution at the millennium (with an interesting commentary on the periodization of the "middle ages"), the victimization narrative, as well as the mythos of a consolidated Christianity. Elukin argues that Jews were so "rooted" in Europe (socially, culturally, and physically), that they attempted to contain or elude the increasing violence of the middle ages. Yet, while both Elukin and Nirenberg illuminate the problem of shared culture, they both have difficulty in finding a reason as to why such problems existed.

Most recently, Thomas Sizgorich has examined the role of violence in the formation of early Christian and Islamic communities in *Violence and Belief in Late Antiquity: Militant Devotion in Christianity and Islam*. The creation, hardening, and fluidity of boundaries within a community are of critical importance in the formation of orthodoxy. As Sizgorich himself notes, his work relies heavily on Daniel Boyarin, and a tradition of scholarship that has rejected Trachtenberg's parting of the ways thesis with

⁴⁶ Jonathan Elukin, *Living Together, Living Apart: Rethinking Jewish-Christian Relations in the Middle Ages*, (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2007), p. 7.

regard to Judaism and Christianity. Rather, Jewish and Christian communities were incredibly fluid as there was obviously no distinct *Christian* community at first, but rather a community of messianic Jews. Jews and Christians continued to live side-by-side, resulting in violence where anxieties about the *other* emerged in response to attempts to create an orthodox belief system or praxis. Sizgorich suggests that violence, utilized by more fanatical groups, is hardly the result of intolerance or bigotry; but rather the need to establish boundaries around these “imagined communities”⁴⁷ which were constantly being transgressed.⁴⁸ As individuals (and communities) articulated boundaries through what Sizgorich calls “primordial narratives” in the creation of a religious identity, they also embed themselves within versions of the narratives in a teleological move that then has dire consequences on present and future self-fashioning.⁴⁹

As Ivan Marcus has suggested, the concept of selfhood gains impetus when we consider a shared culture across religious boundaries. This conception of selfhood is further enhanced by Kathleen Little’s definition of selfhood as something emergent out of the crisis of historical negotiation and individual choice. The crisis becomes far more critical when it becomes about eternal salvation, and the movement towards the *infinite* that I suggested earlier defines statements of faith. For Hugh of St. Victor, the perfection of faith through truth is not a matter of whether or not one competes for economic resources, or political influence; but rather who has the just claim on eternal salvation.

⁴⁷ Sizgorich’s use of the term “imagined communities” recalls Benedict Anderson, in which the community is “imagined” because “members . . . will never know most of their fellow members . . . yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.” Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 2006), p. 6.

⁴⁸ This however, doesn’t seem particularly new; again, David Nirenberg seems particularly applicable.

⁴⁹ Here Sizgorich is recalling Margaret Sommers.

In the twelfth century, this fight for eternal salvation will no longer be based solely upon external observances of correct practice, but rather become the fight for an intention of faith, by which both historical forces and individual choice is negotiated, and out of which selfhood emerges.

I have attempted to consider the statement of faith out of which intention emerges through three strata: the educated theological writings of scholars, the practice of martyrdom by a particularly heroic group of individuals, and the merging of the laity and the clerical in the exempla of miracle tales. While the educated writings of scholars presented the theological dilemma of faith and attempted to define it by tracts of orthodoxy, martyrs lived the physical manifestations of such faith. Both groups seem to have inspired the later exempla tales of a laity that was neither divine inspired to write treatises on faith, nor about to make the ultimate movement of faith, martyrdom. Rather, the attempt to reconcile statements and practices of faith in the real world show the extent to which the discussion of faith and intention had penetrated both medieval Christian and Jewish society.

Chapter one will focus on the language of right belief expressed in both Christian scholasticism and Judaism. Following the revival of Aristotle, and the imperative of competing religions, this century saw a particular rise in the defining of orthodoxy, illustrated by Moses Maimonides, Christian scholastics and the canons of the Fourth Lateran Council. These statements of right belief focus on intention solely through the medium of language, aimed at a learned audience. The crisis of language illustrates what

Gerard Genette terms the “ecstasy of the intemporal,”⁵⁰ as the authors attempt to make the link between the intent and the deed, faith and orthopraxy. In each of these dichotomies, the tension of selfhood emerges out of a rhetoric in which religiosity finds its expression in the intent of the self. The transgressing of religious and geographic boundaries indicates that this concern is not circumscribed by locale, or by religious precedent – but rather is of particular concern to both clerics as well as a laity that is increasingly anxious about its place in the world.

The anxiety over transgression is even more clearly seen in Chapter two which will focus on the intent to self-sacrifice: martyrdom in the Kiddush HaShem of 1096, and the heresy of the Christians in Cologne in 1144. Through looking at the intentions of both Jewish and Christian martyrs, we can more easily see the independent shift that takes place across the twelfth-century, as the crisis of defining orthodoxy in terms of intention emerged. We see a similarity in situation in which the martyrs chose their own deaths, by refusing to recant their own personal orthodoxies.⁵¹ In the martyrdoms of both Jews and Christians is a language of intention out of which selfhood emerges. I have already suggested that the movement of martyrdom requires a special kind of faith, in which the

⁵⁰ Gerard Genette, *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 159. I would argue that Genette’s notion here of ecstasy is compatible with Barthe’s definition of *jouissance*.

⁵¹ I utilize this term of personal orthodoxy as opposed to heterodoxy to stress the importance of the individual faith-statement being posited and ascribed to at this time.

anxiety over death becomes the point at which the selfhood emerges.⁵² To return to Jerold Seigel, in talking about Martin Heidegger, he notes that

Death is the one moment when no one else can stand in for *me*, the moment when all confusion of individual *Dasein*⁵³ with the "one" or "they" becomes impossible. Thus "anxiety in the face of death is anxiety in the face of that potentiality-for-being which is one's ownmost;" faced with this final reality *Dasein* can develop an "*impassioned freedom towards death*," that dissolves the illusions of the "they."⁵⁴

In making the choice to die, martyrs and heretics may have selected their own community over the individual; ultimately, however, their choice is that very negotiation between the historical forces and the individual; a choice in which boundaries between the individual and *communitas* dissolved, and selfhood emerged. The act of martyrdom was not particularly new to either community, but the increase in such acts in the twelfth century and the ways in which they were presented to the subsequent audience, suggest that such acts marked a significant attention towards the intention of the martyr.

The breakdown of community and individual is evident in the miracle statements of faith, found in exempla literature, which are a synthesis of both the scholastic writings of theologians and the martyrologies that were so popular. Chapter three will focus on the language of intent that had trickled down to the laity, through Caesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus Miraculorum*, as well as the Jewish *Sefer Hasidim*. Looking at the similarities and differences of both exempla, a shared culture of intention emerges, in which the

⁵² I do not wish to suggest that this is something unique to martyrdom of the twelfth-century, but rather, the ways in which martyrdom is conceived as an act of faith over and against the competing religion makes not just the act critical as it had in previous eras, but makes the intention behind the act the critical component.

⁵³ Heidegger's *Dasein*, the German term for "existence," suggests an intentionality towards being that is not simply existence, but rather that "being is itself an issue."

⁵⁴ Seigel, *The Idea of the Self*, p. 577.

ecstatic love of God permeates religious boundaries. In both *Sefer Hasidim*, as well as the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, we can see both the crisis of self, as well as language.⁵⁵ It is interesting to note that the discourse of *self* becomes the ultimate discourse of reference, both to the speaker (Rabbi Judah/ Caesarius of Heisterbach) from the speaker (as a teaching text), to one spoken to (the faithful), and to one spoken of (the example).

All three statements of faith require the ecstatic love that Roland Barthes has identified as *jouissance*.⁵⁶ Such love requires the actor, the recorder/ writer, and the reader to move beyond boundaries and embrace the infinite as a possibility. In addition to the *jouissance* implicit in the physical textualization of the faith statements of the twelfth-century, I would argue that the actual events themselves make the move from pleasure in God, towards a crisis of ecstasy in which traditional forms explode, and the unmediated relationship with God takes primacy, out of which selfhood emerges.

⁵⁵ Here, one might consider Roland Barthes, here quoting Leclaire about the *jouissance* of textualization: "Whoever speaks, by speaking denies *jouissance*, or correlatively, whoever experiences *jouissance* causes the letter - and all possible speech - to collapse in the absolute degree of the annihilation he is celebrating." Roland Barthes, *Le plaisir du texte*, (Paris: Seuil, 1973), p. 21.

⁵⁶ Roland Barthes, *Le Plaisir du texte*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: MacMillian, 1975). Barthes takes Jacques Lacan's theories of *jouissance* and applies them to textual analysis.

CHAPTER ONE

Faith Formation and the Individual in the Twelfth-Century Renaissance: The Shift to Orthodoxy

The twelfth-century saw a particular rise in the defining of orthodoxy across the Abrahamic religions, which I would argue was in part brought on by the imperative necessity of competing religions, in addition to the revival of Aristotle and classical teachings and finally, due to a new anxiety gripping the world. Not only did Jews and Christians live side-by-side, but anxieties and concerns for individual salvation ended up being a preoccupation for both in the twelfth century. In the midst of the renaissance of learning in the twelfth-century, scholars emerged in both Jewish and Christian culture who attempted to define right belief in terms of intentionality. This chapter seeks to explore some of those similarities in an effort to increase the historical vision of a shared experience across the Abrahamic religions.

The Wandering Scholastics: Maimonides

One of the most intriguing of the Jewish or Christian scholastics was Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, known both as Maimonides and the Rambam. Born in Córdoba in 1135⁵⁷ Maimonides represents one of the most prominent examples of scholasticism⁵⁸ in terms of the amount of writing he left, as well as the plethora of cultures that influenced

⁵⁷ This date is contested with some scholars (Shlomo Pines) arguing that he was born in 1138.

⁵⁸ While the term scholastic is not utilized in a treatment of Maimonides, I would argue that he is a product of the increasing rise of education and the cross-cultural collaboration that ensued. I do not seek to lump him into the Christian scholastics, but rather to emphasize the growing tradition of education and erudition.

him. Fleeing Córdoba in 1148 with his family to escape the oppressive Almohad Dynasty, Maimonides was forced from town to town throughout Southern Iberia. His family settled for a time in Fez, where he wrote the *Letters of Consolation*, in which he refuted the position of a prominent rabbinic authority, who claimed that martyrdom was preferable to the false worship of Islam that many Jewish families claimed. Maimonides vehemently disputed this position, arguing that it was better for the Jews to remain in hiding in order to one day reemerge, or even better, to roam, as befitted a diaspora culture.

Again escaping religious persecution, Maimonides and his family eventually left Morocco and traveled to the Holy Land, only to end up leaving and finally settling in Alexandria. The move to Egypt would be the last for Maimonides, although he would move one last time from Alexandria to Fostat in 1168. In Fostat Maimonides would write his most significant works, including the *Guide to the Perplexed*, and the *Mishneh Torah*.

Scholarship on Maimonides has typically centered on the issues of authorial intent, as well as the Islamic influence upon Maimonides, but has yet to focus on the concurrent shift that took place across Judaism, Islam and Christianity during the twelfth century. Although Christians may not have significantly influenced Maimonides, it is critical that Jewish and Christian expressions of true belief (faith statements) in the twelfth century indicate an incredible similarity in experience.

The Islamic influence on Maimonides is well documented by Joel Kramer's⁵⁹ latest biography which has done a magnificent job of connecting Maimonides not only to his Islamic contemporary, Ibn Rushd, but also to several other contemporary Islamic thinkers, illuminating the textual similarities in both scholars work. Kramer ultimately argues that while Maimonides appropriated Islamic scholarship to construct his most important contributions (faith statements, jurisprudence, and philosophy), Maimonides' impact on Judaism and Jewish scholarship cannot be denied.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, Kramer tends to focus on the lack of original content in Maimonides work, as opposed to an emphasis on the fusing of Islamic and Jewish theology that would ultimately create something entirely new, something that had increasing similarities towards Christian orthodoxy in many ways.

The twelfth century saw a particular rise in the defining of orthodoxy across the Abrahamic religions, which I would argue was in part brought by the imperative necessity of competing religions, in addition to the revival of Aristotle and classical teachings aforementioned, and finally, due to the new anxiety⁶¹ gripping the world, as political roles once again shifted towards a new consolidation of state power. Maimonides embodies all three of these transitions – highly educated in the neo-Aristotelian tradition, living eventually in Islamic Egypt, and defining orthodoxy for an

⁵⁹ Joel Kramer, *Maimonides: The Life and Mind of One of Civilizations Greatest Minds* (New York: Doubleday, 2008).

⁶⁰ This argument introduces the inherent difficulties and problems of scholarship, yet in some ways seems to negatively affect the ways in which Maimonides is ultimately seen as a contributor towards an entirely new tradition.

⁶¹ I think this concept of anxiety is critical, particularly as illustrated by Langmuir and Hsia. Ultimately, I decide to agree with Brown in his definition of the anxiety that gripped the world of late antiquity, which I will come to later in this paper.

orthopractic religion, Maimonides epitomizes an increasing anxiety over right belief, and the crisis of individual salvation.

Abrahamic Religions in the Twelfth Century: Orthodoxy and A New Mood

Many scholars have argued that after the destruction of the second temple, Judaism moved into a new phase of orthopraxy, in which ritual figured heavily. Menachem Kellner has called this the essentialist view of Judaism that was ultimately supplanted by Maimonides' definition of the "Jew as a person who adheres to a strictly defined set of dogmas."⁶² This is where Maimonides makes a historic change, by taking a religion that was rooted in orthopraxy and making the shift to orthodoxy, through the invocation of the faith statement.

Peter Brown has identified the crisis of identity in such a manner that is appropriate for the twelfth century when he argues that the world of late antiquity was one that

Encouraged men to feel that they needed to defend their identity by drawing sharp boundaries round it. They fitted less easily into their communities and felt out of place in the physical world. They stood aloof and alone with their One God. By conversion, by accepting a revelation, they cut themselves off from their own past and from the beliefs of the mass of their fellows. They manned the barricades in an invisible battle with the demons. As a result, the individual came to feel more strongly than ever previously that he needed to survive in another, better existence.⁶³

I would argue that this crisis in identity and the difficulty of fitting into one's own community is exactly the same type of shift that we see in the twelfth century. The shift

⁶² Menachem Kellner, *Must a Jew Believe Anything* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 7.

⁶³ Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (New York: Norton, 1989), p 56.

has moved away from the community, towards a more internal preoccupation with salvation that echoes Brown's new mood of the second and third centuries. Faith formation of the twelfth century was a major concern, as the Christian authorities struggled to define what right practice was, especially as it concerned spiritualized peace (true peace characterized by complete reason – we see again the shift towards Aristotelian teachings – even before Aquinas).⁶⁴ These concerns with orthodoxy are ultimately evident in the concerns of the clergy with sacraments and pax oaths taken without grace; and we also see the prioritization of the individual within the sudden transformations (what we might call a transubstantiation of the soul), anxiety about conversion, revelation, and correct salvation, as well as internal miracles. The individual is suddenly put upon to prove grace in a meaningful way as both religions strive to identify one another through references to what one is not.

In the character of that new mood, we find Maimonides, the consummate Jewish scholar, exposed to Islamic influence, positing faith creeds. The work of Maimonides, and this concept of faith formation, suggests a broadening definition of what we mean by a “shared culture.” Shared culture was not simply the socio-economic similarities of Christian and Jewish communities, but extended to the core of religious concerns about that most illusive concept: faith. Regardless of whether Maimonides was impacted by Christians, or vice versa, what is ultimately of interest is that similar movements in the defining of orthodoxy were being made by each religion at similar times. Maimonides

⁶⁴ For a discussion of true peace and its' implications, see Jehangir Malegam, “No Peace for the Wicked: Conflicting Visions of Peacemaking in an Eleventh-Century Monastic Narrative,” in *Viator: Medieval and Renaissance Studies* (Spring 2008): 23-49.

embodies this concept through his concerns with individual faith and salvation; a concern that ultimately seems mirrored in the Christian community at a similar time. Jewish and Christian expressions of true belief (faith statements) in the twelfth century indicate an incredible similarity in experience. Not only did Jews and Christians live side-by-side, but anxieties and concerns for individual salvation ended up being a preoccupation for both in the twelfth century. As we continue to look at this shared culture of Jews and Christian (and as we can infer through the link of Maimonides, ultimately Muslims), the problematic nature of a shift across the Abrahamic religions becomes more apparent. If Maimonides did not have significant influence on the Christian community until Aquinas, or vice versa, then why is there an independent preoccupation with the defining of orthodoxy that spans all three Abrahamic religions at this time?

Maimonides and the 13 Principles:

Between 1170 and 1180 Maimonides completed his work on the *Mishneh Torah*, his vast commentary on the Torah. Most pertinent for this paper is *Tractate Sanhedrin*, dealing with courts and authority in Jewish law, and the tenth chapter of *Sanhedrin*, *Helek*, which opens with a statement of beliefs that Jews must hold in order to merit salvation.⁶⁵ The first and most important of these is a belief in “the existence of the Creator, may He be praised; to wit, that there exists in the most perfect type of existence and that it is the cause of the existence of all other beings.”⁶⁶

⁶⁵ Menachem Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 10.

⁶⁶ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 10.

Maimonides then makes what I would argue is a next step and writes that “the following have no share in the world to come: he who says there is no resurrection [and] that the Torah is not from heaven.”⁶⁷ Not content with defining what right belief is, he also makes the move to define heresy. He then goes on to posit the rest of what might be the most problematic and yet famous of his commentary, what are commonly known as the thirteen principles.

There is little doubt that the thirteen principles, as a set of specific beliefs needed in order for Jews to share in the world to come, were ultimately a unique contribution to Judaism in the twelfth century. The principles themselves suggest that Maimonides was trying to establish a profession of right beliefs. Was Maimonides reacting to Islamic influence, as David Neumark has suggested, was he attempting to direct the masses as Arthur Hyman argues, or was he simply attempting to correct beliefs in his commitment to Torah and the Jewish people, as Menachem Kellner has more recently suggested?⁶⁸ Kellner suggests that the thirteen principles were an attempt to “counteract perverted habits of thought and in order to perfect halakhic observance among the Jewish people of his age...which he wanted his readers to understand as dogmas in the strict sense of the term.”⁶⁹

As already mentioned, Maimonides was not content to simply state the right beliefs one must hold in order to be a Jew, but also was concerned about identifying what constituted heresy. Kellner has argued that Maimonides’ thirteen principles, when

⁶⁷ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 10

⁶⁸ Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*.

⁶⁹ Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, p. 65.

summarized, essentially state that “if a Jew has incorrect beliefs about God then every commandment which he fulfills is actually an act of idolatry.”⁷⁰ Maimonides clearly defines an increasing hierarchy of wrong belief: idolaters, sectarians, those who deny any of the first five of the thirteen principles; *epikoros*, those who deny prophecy; and finally deniers, those who deny Torah, resurrection, and the coming of the Messiah. Those identified as heretics were to be denied any portion of the world to come, as they were not Israelites; and in some cases, (in the Laws of the Murderer, he mentions the *epikoros*) Maimonides even sanctions the outright killing of heretics.

Most scholarship on Maimonides focuses predominantly on two questions: why did Maimonides posit his dogmas of faith and what impact did Islam have on Maimonides? This concern with authorial intent is certainly important; but why Maimonides chose to posit these principles is difficult to answer. While Judaism had been increasingly concerned with religious ritual, Maimonides positing of faith creeds focused on a surprising definition of orthodoxy. Many scholars have attributed the intent to Maimonides’ interactions with Islam, which certainly may hold true, particularly for his first three principles; nevertheless, this explanation does not go far enough to explain some of the more troubling principles, particularly in looking at their parallels with the movements being made by Christianity. As opposed to a concern with authorial intent⁷¹,

⁷⁰ Kellner, *Dogma in Medieval Jewish Thought*. 41

⁷¹ This concern with authorial intent is very interesting, but ultimately leads to a problematic attempt of trying to ascertain something that is both impossible and untenable. Regardless of authorial intent, the historical context and impact of Maimonides’ positing of the faith creed is as far as the historian might hope to conjecture.

I argue that it is imperative to look further afield to the independent cross-cultural movement happening across both Judaism and Christianity.

The twelfth Ecumenical Council, the Fourth Lateran, of 1215 suggests similar concerns for the Christian community as those addressed by Maimonides in the Jewish. The council had met previously to set forth issues of doctrine in the early Christian era, but had of late been concerned with administration. With the Fourth Lateran, the shift in agenda moved back towards the defining of orthodoxy, and setting forth the nature of right beliefs.⁷²

Canon One opens with a statement of both faith and orthodoxy, similar in its concern to the statement of right belief posed by Maimonides half a century earlier. The canon declares that

We firmly believe and openly confess that there is only one true God, eternal and immense, omnipotent, unchangeable, incomprehensible, and ineffable, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; three Persons indeed but one essence, substance, or nature absolutely simple; the Father (proceeding) from no one, but the Son from the Father only, and the Holy Ghost equally from both, always without beginning and end. The Father begetting, the Son begotten, and the Holy Ghost proceeding; consubstantial and coequal, co-omnipotent and co-eternal, the one principle of the universe, Creator of all things invisible and visible, spiritual and corporeal, who from the beginning of time and by His omnipotent power made from nothing creatures both spiritual and corporeal, angelic, namely, and mundane, and then human, as it were, common, composed of spirit and body... This Holy Trinity in its common essence undivided and in personal properties divided, through Moses, the holy prophets, and other servants gave to the human race at the most opportune intervals of time the doctrine of salvation.⁷³

⁷² I argue that all religions make movements back and forth between orthodoxy and orthopraxy that mirror the human experience as it moves from spiritual anxiety to indolence.

⁷³ H.J. Schroeder, ed. and trans., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Council* in the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html>. I have included the entire canon, as it will be referenced again later in this chapter.

The statement of right belief is of particular concern to a religion with an increasing fear of competing religious authority, and is the most important statement because it can then be used to define heresy.

While Canon Two is a condemnation of a specific heretic, Joachim of Fiore (c. 1135 – d. 1202), whose work on the trinity directly contradicted the concept of “one essence,” Canon Three is a repudiation of heresy in general, asserting that

We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy that raises against the holy, orthodox and Catholic faith which we have above explained; condemning all heretics under whatever names they may be known, for while they have different faces they are nevertheless bound to each other by their tails, since in all of them vanity is a common element. Those condemned, being handed over to the secular rulers of their bailiffs, let them be abandoned, to be punished with due justice, clerics being first degraded from their orders.⁷⁴

Similarly to Maimonides hierarchy of heresy, and the punishment appropriate to each transgression, Canon Three states the differences in heretical clerics, rulers, teachers, those who harbor and those who offer succor to heretics. Punishment is fit to each crime, with failure to repudiate the sin not only subject to excommunication from the Church, but even the secular community of the law.

The Patron: Moses and the Scholastics

In the world of the twelfth century, we are continuously presented with a world of patronage, in which the question of intercession comes up repeatedly. Concerns with the ordering of the cosmos, as well as the ability of the individual to be the recipient of divine revelation, manifest themselves in both the works of Maimonides, as well as the Christian

⁷⁴ Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Council* in the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html>.

scholastics. Both works suggest fears about the influence of other religions, with Maimonides addressing fears of Christian saints and Muslim prophets; while Christian scholastics worried about the purity of their faith.

Maimonides addresses his commentary towards those who wish to have a share in the world to come, to those who have a right belief in Torah, and are not idolaters. In the fifth principle he asserts that

They [the angels] have no destiny and no rootedness other than His love, may He be exalted. Do not, furthermore, seize upon intermediaries in order to reach Him but direct your thoughts toward Him, may He be exalted, and turn away from that which is other than He.⁷⁵

Interestingly, we see a major shift in a religion that had relied very heavily upon rabbinic wisdom after the second temple now ultimately concerned with individual faith, lacking any type of intercessor, including, but certainly not limited to, angels. Peter Brown has argued that the Christian cult of saints, which arose in the fourth and fifth century, were a spiritual manifestation of the patron/client relationship that had existed in Rome. Of Martin of Tours, Brown notes that the wonder of the saint is “in the intimate manner in which the friendship and patronage of Martin was thought to be able to reach across the faceless horror of the underworld.”⁷⁶ While the fourth and fifth centuries saw intercession as a means of achieving nearness to the divine, both Maimonides and twelfth-century scholastics seem concerned with direct interaction with God.

⁷⁵ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 12.

⁷⁶ Peter Brown, *The Cult of Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1982), 65.

Similarly, we see anxiety, likely rooted in the Muslim veneration of prophets, about who may be given prophecy continued in the seventh principle, with Moses ascending to the level of angels. The question of who is worthy of revelation is of great concern to Maimonides who describes Moses thus:

He reached a state of exaltedness beyond humanity such that he perceived the level of sovereignty and became included in the levels of angels. There remained no veil which he did not pierce, no material hindrance burdened him, his desiderative faculty was still, and he remained pure intellect only. For this reason, they remarked of him that he discoursed with God without the intermediacy of an angel.⁷⁷

Interestingly, we see Maimonides concerned with the ability of man to ascend to the level of the angels. Maimonides sees the capability of man to transcend the earthly into the divine, through intellect, that gives him the ability to prophecy. This is particularly pertinent in light of the fifth principle that has already been mentioned. It is obvious that speaking with God without an intermediary is critical in looking to Moses as the “father of all prophets,” but in setting him within that divine sphere of the angels, he has left him with little more recourse than what he previously had as ultimately a font for God’s will, just as the angels had “no destiny of their own.” Nevertheless, Moses, who spoke directly to God, becomes an intermediary to his people. Maimonides is attempting to reconcile Moses as a transmitter of Torah with the Muslim emphasis on prophecy, and the Christian emphasis on Sainthood.⁷⁸ The definition of right belief is only necessary due to religious competition.

⁷⁷ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah:Perek Helek*,12-13.

⁷⁸ This particular point was illuminated by Julie Mell in exchanges regarding this thesis.

The capability of man to transcend the earthly into the divine through intellect is echoed within the Christian scholastic narrative of the time. Only through the revelation of the learned scholastic could the true meaning of the gospels be obtained, and conversely, only through such learning and revelation could a scholastic could hope to become influential both temporally and divinely. Peter Abelard notes that

Words were useless if the intelligence could not follow them, that nothing could be believed unless it was first understood, and that it was absurd for anyone to preach to others what neither he nor those he taught could grasp with understanding: the Lord himself had criticized such ‘blind guides of blind men.’⁷⁹

Abelard also argues for the personal revelation of the individual, without an intermediary, in order to be able to both understand and relate the revelation of the Lord.

Similar to Maimonides, Abelard places the burden of spiritual salvation upon one’s intellect, one that necessitated a specific connection with one’s own intelligence and the purity of one’s faith. Upon being accused of heresy, Abelard laments that

I compared my present plight with my physical suffering in the past, and judged myself to be the unhappiest of men. My former betrayal seemed small in comparison with the wrongs I now had to endure, and I wept much more for the injury done to my reputation than for the damage to my body, for that I had brought upon myself through my own fault, but this open violence had come upon me only because of the purity of my intentions and love of our Faith which had compelled me to write.⁸⁰

Abelard is predominantly concerned with his reputation as a learned scholar and intermediary, something that is divinely inspired through his “purity of...intentions.”

⁷⁹ Peter Abelard, *Historia calamitatum* in *The Letters of Abelard and Eloise* trans. Betty Radice (New York: Penguin Books, 1974), 78.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 84-5.

These intentions were his commentaries on *The Unity and Trinity of God*, an attempt, like Maimonides, to give clarity and specific meaning to doctrinal dogmas.⁸¹

The Lord is One: Torah and the Trinity

Where man fell within the sphere of the cosmos is an overwhelming theme identifiable in the Christian concerns of the Trinity, and the concerns that Maimonides had regarding the Torah. We see in both religions an anxiety about the nature of God who is identified with either the Son and the Holy Spirit, or the divine inspiration of the Torah.

Maimonides' eighth principle lays out another true belief that Jews must espouse in order to share in the world to come

The eighth foundation is that the Torah is from heaven; to wit, it [must] be believed that the whole of this Torah which is in our hand today is the Torah that was brought down to Moses, our Teacher, that all of it is from God [by transmission] which is called metaphorically 'speech;' that no one knows the quality of that transmission except he to whom it was transmitted... Everything is from the mouth of the Mighty One; everything is the Torah of God: whole, pure, holy [and] true.⁸²

Significantly, Maimonides writes that the Torah is the Torah of God, directly from his mouth, without regard for the nature of the transmission, or the quality. There is no room for questioning or doubt; all of Torah has been transferred divinely through grace: "whole, pure, holy and true." This principle exposes a significant anxiety and tension in

⁸¹ I would argue that the very creation of these commentaries by the Christian Scholastics on Christian doctrine are similar to Maimonides' commentary on the Torah. Peter Lombard, Abelard, Anselm, etc – all were invested in the clarification of doctrine, an exercise that is equivalent to the work being done by Maimonides.

⁸² Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 14-15.

the Jewish community of whether Torah was from directly from heaven, or rather revealed in the temporal sphere to the intercessor Moses. In his concern to be sure that right belief is followed, Maimonides again makes the next step to identify what is heretical belief. He argues that Menasseh, an idolatrous King,⁸³ became

In the eyes of the Sages, the person strongest in heresy and hypocrisy for he thought that the Torah was composed of kernels and husks and that these dates and these narratives had no value and that they were composed by Moses. This is the issue of ‘the Torah is not from heaven.’ And the Sages have said that he who believes that ‘the Torah is entirely from the mouth of the Almighty except for this [any given] verse which was not said by the Holy One, blessed be He, but Moses said it on his authority’ is one to whom the following verse [applies:] *He disdains the word of God.* May God be exalted above that which the heretics say! Rather, every letter of the Torah contains wisdom and wonders for him whom God has given to understand it.⁸⁴

Maimonides makes it apparent that anyone who deviates from the belief that the Torah, in all of its styles “such as the form of Sukkah, the Lulav, the Shofar, the Zizit, the Tefilin...are the actual forms which God told to Moses and which he told to us,”⁸⁵ are heretics of the worst kind. The anxiety of Maimonides, as well as Christian theologians, seems to imply that scholastic treatises were not only to combat religious competition, but also to address a lack of consistency *within* the religious community itself.

The anxieties regarding the unity of God and the Torah are tantamount to the Christian concerns with the Trinity. The exact place of man within the Trinity was the first major concern of the Fourth Lateran Council. Canon one is particularly concerned with the unity of the Trinity, in which the three persons are joined together, “coequal and

⁸³ 2 Kings, 21. *The Jewish Study Bible*, ed. Adele Berlin and Marc Zvi Brettler, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 769.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

consubstantial,” similar to Maimonides’ commentary on the nature of the Torah that was “whole, pure, holy and true.”

The concern with unity is ultimately revealed in both the Torah and the Trinity in the person of Moses – even in Christianity, Moses is noted first by the Council as the repository of revelation and the doctrine of salvation – an *orthodox statement of faith*, just as Maimonides’ principles make an orthodox statement of faith. Both the Jewish and Christian sources are ultimately focused on Moses as the repository of divine revelation and are both concerned with unity, in which man is struggling to find his place within the cosmos. While Maimonides struggled to place Moses within the cosmos alongside the angels; the Fourth Lateran struggled with the nature of Christ’s divinity, as they posited that

Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God made flesh by the entire Trinity, conceived with the co-operation of the Holy Ghost of Mary ever Virgin, made true man, composed of a rational soul and human flesh, one Person in two natures, pointed out more clearly the way of life. Who according to His divinity is immortal and impassable, according to His humanity was made passable and mortal, suffered on the cross for the salvation of the human race, and being dead descended into hell, rose from the dead, and ascended into heaven. But He descended in soul, arose in flesh, and ascended equally in both.⁸⁶

There is a duality of nature⁸⁷ that allows for the ascendance of man, similar to the Moses that Maimonides depicts. The concerns are still with intermediaries, and the nature of the flesh. What is man, how can he transcend his temporal state, and whether or not there

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ For a more thorough discussion of Manicheanism and duality, please see John Henderson, *The construction of Orthodoxy and Heresy* (New York: SUNY Press, 1998).

is a unity in the divine seem to be the major themes that emerge. This unity of the divine is epitomized by Maimonides, who in the second principle states

The second foundation is God's unity...to wit, that this One, Who is the cause of [the existence of] everything, is one. His oneness is unlike the oneness of a genus, or of a species. Nor is it like the oneness of a single composed individual, which can be divided into many units. Nor is His oneness like that of the simple body which is one in number but infinitely divisible. Rather He, may He be exalted, is one with a oneness for which there is no comparison at all.⁸⁸

Both Maimonides and the Fourth Lateran Council are concerned with the nature of the divine, both are concerned with the unity of that divinity, and both are concerned with creating orthodox doctrines about such a unity. Such movements, regardless of their independence, are striking in terms of their similarities.

The Corporeality of God: The Father, The Son, and the Repudiation of a Body

I have argued that the Fourth Lateran Council's first decree argues for a similarity of concern with Maimonides, a point which I would still argue is correct, but in perhaps an even more striking way than simply a concern with unity. The corporeality of the body of God is of fundamental concern to both Maimonides and to the Fourth Lateran Council. Interestingly, they disagree entirely in their outcomes, but both share an intense focus on the nature of God's body. Caroline Bynum has suggested that bodily experience was a critical component of medieval religiosity, as opposed to the more simplistic narrative of a medieval duality that argued the body was rejected in order to become closer to the

⁸⁸ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 11.

spirit. She takes up this theme further in her collection of essays, *The Resurrection of the Body*, in which she argues that medieval religiosity was not a flight *from* the body, but rather *into* it as the locus of experience and personhood.⁸⁹

Maimonides argues in both his commentary on *Tractate Sanhedrin*, as well as the *Guide for the Perplexed* that it is of critical importance that Jews “should be made to accept on traditional authority the belief that God is not a body...for there is no profession of unity unless the doctrine of God’s corporeality is denied.”⁹⁰ Again we see the fear of competing religions as he argues that

The third foundation is the denial of corporeality to Him; to wit, that this One is neither a body nor a force within a body. None of the characteristics of a body appertains to Him, either by His essence or as an accident thereof...This is attested to by the verse *You saw no image* meaning, ‘you did not perceive Him...as having an image’ for He is...neither a body nor a force within a body.⁹¹

This denial in the corporeality of God is directly in opposition to the decree of the Fourth Lateran Council, as well as the debates of the scholastics in the century leading up to the Council. I have already noted that Canon One of Fourth Lateran allows for a dual nature of God – both divine and temporal, merged into one, both of which were allowed ascension. Peter Lombard argued in the twelfth century, long before the Council convened, in the *Sententiarum Quatuor Libri*, that

By these and very many other authorities there is evidently shown, that it must be said and believed, that the One God is the Trinity, and the One Substance the

⁸⁹ Caroline Bynum, *Resurrection of the Body in Western Christianity, 200-1336*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995).

⁹⁰ Moses Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, trans. Shlomo Pines (Chicago: U. Chicago Press, 1974), 79-80.

⁹¹ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 11-12.

Three Persons; just as conversely the Trinity is said to be ‘the One God,’ and the Three Persons are said to be the ‘One Substance.’⁹²

Regardless of the differences in their outlooks, twelfth century Christians and Jews are directly concerned with the corporeality of God, as they attempt to define themselves against one another. Indeed, Maimonides argued in the *Guide* that Jewish belief in God’s corporeality was

Due to people being habituated to, and brought up with, texts that it is an established usage to think highly of and to regard as true and whose external meaning is indicative of the corporeality of God and of other imaginings with no truth in them, for these have been set forth as parables and riddles.⁹³

Such parallel concerns about the corporality of God and the intent towards right belief, indicates the growing concerns among both Jewish and Christian communities in the very nature of belief, as opposed to simply outward protestations of such.

Sins, Confession and Heresy

The concern with right belief manifests itself yet again at the end of Maimonides’ thirteen principles. Concluding that when

These foundations are perfectly understood and believed in by a person, he enters the community of Israel and one is obligated to love and pity him and to act towards him in all ways in which the Creator has commanded that one should act towards his brother, with love and fraternity. Even were he to commit every possible transgression, because of lust and because of being overpowered by the evil inclination, he will be punished according to his rebelliousness, but he has a portion [of the world to come]; he is one of the sinners of Israel. But if a man doubts any of these foundations he leaves the community [of Israel], denies the fundamental and is called a sectarian,

⁹² Peter Lombard, *Sententiarum Quatuor Libri: Liber Primus Sententiarum* in the Franciscan Archive, <http://www.franciscan-archive.org>.

⁹³ Moses Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed*, trans. Shlomo Pines (Chicago: U. Chicago Press, 1974), 67.

epikoros, and one who ‘cuts among the plantings.’ One is required to hate him and destroy him.⁹⁴

The first portion of this passage deals with the true believer, one who can possibly commit every possible transgression and still inherit a portion of the world to come. Maimonides is clear in the *Mishneh Torah* exactly how one must act upon transgression: through confession. The act of confession must be verbal, and Maimonides gives a very clear example of what must be said:

How does one confess: He states: ‘I implore You, God, I sinned, I transgressed, I committed iniquity before You by doing the following. Behold I regret and am embarrassed for my deeds. I promise never to repeat this act again.’ These are the essential elements of the confessional prayer.⁹⁵

The confessional prayer offers a way for those with right belief to ultimately atone and repent of their transgressions.⁹⁶

⁹⁴ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Perek Helek* as cited in Kellner, *Dogmas in Medieval Jewish Thought*, 16.

⁹⁵ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Teshuvah*, trans. Eliyahu Touger (New York: Moznaim Publishing Corp., 1990) 4.

⁹⁶ Morris had argued that one of the greatest expressions of the individual was confession. He argued that before the eleventh and twelfth century’s sinners were expiated through “punishment of an offense by a specific penance,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 70). Public penance not only expiated the sinner, but also served to compensate the community in which the sin occurred. Morris explains that while these attitudes about penance survived the twelfth century, they nevertheless were challenged by a “new emphasis on self-examination,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 71). Ultimately auricular confession, which had earlier been unusual, became the normative method of expiating one’s sins, with Canon 21 of the Fourth Lateran, adopted as orthodox practice. Morris considers this development of particular interest because it was “an attempt to introduce the idea of self-examination throughout society,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 73). Confession ultimately becomes bound up with the issue of intention, which Morris briefly notes is of particular concern to the twelfth century reformers, acknowledging however that confession was not the only issue of theology in which the individual became recognizably unique from the corporate. The passion emerged as something less to be celebrated for the salvation it brought, as something to be empathized with, in which the sinner’s redemption was gained. Morris demonstrates this through the changing nature of the crucifix – from the living Christ of the first millennium, to Christ dead on the cross. Morris notes that this shift was mirrored with a growing devotional emphasis on Christ’s pain, reflected in the self-flagellation of some monastic reformers. The millennium also caused another significant shift in theology: eschatology. Morris notes that the millennial expectations of many were disappointed, and attention shifted “sharply from the salvation of mankind as a whole to the deliverance of the individual,” (Morris, *The Discovery of the Individual*, p. 152). That

These anxieties for the transgression of the soul are echoed in the Fourth Lateran Council as well. Canon twenty-one declares that “all the faithful of both sexes shall, after they have reached the age of discretion, faithfully confess all their sins at least once a year to their own priest and perform to the best of their ability the penance imposed.”⁹⁷ The oral confession is critical, spoken to God, and, in the case of the Christian, to God’s representative. The language of confession in Christian tracts and manuals, particularly after the Fourth Lateran Council decreed that auricular confession was mandatory, also use the rhetoric of *intentio*. It was no longer enough to simply confess to the village priest, nor even to go through the motions of penance. Rather, it was critical that the act of confession suspend everything except pure faith, in the intent to purge oneself of sin.

individual would find a place in spiritual union with Christ, in what Morris has described as the fulfillment of the self, as opposed to the annihilation.

It is perhaps in the field of confession that we can see one of Morris’ biggest contributions. Following the publication of *The Discovery of the Individual*, scholarship became convinced of the shift in penance from public to private, in which interiority became more critical. Scholarship on this topic is still centered around this theme, which owes as much to Morris as his predecessor Cyrille Vogel, a historian of penance, who argued that private sacramental confession took on a new life from the twelfth century theology of personal intention; see Cyrille Vogel, *Le Pêcheur et La Penitence au Moyen Age*, Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1969. For the most part, scholarship has come to accept this division without reservation. For an exception that appropriately complicates the field, see Mary Mansfield, *The Humiliation of Sinners: Public Penance in Thirteenth-Century France*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995. Unfortunately, this was published posthumously, and while scholarship gives acknowledgement to the work, it has not followed up on the questions it has asked about what to do with public penance that is seen after the Fourth Lateran.

⁹⁷ H.J. Schroeder, ed. and trans., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Council* in the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html>. *All the faithful of both sexes shall after they have reached the age of discretion faithfully confess all their sins at least once a year to their own priest and perform to the best of their ability the penance imposed, receiving reverently at least at Easter the sacrament of the Eucharist, unless perchance at the advice of their own priest they may for a good reason abstain for a time from its reception; otherwise they shall be cut off from the during life and deprived of Christian burial in death. Wherefore, let this salutary decree be published frequently in the churches, that no one may find in the plea of ignorance a shadow of excuse. But if anyone for a good reason should wish to confess his sins to another priest, let him first seek and obtain permission from his own priest, since otherwise he cannot loose or bind him.*

In a thirteenth-century tract on confession, compiled by Bishop Alexander Stavensby for his diocese of Coventry and Lichfield in England, the faithful are instructed that

Since penance consists of three things – contrition of heart, confession by words, and satisfaction through works – the first thing to ask someone coming to confession is whether he is sorry that he sinned, *because without contrition of the heart sin can never be remitted.*⁹⁸

The act of confession is not simply a sacrament, but rather a statement of faith, in which the intent of the person confessing is far more critical than the act itself. In fact, the tract goes on to suggest that if the sinner “says that he is sorry then the priest may proceed to hear the confession; if he says that he is not sorry he should be sent away as an obstinate sinner.”⁹⁹ This act of faith then becomes entirely personal, in which the confessor, or spiritual authority, may or may not be able to correctly identify the sinner’s intentions; yet what is really at stake is the individual’s salvation.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ John Shinnars, trans. and ed., “A Tract on Hearing Confessions,” in *Medieval Popular Religion, 1000 – 1500: A Reader*, (Ontario: Broadview Press, 2007), p. 19, italics are mine.

⁹⁹ Shinnars, “A Tract on Hearing Confessions,” p. 19.

¹⁰⁰ Cyrille Vogel’s mediation of both Bernard Poschmann and Henry Charles Lea’s timelines essentially cemented penance into two categories in the post-Carolingian world: the public penance of humiliation, and the more private sphere of tariffed penance, out of which, according to Vogel, the sacrament of confession emerged. He argued that while private sacramental confession was not new in the twelfth century, it nevertheless took on a new life from the twelfth century theology of personal intention. The Fourth Lateran’s requirement of annual confession was then seen as the end of public penance, as Vogel assumed that public penance faded once the *summa confessorum* replaced tariffed penitential books.

Vogel’s argument of a twelfth century of personal intention deserves some treatment here. The suggestion that the twelfth century represented a penitential revolution (similar to twelfth century renaissance/reform) indicated a growing intimacy between God and confessor, in which both penitent and confessor were concerned with the intent of the confession. This relationship of the soul, and ultimately the spirit, to God, represents a shift of interiority that has continued to be a subject of investigation and debate. For more, see Henry Charles Lea, *The History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (1896, reprinted New York, Greenwood Press Reprint: 1968), Bernard Poschmann, *Penance and the Anointing of the Sick* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964), and Cyrille Vogel, *Le Pecheur et La Penitence au Moyen Age* (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1969).

Even before the Fourth Lateran, Christian theologians were wrestling with the problem of confession, and what purpose it might serve. We return again to Hugh of St. Victor (d. 1141), whose works survive in numerous manuscripts, attesting to his fame, and who was especially concerned with the notion of intent. In *De Sacramentis*, Hugh writes that the act of contrition must come first, that “first there must be weeping, afterwards confessing. Since this tends to truth of confession, that you should first feel remorse, afterwards you should confess.”¹⁰¹ It is the act of *compungaris* that is a singular act of interiority.

Hugh is also focused on this language of *poenitentiae* in which “exterior penance is in the pain of the flesh. Interior penance is in the dismay of the soul. Through exterior penance the error of a small deed is punished. Through interior penance the error of a depraved will is corrected.”¹⁰² It is the concern with *voluntatis* that is particularly important. The intent of the deed is what is most vital to the way in which penance ought to be meted out. The exterior penance of the flesh is not nearly so critical to Hugh, as the interior *contritione* of the soul.

The second half of Maimonides’ conclusion proves that his principles are meant as dogmas, posited as faith statements to be believed in if one chooses to be a member of the Jewish community. The consequences of doubt in any of the foundations are dire,

¹⁰¹ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, trans. Roy Deferrari, (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1951), p. 405. “*Prius flendum est, postea confitendum. Hoc siquidem ad veritatem confessionem spectat ut prius compungaris, postea confitearis.*”

¹⁰² Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis* in *Patrologia Latina*, vol. 176, col. 0554D – 0555A. *Poenitentia alia est interior, alia exterior. Poenitentia exterior est in afflictione carnis. Poenitentia interior est in contritione cordis. Per poenitentiam exteriorem castigatur culpa parvi operis. Per poenitentiam interiorem emendatur culpa pravae voluntatis.* Translation is mine.

condemning one to the hatred, and perhaps even death at the hands, of the community. The failing of one's belief is not even considered a sin, but rather an error that can never be overcome. Maimonides noted that even the repentance of the sectarian could not be considered sincere, and that while God alone would know whether atonement was genuine, the community of Israel should never allow the sectarian a return to the fold.¹⁰³ Here we finally see Maimonides creating his orthodoxy of right beliefs, in which the true believer of Judaism must posit his faith if he is to merit salvation. This creation of orthodoxy through the definition of heresy is also shared with the Fourth Lateran Council.¹⁰⁴

Canon three clearly states the position of the Church in regard to those who repudiate any portion of the faith statement posited in canon one, affirming that

We excommunicate and anathematize every heresy that raises against the holy, orthodox and Catholic faith which we have above explained; condemning all heretics under whatever names they may be known, for while they have different faces they are nevertheless bound to each other by their tails, since in all of them vanity is a common element.¹⁰⁵

Not only does heresy have a variety of names, as it did for Maimonides, but it is also defined by the repudiation of that orthodox faith that was defined by the Council in canon one. This definition of heresy mirrors that of Maimonides'.

The revival of Aristotle certainly must have contributed to the perceived relationship of the individual to the world. Engaged in the world, the individual actively

¹⁰³ Maimonides, *Mishneh Torah: Hilchot Teshuvah*, trans. Eliyahu Touger (New York: Moznaim Publishing Corp., 1990) Ch. 3.

¹⁰⁴ I would argue that this is in direct conflict with the concept of heresy as a polemical tool. Heresy in both of these instances is almost being defined through a negation of orthodoxy.

¹⁰⁵ H.J. Schroeder, ed. and trans., *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Council* in the Internet Medieval Sourcebook, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.html>.

participates in activity while encountering demands and realizing values. This view of engagement “stresses that the human relation to the world is intentional in the sense that consciousness is always about something, it is world-directed.”¹⁰⁶ Significance and definition is given in the very act of participating in the world. In defining themselves against one another, Jewish and Christian scholars ironically made parallel movements of faith that would escalate tensions about the “other.” This tension about the “other” would not be limited to the theological writings of the learned in the twelfth-century, or the canonization of such writings in the thirteenth, but would manifest itself in the violence that erupted in the First Crusade and the conviction of heretics.

¹⁰⁶ Arto Laitinen, *Strong Evaluation Without Moral Sources: On Charles Taylor's Philosophical Anthropology and Ethics*, (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), p. 2.

CHAPTER TWO

The Knight of Faith and the Emergence of Selfhood: Twelfth-Century Martyrdom and Heresy in The Rhineland

The joy that the heretics evinced upon making their way to the flames, as well as the decisions of Jewish parents to murder their children rather than have them converted to Christianity, suggests that martyrdom was one of the most critical movements of faith that could be made in the twelfth century, one that necessitated an interior resolve of intention, out of which selfhood emerged.

The issue of the statement of faith is highly problematic – for what is faith? The articulation of orthodox doctrine across both Judaism (Maimonides), and Christianity (Christian scholasticism resulting in the Fourth Lateran Council) in the twelfth century is certainly much easier to identify. Elliot Wolfson, in an echo of Heidegger, has noted that “what is unspoken often speaks more loudly than what is spoken.”¹⁰⁷ I would suggest that faith is the movement of intention to make the leap of the absurd and the wholehearted devotion of oneself to a particular belief.¹⁰⁸ I would also suggest that such faith statements are highly erotic¹⁰⁹ in their implementation, out of which we see the

¹⁰⁷ Elliot Wolfson, “Martyrdom, Eroticism, and Asceticism,” in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2001) p. 174. Wolfson’s article is highly nuanced and provides a unique insight into the relationship between the martyrdom of 1096 and the subsequent asceticism in Hasidei Ashkenaz.

¹⁰⁸ This notion of faith admittedly owes a great deal to Kierkegaard’s *Fear and Trembling*. And while Judaism approaches faith through orthopraxy, I would argue that the twelfth century sees a significant departure from this, as both the practice of the Sanctification of the Name, as well as the positing of faith creeds, suggests.

¹⁰⁹ Again, Wolfson. Also, I would argue this is directly related to the notion of the faith statement as an act of *jouissance*.

increasing emergence of asceticism in both Judaism (Hasidei Ashkenaz), and Christianity (apostolic poverty and reformed monasticism).¹¹⁰

Out of the statement of faith, the individual is emergent in its intention to *self-sacrifice*.¹¹¹ The act of martyrdom requires the *jouissance*¹¹² implicit in the movement of ecstatic faith. *Jouissance*, which Roland Barthes describes as somewhere between sex and fear, is synonymous with the act of faith, in which, through the act of pure devotion, the self is found. This quest for the meaning of selfhood, and the definition, can be found in the long twelfth century, as martyrs joyfully faced the flames, or slit the throats of their children in unconditional faith-acts.¹¹³ Such acts required the manifestation of competing religions, only possible due to the shared culture of Jews and Christians. While Christian pollution fears may have often been focused on schism within the Christian faith itself, it was more than likely to take the form of the pogrom against Jews or the accusation of ritual murder. Jewish fears of purity were similarly concerned with the taint of Christian heresy, as Jews attempted to reconcile mass martyrdom with prohibitions against suicide.

Martyrdom: The Intent of the Individual

¹¹⁰ Here, I agree with Cohen that Ashkenazic Jewry can trace a good deal of its roots to the events of 1096. However, neither this, nor the increased violence towards Jews, is the only historical development that can be linked to these events. Again, see Cohen, *Sanctifying the Name of God*.

¹¹¹ One could argue that the murder of loved ones places that burden even more squarely on the individual, as opposed to suicide as it requires that the faith-act is so strong as to apply to more than one person.

¹¹² Barthes, *Le Plaisir du Texte*.

¹¹³ Historians have begun to seek for notions of selfhood in the twelfth century, but do not tend to link it to faith. See Jonathan Elukin, "The Discovery of the Self: Jews and Conversion in the Twelfth Century," in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, p. 63-76.

Although the pogroms of 1096 have begun to receive increased scholarship in the last decade, it has often been alluded to only briefly in the historiography on the crusades. As Jeremy Cohen notes, this is not surprising in light of the pogroms being considered a diversion, as opposed to a primary objective.¹¹⁴ Although this may be true of the overall objective of the crusaders, it is nevertheless striking to note the change in religious violence that seems to begin with the atrocities of 1096. No longer small, isolated, incidents, Christian violence against Jews, and pollution fears of Jews, seem to have flourished in the aftermath of the horrors of the First Crusade. Such violence seems to have created an even greater need for self-definition, as individuals struggled to simultaneously create and transgress the boundaries of social, economic, and religious boundaries.

There are several accounts written of the Jewish martyrdom of 1096, in which the practice of Kiddush Ha-Shem, or Sanctification of the Name, was carried out by hundreds of persecuted Jews. There are three very different and distinct Jewish chronicles, which detail the events leading up to the massacre, as well as the various reactions of both Christians and Jews to the violence, and the accounts of individual and communal martyrdom of several hundred Jews. The first account is most likely a condensed version of the events, and has been dubbed “The Mainz Anonymus”¹¹⁵ by contemporary scholarship. The second account is the lengthier version attributed to

¹¹⁴ Jeremy Cohen, *Sanctifying the Name of God: Jewish Martyrs and Jewish Memories of the First Crusade* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006), p. 31.

¹¹⁵ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” in *The First Crusade: the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998).

Solomon bar Samson,¹¹⁶ and the third is a poetic synthesis of the two accounts by Rabbi Eliezer bar Nathan.¹¹⁷ As Robert Chazan has thoroughly explored in his treatment of the source materials, the first two chronicles are most likely the earliest accounts, and also the most pertinent for the historian.¹¹⁸ In considering the practice of Kiddush ha-Shem in 1096 as a statement of faith, by which the individual emerges, both of these Jewish accounts must be considered: the Mainz Anonymous, as well as the account by Solomon bar Samson.¹¹⁹

The anonymous account, written in the early twelfth century, gives a vivid account of the slaughter of the Jews at Speyer, Worms, and Mainz in 1096. It begins with the preaching of the First Crusade, and the gathering of “both princes and common folk” who “placed an evil sign upon their garments, a cross” before heading out to

¹¹⁶ Solomon bar Samson, “The Crusaders in Mayence,” in *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book: 315-1791*, ed. Jacob Marcus and Marc Saperstein, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1999).

¹¹⁷ Eliezer bar Nathan, “The Massacre of Jews by the First Crusaders,” in *Jews and the Crusaders: Hebrew Narratives of the First and Second Crusades*, ed. and trans. Shlomo Eidelberg, (Jersey City: KTAV Publishing House, 1996), p. 79 – 93.

¹¹⁸ Robert Chazan, *European Jewry and the First Crusade* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), especially p. 42. Also, Robert Chazan, *God, Humanity and History: The Hebrew First Crusade Narratives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000). Chazan notes that the Solomon bar Samson account is not necessarily a unified narrative, and has thoroughly illuminated the history of the manuscripts in *God, Humanity and History*. Also, see Anna Sapir Abulafia, “The Interrelationship Between the Hebrew Chronicles of the First and Second Crusade,” in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, vol. 27 (1982), p. 221-239.

¹¹⁹ There are also several Christian accounts, many of which place the violence within the broader objective of the First Crusade, and place the motivation for the violence towards the Jews in a variety of places. Nevertheless, the chronicle of Albert of Aachen attempts to construct the events in Speyer, Worms, Mainz, and even Cologne in 1096. Here I have to disagree with Chazan, who claims that “anti-Jewish activity” was of minimal interest to the crusading chronicles (Chazan, *European Jewry*, 39). Chazan argues, and I would agree, that this is specifically true of the traditional narratives, including the *Historia Hierosolymitana* by Fulbert of Chartres. However, Chazan takes his argument to Albert of Aachen (Aix), only allowing that he gave a “brief depiction” that was only given in context to the larger crusading project. If there was so little concern with the violence, why even give that much of a depiction? Why come down so hard on the perpetrators, as even Ekkehard of Aura, who was a Crusader himself, does? Rather, I would argue, there is a distinct attention to the violence towards the Jews, at least in the account of Albert. Additionally, the very fact that such Christian corroboration of the violence survives suggests that the narrative did not go unnoticed.

reclaim the Holy City, taking their souls in their hands “in order to kill and to subjugate all those kingdoms that do not believe in the Crucified.”¹²⁰ In addition, the account claims that it was preached amongst the nobles and common folk that “how much more so [should we kill and subjugate] the Jews, who killed and crucified him [Christ].”¹²¹ The chronicler puts these words into the mouths of this council of crusaders, claiming that these were the words said as “they taunted us from every direction. They took counsel, ordering that either we turn to their abominable faith or they would destroy us ‘from infant to suckling.’”¹²² The chronicle goes even farther than this, to claim that “there circulated a report that ‘anyone who kills a single Jew will have all his sins absolved.’”¹²³

Upon hearing of the Crusade, and the joining of the princes to the “battalions” of common crusaders, the chronicler tells us that the Jews in Speyer fasted so as to be delivered from the hands of the crusaders. Yet, such measures were not only unsuccessful, but weakened potential protectors. The crusaders first attempted to seize the Jews in the synagogue, but only killed eleven before the rest had fled to a Bishop John who, we are told, assisted them.¹²⁴

Indeed, according to this account Bishop John not only attempted to protect the Jews, but actually cut off the hands of some of the crusaders and burghers who tried to seize the Jews. Regardless of these actions, there is a sense of the inevitable, particularly

¹²⁰ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 113.

¹²¹ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 113.

¹²² Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 113.

¹²³ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 113.

¹²⁴ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 114.

the continuous emphasis and reference to Hebrew scripture. After telling of the first eleven killed, the chronicler makes an explicit reference to Ezekiel and claims “from there the decree began, to fulfill that which is said: ‘Begin at my sanctuary.’”¹²⁵ This reference to the prophecy of the destruction of the Temple is even more dramatic in its full context “‘Cut down old men, young men, and young women, little children and women...and begin at my sanctuary.’”¹²⁶ The chronicler allows for a historical context to be constructed for the current slaughter, in which the fulfillment of prophecy outweighs the problematic nature of suicide. The need to rationalize the mass suicide, forbidden by Jewish law, forces the chronicler to look to a historic precedent, placing the events of 1096 within the same narrative arc as the destruction of the Temple.

Before the martyrdom is described however, the chronicler tells us that a crucified body was dragged into the town, obviously symbolic of the crucified Christ, and an accusation of well-poisoning is made.¹²⁷ Upon this accusation, the violence quickly increases, with several Jews being slaughtered outside of the Bishop’s protection.

The action moves to the city of Worms, and here for the first time, the chronicler tells us that beyond the slaughter of Jews by Christians, Jews also took their own lives, as well as those of their children,

When they saw the battle raging to and fro, the decree of the King of kings, then they accepted divine judgment and expressed faith in their Creator and ‘offered

¹²⁵ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 114.

¹²⁶ Ezekiel 9.6.

¹²⁷ “They took a ‘trampled corpse’ of theirs, that had been buried thirty days previously and carried it through the city, saying: ‘Behold what the Jews have done to our comrade. They took a gentile and boiled him water. They then poured the water into our wells in order to kill us.’” Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” in *The First Crusade*, p. 115.

up true sacrifices.’ They took their children and slaughtered them *unreservedly* for the unity of the revered and awesome Name.¹²⁸

This reference to the Kiddush Ha-Shem, or Sanctification of the Name, is the first reference in the chronicle to the martyrdom that hundreds more would choose in both Worms and Mainz.

The chronicle then chooses to give several accounts of Kiddush ha-Shem, specifically practiced by individuals who are named. The first such account is particularly relevant; R. Meshullam ben R. Isaac, a young man, proposes to sacrifice his son Isaac,

He called out loudly to all those standing there and to Zipporah his helpmate: “Listen to me both great and small. This son God gave me. My wife Zipporah bore him her old age and his name is Isaac. Now I shall offer him up as did our ancestor Abraham with his son Isaac.”¹²⁹

The chronicler tells us that “his helpmate” asked him to delay so as to avoid seeing the death of her first-born, but R. Meshullam says he will “not delay even a moment,”¹³⁰ and so saying, binds his first-born, makes the benediction for slaughter, at which his son answers “amen.” We see the son not only accepting his fate; rather he is welcoming and embracing his martyrdom according to the chronicle. This first example is especially important in considering martyrdom as a means of the expression of intent. It is here that the chronicler draws upon the mythic story of Abraham, who offers to slaughter his only son Isaac at the request of God. Abraham, the ultimate paradigm of *intentio*, prepares Isaac for slaughter, and lifts the knife, ready to murder his son. Yet, in the biblical story,

¹²⁸ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 116, italics are mine.

¹²⁹ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 116.

¹³⁰ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p. 116.

God stays the hand of Abraham, and gives him a ram as substitute for the slaughter, but only because “you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son.”¹³¹ The Mainz Anonymous inserts the medieval Jewish martyrs into this story, with the *intentio* matching that of Abraham. That the results are different would be extremely problematic, but I would argue that Abraham, having made the extreme move of faith, now represented an example for the martyrs by which this particular chronicle attempted to subsequently understand their motivations.

The anonymous chronicle goes on to discuss more “notables,” individuals in the Worms Jewish community who also committed themselves and their children to the unity of the “revered and awesome name,” with the emphasis here on the individual stories of various people within the community, all of whom come to their martyrdom in different ways. Isaac ben Daniel is unable to utter a word due to strangulation, but is able to cry out, “Cut off my head!” upon reaching the “the place of [the Christians’] idolatry.”¹³² The respected woman, Minna, denies baptism, and is killed. In addition to these individuals, we are told that “all of them were killed and sanctified the Divine Name *unreservedly and willingly*.”¹³³ It is this, the unreserved and willing nature of the sanctification that marks the sacrifice as a specific intention; and as martyrdom, rather than merely victimization. Through this intention, the individual emerges from the corporate group as an unambiguous self, determined to sacrifice the ultimate for faith.

¹³¹ Genesis 22.16.

¹³² Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p.117.

¹³³ Anonymous, “Gezerot Tatnu,” p.118, italics are mine.

The account finally comes to Mainz, and tells us how the “wicked” Emicho rode into the city, with several hundred commoners and crusaders, although the chronicle does note that there were anti-Jewish sentiments in the city before this army arrives. We are then told of an ensuing battle, which fails, and the subsequent slaughter.

Solomon bar Samson also places great emphasis on the “foe” Emicho riding into the city of Worms, with “his whole army against the city gates” which the citizens opened to him.¹³⁴ The battle is accounted for, and, in this account, the Mainz Anonymous, and in Albert of Aachen’s report, we are told of the Archbishop Ruthard, who had promised to help, but whose men are “the first to flee.”¹³⁵ The short account of Ekkehard (d. 1126), the Abbot of Aura, begins with Emicho, on whom he places a great deal of the blame and condemns in the very opening of his account. He tells us that in 1096, “there appeared a certain soldier, Emico, Count of the lands around the Rhine, a man long of very ill repute on account of his tyrannical mode of life.”¹³⁶

Albert of Aachen’s chronicle, again written in the twelfth century, also mentions Emicho, as the leader of the violence in the city of Mainz; but Albert, in a lengthier account, tells us that the violence in Mainz was not the beginning. Rather, his account begins earlier in Cologne, with the slaughter and wounding of Jews taking place by the

¹³⁴ Solomon bar Samson, “The Crusaders in Mayence,” in *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source Book: 315-1791*, ed. Jacob Marcus and Marc Saperstein, (Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College Press, 1999), p. 128.

¹³⁵ Solomon bar Samson, “The Crusaders in Mayence,” p. 129.

¹³⁶ Ekkehard of Aura, “The Slaughter of the Jews,” in *The First Crusade: the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), p. 112. Ekkehard ultimately excuses the acts of the crusaders, as he considers the Jews “execrable” – yet, I still think that his pejorative description of Emico, who would have been a fellow crusader, is problematic. Even if the action is vindicated for Ekkehard, why then would Emico have been seen as a man of ill repute, based upon his actions? For Albert of Aachen, there is no complication; Emico is wholly criticized and his actions, and those who followed him, condemned.

“citizens of Cologne.”¹³⁷ This addition to the narrative adds a significant facet to an already troubling account, as we consider that the violence took place by those who lived alongside the massacred Jews. Albert’s very next line betrays one possible reason why the Jews in Cologne may have been slaughtered, as he writes, “they destroyed the houses and synagogues of the Jews and divided among themselves a very large amount of money.”¹³⁸ However, it is impossible to simply see the violence against Jews as a grasping attempt by impoverished and famine-stricken urbanites to obtain more worldly goods.¹³⁹

Solomon bar Samson accounts the deaths of the martyrs in vivid detail, dwelling on the relationships that were sanctified through the murder/suicides,

The women there girded their loins with strength and slew their sons and their daughters and then themselves. Many men, too, plucked up courage and killed their wives, their sons, their infants. The tender and delicate mother slaughtered the babe she had played with; all of them, men and women arose and slaughtered one another.¹⁴⁰

This dwelling on the relationships between those being slaughtered and the ones performing the sacrifice, as well as those who kill themselves in the face of impending conversion, highlights the sacrifice, and again we are taken back to the Mainz Anonymous, which chose to focus on the sacrifice of Abraham and Isaac as the first

¹³⁷ Albert of Aachen, “The Slaughter of the Jews,” in *The First Crusade: the Chronicle of Fulcher of Chartres and Other Source Materials* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998), p. 110.

¹³⁸ Albert of Aachen, “The Slaughter of the Jews,” p. 110.

¹³⁹ Problematically, much of the historiography on the Jewish pogroms of 1096 has focused on the crusading mentality present within Western Christendom at this time. Similarly, historiography on the accounts of ritual murder by William of Norwich, which would happen nearly fifty years later tend to focus the pragmatic and materialistic focus of violence against Jews. For further information on accusations of ritual murder, and specifically William of Norwich, see Gavin Langmuir, *Towards a Definition of Anti-Semitism* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

¹⁴⁰ Solomon bar Samson, “The Crusaders in Mayence,” p. 130.

exemplum of this sanctification of the Name. Solomon bar Samson also references the Abraham and Isaac story, giving an explicit comparison

They tied their sons as Abraham tied Isaac his son, and they received upon themselves with a willing soul the yoke of the fear of God, the King of the Kings of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He, rather than deny and exchange the religion of our King for an “abhorred offshoot.”¹⁴¹

While both Chazan and Cohen have seen these explicit glorifications as guilt by those who chose baptism over martyrdom,¹⁴² there is nevertheless an awe and reverence held for this ultimate demonstration of faith.¹⁴³ Even the Christian narrative of Albert of Aachen is concerned with the resolve of those who placed faith above their own, and their children’s lives, as he recounts that

The Jews, seeing that their Christian enemies were attaching them and their children, and that they were sparing no age, likewise fell upon one another, brother, children, wives, and sisters, and thus they perished at each other’s hands...mothers cut the throats of nursing children with knives and stabbed others, preferring them to perish thus by their own hands rather than to be killed by the weapons of the uncircumcised.¹⁴⁴

Again, we see the same concern with emphasizing the relationships, highlighting the magnitude of the sacrifice, in the face of devotion to God. Even in this Christian narrative, there is a certain awe and respect for the ultimate sacrifice that is made, as

¹⁴¹ Solomon bar Samson, “The Crusaders in Mayence,” p. 130.

¹⁴² Chazan, *European Jewry*; and Cohen, *Sanctifying the Name of God*.

¹⁴³ Cohen’s own objective is to utilize the three accounts of the Kiddush ha-Shem in order to show the anxieties of the authors that committed them to history. These twelfth-century accounts, Cohen argues, display the fear, guilt and discord of those Jews who accepted baptism, rather than serve as accurate accounts of the events. Yet is this issue of authorial intent the most pertinent? Cohen betrays his own presentist concerns by arguing that the accounts of 1096, written out of the guilt of choosing life over martyrdom, shaped the consciousness of Ashkenazic Jewry up until the present.

¹⁴⁴ Albert of Aachen, “The Slaughter of the Jews,” p. 111.

“horrible” as it may be, it is not seen as suicide and murder, but rather, as an act of faith.

Furthermore, a special place is again held for the individual who makes the decision to take the knife into his or her own hand and sanctify the name, without the assistance of the crusaders. Even Jacob ben Sullam, who “was not from a family of notables. Indeed his mother was not Jewish,”¹⁴⁵ is given a special place within the chronicle. Because of his mother’s heritage, we are told that “all the days of [his] life till now, you [the other Jews of Mainz] have despised me. Now I shall slaughter myself.”¹⁴⁶ His act of martyrdom is a redemptive act of faith in the face of his questionable lineage. That “he slaughtered *himself*”¹⁴⁷ is the critical movement here; already separated through his parentage from the larger community, it is now the individual act of heroism that sets him apart, the individual *intentio* that marks him.

There are several other individual accounts related in the Mainz Anonymous. The account of the death of Samuel the elder ben R. Mordechai is particularly important to consider for “he took his knife and plunged it into his belly, spilling his innards upon the ground” as an example to his brethren, calling to them as he dies, “Behold my brethren what *I* do for the sanctification of the Eternal.”¹⁴⁸

There are subtle differences in the two accounts; while the Mainz Anonymous is particularly concerned with the hostility eminent in the Christian attitude towards Jews, the account by Solomon bar Samson seems more concerned with laying the blame on

¹⁴⁵ The Mainz Anonymous, p. 124.

¹⁴⁶ The Mainz Anonymous, p. 124.

¹⁴⁷ The Mainz Anonymous, p. 124, italics are mine.

¹⁴⁸ The Mainz Anonymous, p. 124, italics are mine.

Emicho, and recounting the horrors of the martyrdom itself. But it is this “I” that is so critical to the Mainz Anonymous account, and is most critical to the emergence of selfhood and intention. The individual and their actions within the chronicle are the pivotal aspects of this memorializing of the events. In the moment of making the sacrifice of oneself, in negotiating the space between the historical forces and the individual choice, the self, the “I” comes to the fore. As I have already noted, Heidegger points to the moment of death as the moment when the knowledge of being comes into existence. There is also a second concern: establishing the legitimacy of the martyrs. From the continuous need to reaffirm the heroism of the martyrs, as well as the references back to historical events, it is clear that there is some tension about the actions of these individuals, and that while their intent is clear, there is a difficulty in presenting their suicides as acts of heroism. Nevertheless, the “Anonymous” account is particularly engaged in the problematic nature of the deaths, highlighting the individual actions, even to the point of drawing significantly more attention to the suicides of the martyrs, as opposed to those slaughtered by the crusaders. Those who were slaughtered by the crusaders would have appeared as victims of violence, as opposed to heroes of intention, making a choice to die in the sanctification of the name. As Samuel the elder ben R. Mordechai makes the movement towards the *eternal*, he makes the movement of faith towards the infinite.

Heresy: The Joy of the Flames

Nearly fifty years after the Jewish pogroms in Mainz, in 1144, and little more than one hundred miles away, in Cologne, two men would be burned at the stake for their staunch conviction of the Cathar heresy.¹⁴⁹ The two men, one called a bishop, and the other his assistant, were reported to have “held their ground against...an assembly of clergy and laymen, in the presence of the lord archbishop himself and some great nobles, defending their heresy with the words of Christ and the Apostle [Paul].”¹⁵⁰

The heresy in Cologne, only forty-eight years after the events we have previously described, was documented in letters between Eberwin of Steinfeld and Bernard of Clairvaux. Eberwin wrote to Bernard of a particular heresy then popular in Cologne, and which his two charges would not deviate from, “promising that they would be reconciled to the Church if they should find their teachers unable to offer satisfactory response.”¹⁵¹

The issue of heresy has received a great deal of renewed interest in the last half-century, particularly the origins of heresy. Debates surrounding the eleventh-century’s changing social, religious, economic and demographic structure have contested Bogomil

¹⁴⁹ Whether or not this can actually be considered Cathar heresy is still debated. R.I. Moore has argued that the earliest trace of Bogomil influence is in the 1160’s. See R.I. Moore, *The Origins of European Dissent* (New York: Blackwell, 1985) and “Literacy and the Making of Heresy, c. 1000-1150,” in *Heresy and Literacy*, ed. Peter Biller and Anne Hudson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 19-37. Also, see Claire Taylor “Authority and the Cathar Heresy in the Languedoc,” in *Heresy and the Persecuting Society in the Middle Ages: Essays on the World of R.I. Moore*, ed. Michael Frassetto (Leiden: Brill, 2006). I would argue that an undue amount of attention has been given to the minutiae of the origins of heresy in the eleventh and twelfth century. While many argue that the presence of Bogomil missionaries accounts for the emergence of dualist heresies, regardless, it seems more pertinent that the articulation of orthodoxy across the Abrahamic religions at this time is what creates heresy.

¹⁵⁰ Eberwin of Steinfeld, “*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*” in *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, trans. Walter Leggett Wakefield, Austin Patterson Evans. New York, Columbia University Press, 1991, p. 128.

¹⁵¹ Eberwin of Steinfeld, “*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*,” p. 129.

influences.¹⁵² Even more recently, Malcolm Lambert has synthesized the two, arguing that it was a combination of both the changing conditions in the *Societas Christianus*, as well the influence of Balkan missionaries.¹⁵³

It would seem that Eberwin was aware of the Byzantine roots of the heresy in Cologne, for he tells Bernard of Clairvaux that

Indeed those who were burned told us during their defense that this heresy has lain concealed from the time of the martyrs even to our own day, and has persisted thus in Greece and certain other lands.¹⁵⁴

As Eberwin continues his account of the heresy in Cologne, we gain a clearer picture of all that is at stake. Eberwin is very careful to clearly articulate the doctrine of the heresy noting that

They say theirs alone is the Church, inasmuch as only they follow in the footsteps of Christ. They continue to be the true imitators of the apostolic life, seeking not those things which are of the world, possessing no house, or lands, or anything of their own, even as Christ had no property nor allowed His disciples the right of possessions.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵² For the changing social, religious, economic and demographic nature of heresy, see R.I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe 950-1250* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007) and, again, *The Origins of European Dissent*. For Bogomil influences, as well as dualism, the classic text is Steven Runciman, *The Medieval Manichee. A Study of the Christian Dualist Heresy* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 1947). For a more contemporary study, see Bernard Hamilton, *Christian Dualist Heresies in the Byzantine World, c. 650-1450* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993) and “Bogomil Influences on Western Heresy,” in *Heresy and the Persecuting Society in the Middle Ages: Essays on the World of R.I. Moore*, ed. Michael Frassetto (Leiden: Brill, 2006).

¹⁵³ Malcolm Lambert, *Medieval Heresy* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002) and *The Cathars* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998).

¹⁵⁴ Eberwin of Steinfeld, in *Heresies of the High Middle Ages*, p. 132. Also see Hamilton “Bogomil Influences on Western Heresy,” p. 100.

¹⁵⁵ Eberwin of Steinfeld, “*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*,” p. 132.

There are some distinct difficulties in regarding heresy through the lens of the Church's response; yet Eberwin is extremely detailed in laying out all of the tenets of the heresy.¹⁵⁶ We are told that the heretics baptize in water, fire and the Spirit, and that they have the power to transubstantiate food and drink "thus changing it into the body and blood of Christ so as therefrom to nourish themselves as the members and body of Christ."¹⁵⁷ But it is this issue of rejection of the Church that is obviously most troubling for Eberwin. That the heretics refuse the authority of the Church, and place no faith in the sacraments given by ecclesiastic officials, seems to be the overwhelming concern. It is obvious that Eberwin has some measure of respect for these heretics, who were able to hold their ground against such an august group of clergy, and that he holds their spiritual authority to be real in that they are able to transform the food and drink.

Eberwin also goes on to describe "certain other heretics" in the land, who, "differing completely"¹⁵⁸ from those who were burned, seem to trouble him even more. These heretics deny utterly the power of the papacy, as well as the entire ecclesiastical structure of the Church; have no faith in the intercession of saints, and reject Purgatory. Of these heretics, there are no mitigating words of respect; rather Eberwin's tone is almost frightened of these heresies.

¹⁵⁶ While I do not agree with Bernard Hamilton's reasoning, I agree here with Hamilton who notes "educated churchmen thought it important to diagnose heresies correctly." "Bogomil Influences on Western Heresy," p. 95. It is obvious that Eberwin was extremely concerned with the doctrinal aspects of the heresy, and such a concern betrays significant anxiety with origins, as well as dogma.

¹⁵⁷ Eberwin of Steinfeld, "*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*," p. 130.

¹⁵⁸ Eberwin of Steinfeld, "*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*," p. 130.

Let us return though to the first two heretics, the so-called bishop and his assistant awaiting another disputation between themselves and the clergy. We are told that these two heretics promise

That they would be reconciled to the Church if they should find their teachers unable to offer satisfactory response; otherwise, they would rather die than be swayed from their beliefs. This being agreed upon, they were reasoned with for three days but would not recant.¹⁵⁹

These heretics make the same movement of faith that we saw earlier in the Jewish martyrs. The intention is the most critical statement of faith, and these two heretics are willing to die for their version of orthodoxy, rather than recant. The long twelfth century, with the emergence of new types of religiosity, also saw witnessed a revival in the articulation of orthodoxy. In the articulation of these orthodoxies, we see the critical movement of faith, and the intent behind such faith to actually die for one's own right belief, and even more surprisingly, right practice. Heresy in itself becomes a statement of faith, that the intent to die for one's articulation of right belief is the critical component of faith/ devotional worship.

Here too, as in the martyrdom of the Jews, we see that the *intentio* is actually followed through to action, as the people, against the will of Eberwin, seize the heretics and throw them into the fire. Eberwin has great awe for the two heretics, who he says "met and bore the agony of the fire not only with patience but even with joy."¹⁶⁰ That they met their deaths with *joy* is the critical movement here of faith. Just as in the accounts of the Kiddush ha-Shem, the religious faith of both the corporate group and the

¹⁵⁹ Eberwin of Steinfeld, "*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*," p. 129.

¹⁶⁰ Eberwin of Steinfeld, "*Everwini Steinfeldensis praepositi ad S. Bernardum*," p. 129.

individual is superseded by the choice made by the martyr. Ivan Marcus, furthering the work of Chazan who pointed out that divine will was at work in the both the Jewish and Latin narratives of 1096,¹⁶¹ notes the similarities between Jewish and Christian narratives of the first crusade.¹⁶² Marcus has pointed out that the “dimension of individual choice” plays a special role in the shared culture of the twelfth century.¹⁶³ In the creation of textual works on either the first crusade or the heresies of the twelfth century, writers emphasized the language of intention, as well as that dimension of individual choice. The language of intention comes out even more strongly in the exempla literature of both Jews and Christians, which will be explored in the next chapter.

¹⁶¹ Robert Chazan, “The Early development of Hasidut Ashkenaz,” in *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. 75, no. 3 (January 1985), p. 199-211

¹⁶² Ivan Marcus, “The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal,” in *Jews and Christians in Twelfth-Century Europe*, ed. Michael Signer and John Van Engen (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 2001) p. 32.

¹⁶³ Marcus, “The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal,” p. 32.

Article I. CHAPTER THREE

Exempla Literature: Sefer Hasidim & Caesarius of Heisterbach

Perhaps one of the most critical investigations of selfhood across religious boundaries involves examining the ecstatic language of exempla literature, in which notions of interiority and selfhood emerge in devotional writings for the laity. Nearly a century after the First Crusade resulted in the pogroms of 1096, Judah the Hasid (d. 1217) worked on the composition of what has become one of the founding texts of German-Jewish pietism, *Sefer Hasidim*.¹⁶⁴ *Sefer Hasidim*, or The Book of the Pietists, is a collection of teachings, or *exempla*; narrative tales that illustrated a religious truth, possibly composed for the religious guidance of the Jewish community in Regensburg. There are nearly two thousand stories that reflect biblical commentary, rabbinic homily, and exemplary tales. Not only is *Sefer Hasidim* remarkable for the number and variety of tales it contains, but also because of its wide circulation and influence far beyond the Rhineland.¹⁶⁵

Only a few years after Judah compiled *Sefer Hasidim*, the Cistercian monk Caesarius of Heisterbach (d. 1240) compiled an instruction manual for the novices,

¹⁶⁴ Rabbi Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, trans. Avraham Yaakov Finkel, (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc, 1997). This translation utilizes the Hebrew text of the Margalioth edition (Jerusalem: Mossad Harav Kook, 1957), and *Sefer Chasidim*, (Jerusalem: *Mechon Rishonim*). This translation has been rearranged thematically by Finkel. The notion of *sincerity*, or rather of *baal teshuvah* (returnee to the Torah way of life), seems critical when one considers selfhood to be a matter of intention.

¹⁶⁵ While popular tradition suggested that Rabbi Judah the Hasid compiled the entirety of the text, several scholars have now agreed that his father, Rabbi Samuel the Hasid, and possibly Rabbi Eleazar of Worms, helped contribute and edit the original edition. For a thorough discussion of the language, editions, and authorship, see Simcha Kogut, "The Language of 'Sefer Hasidim,' Its Linguistic Background and Methods of Research," in *Studies in Medieval Jewish History and Literature, Vol. II.*, ed. Isadore Twersky, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), p. 95-108.

Dialogus Miraculorum.¹⁶⁶ Caesarius, educated at the cathedral school of Cologne, divided his works into twelve books that covered topics of conversion, confession, temptation, demons, visions, and miracles. Many of the stories that Caesarius used for instruction were probably taken from miracle tales told by lay people, and similar to Judah's compilation of exempla, appealed to a wide community of popular belief. While several scholars have looked at the German folkloric roots that permeate both *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, there is more than merely a folkloric similarity between the works.¹⁶⁷

Exempla literature held a special place in the instruction of the medieval laity, attempting to instruct a popular culture in right belief, as well as right practice. While the works themselves were written and used to instruct scholars, they were also read aloud and incorporated local folklore. Judah the Pious argued that his motivation in compiling these stories of instruction was “so that all who fear God and those returning to their Creator with sincerity may see, know, and understand what they should do and what they should avoid.”¹⁶⁸ The exempla had been an important medium for teaching religious values, and although the twelfth and thirteenth century have often been considered the “golden age” of exemplary literature in Christian Europe, such stories existed in the oral tradition hundreds of years before the written collections. Eli Yassif has argued that such

¹⁶⁶ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I & II, trans. H. Von E. Scott and C. C. Swinton Bland, (London: Routledge, 1929).

¹⁶⁷ I do not wish to suggest that *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Dialogus Miraculorum* are the only two examples of exempla literature that share similarities. However, they both serve as illustrative of the genre.

¹⁶⁸ R. Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, p. 3.

“developments in medieval culture must have had influence over or connection with the Jewish culture of the day.”¹⁶⁹

Neither Jewish or Christian exempla literature developed entirely from external influences. Examples of literature that predated *Sefer Hasidim*, such as the *Midrash of the Ten Commandments* and *An Elegant Composition Concerning Relief after Adversity*, both emerged out of the influences of Muslim culture on the Jewish communities in the taifas that followed the fall of the Caliphate of Cordoba in 1009. As early as the eighth century, Islamic culture had already utilized the *adab* and the *faraj*, tales of instruction to transmit ethical values to a lay population. Perhaps the *Disciplina Clericalis* of Petrus Alfonsi shows most clearly the influence of the exempla by all three cultures. Petrus Alfonsi, a Jew converted to Christianity in the eleventh century in the expanding Kingdom of Aragon, utilized narrative tales in order to spread moral and religious principles. However, these tales were often focused on disputations between Petrus and his imaginary interlocutor (the *Dialogi* take place between Petrus and Moses).

The tales of the twelfth and thirteenth century depicted in both *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Dialogus Miraculorum* reveal a major concern with the individual as the predominant character. The stories are about actual people, as opposed to an anonymous group of those who are worthy of a “portion of the world to come.” As opposed to the type of religious narrative that was concerned with commentary on the Torah in an abstract manner, or scholastic *disputatio*, Judah and Caesarius’s narratives are about

¹⁶⁹ Eli Yassif, *The Hebrew Folktale: History, Genre, Meaning*, trans. Jacqueline S. Teitelbaum, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. 283.

contemporary individuals, with current issues about how to live as a good person in the world.¹⁷⁰ The self emerges as the predominant actor negotiating between the historical forces of tension and anxiety inherent in the competition of culture, particularly religious culture, and the intentionality of the individual.

The Language of Intent

The language of *intentio* is evident within *Sefer Hasidim*, particularly in the story of the shepherd who is told by the scholar that he ought not to pray in a given manner. The scholar comes upon the shepherd, who is praying to the Holy One “Master of the universe, You know full well that even though I normally charge everyone else a fee, if you had animals and gave them to me to guard, I would guard them for free – because I love You.”¹⁷¹ The scholar chastises the shepherd, saying “Fool! Do not pray that way.”¹⁷² The scholar teaches the shepherd the appropriate blessings and liturgy of Judaism, yet, the shepherd forgets these, and then stops saying anything at all. The scholar learns of this lapse in a dream, in which he is also told that he has done wrong to interfere with the shepherd’s method of prayer. The voice in the dream tells the scholar that “if you do not go and tell the cattle herder to pray as he did before you met him,

¹⁷⁰ I would suggest that this is similar to the issue of Church in the world, in which we see the emergence of the *vita apostolic*. How one can live religion in the world is yet another manifestation of the concern with the individual over the corporate group. Religious life is no longer limited to the monastery or nunnery, but is now actually accessible to even the average individual.

¹⁷¹ Rabbi Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies: Imaginative Narratives from Classical Hebrew Literature*, ed. David Stern and Mark J. Mirsky; intro and trans. by Ivan Marcus, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 219-220. Whenever possible, I have utilized Ivan Marcus’ translation, which was based on the Parma manuscript found in the Biblioteca Palatina, and now is in a facsimile in the Zalman Shazar Center in Jerusalem.

¹⁷² R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 220.

beware the misfortune that awaits you. You have robbed Me of a man who deserves the world to come.”¹⁷³ The reader is meant to assume that the voice in the dream is God himself, and that the dream-vision has come directly to the scholar in an unmediated format. This direct speech to the scholar is also reminiscent of the direct line between Moses and God discussed earlier in chapter one in Maimonides’ *Guide for the Perplexed*; and indicates a very close, individual link with God that lacks intercession.

The words of the Holy One also provide the reader with a valuable insight into the language of intent. It is no longer correct practice that is critical in obtaining the world to come, but rather, the intent of one’s actions are the most critical. The narrative ends with the commentary that

This is the case of a man who had no Torah and no good deeds. Yet he merely thought of performing good deeds and God counted it as a great thing. For “the Merciful wants the heart.” That is why a man should think good thoughts toward the Holy One, blessed be He.¹⁷⁴

Even though the shepherd may not have performed the good works that he prayed about, he nevertheless *intended* his works to be good to God. This language of intent is far more important to the story than the proper liturgy that the scholar attempts to impose upon the shepherd.

The dialogue of intent is also evident within the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, as Caesarius sets out the “contention of the holy angels with demons for the soul of a contrite usurer.”¹⁷⁵ The story tells of a sick man, who had been stricken with mortal

¹⁷³ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 220.

¹⁷⁴ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 220.

¹⁷⁵ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 116.

illness while “still full of insatiable avarice.”¹⁷⁶ Upon reflection of his sins, he calls for a Benedictine abbot, and asks the abbot to undertake his affairs, and restore the money he has exacted. It is only upon the abbot perceiving the man to be “truly contrite, truly penitent,”¹⁷⁷ that he agrees to consider the usurer’s request. Once he gains the approval of the bishop, who requests that the abbot answer for the man’s soul only upon restoring the “treasure of the church,”¹⁷⁸ the abbot returns to the sick man and takes charge of the usurer’s property, while answering to God for his sins.

The property is returned and the usurer, now dead, is laid out in the church, where his body becomes a battleground on which good and evil are fought out. The body could be the physical corporeality, as it had been for Maimonides and Christian scholastics; or it could be a metaphor for a community struggling to find an identity that encompassed an ever-changing group of individuals. The “body”¹⁷⁹ became both a physical and rhetorical battleground as flesh subject to decay, mortality and death; as implicit sexuality, and as a means of redemption, conversion and damnation upon which notions

¹⁷⁶ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 116.

¹⁷⁷ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 116.

¹⁷⁸ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 116.

¹⁷⁹ Notions of the body are extremely problematic; in the same way that “sexuality” is not merely “the narrative reconstructive of the changing forms of a transhistorical essence, but rather the history of a discourse and culture within which a certain modern institution came into existence.” Daniel Boyarin and Elizabeth Castelli, “Introduction: Foucault’s The History of Sexuality,” p. 358. What exactly do we mean when we talk about the “body?” For many historians, particularly early feminist historians, the body seems to be equated with sexuality, or with what Caroline Bynum has called a “performative” approach, as opposed to constructed or discovered. She argues that many of the contemporary scholarship in the late twentieth century was focused on “sex and gender,” a body “characterized by discomfort,” and interpretations that see the body as “dualist.” Caroline Bynum, “A Medievalist’s Perspective on the Body,” in *Critical Inquiry*, vol. 22 (Autumn 1995), p. 4-6. This problem of looking at the body in such a way persists in many ways today, although feminist/ gender historians like Judith Bennett and Joan Scott respectively certainly have acknowledged that the problems are far more complex than we had previously allowed. See Judith Bennett’s *History Matters: Patriarchy and the Challenge of Feminism*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005, and Joan’s Scott’s revised article “Unanswered Questions,” *American Historical Review*, vol. 113, no. 5 (December 2008): 1422-1430.

of orthodoxy and orthopraxy competed for supremacy. At stake was the legitimacy of the role of the individual in both the physical world and the world to come. In Caesarius' narrative, four demons battle four angels for the salvation of the usurer's soul. Each quote scripture, but due to the contrition of the sinner before his death, the angels ultimately prevail. They tell the devils that "to the Lord he shall go, because he put his trust under the shadow of His wings: he shall be satisfied with the pleasures of His house, for he hath bewailed himself with the tears of contrition."¹⁸⁰ The story ends with the novice asking, "which was the more helpful to this usurer, his alms or his contrition?"¹⁸¹ to which the instructing monk replies, "this I can tell you of a certainty, that if contrition had been lacking, his alms would have profited him but little."¹⁸² Just as in the story of the shepherd from *Sefer Hasidim*, it is the intention of the wrong-doer, or in the case of Caesarius, the sinner, that is the most important. Without proper internal contrition, the external act of the sinner is rendered useless.

In another story from *Sefer Hasidim*, a man lost in a forest encounters a dead man, a Jew who is roaming the forest because he has no peace and is "being chased around the forest because [he] stole the field that belonged to so-and-so."¹⁸³ A similar story is then told "about a non-Jew who died, and a while later his servant ran into him at night."¹⁸⁴ The dead man tells his servant that he is being driven "because [he] took so-and-so's

¹⁸⁰ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 118.

¹⁸¹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 118.

¹⁸² Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 118.

¹⁸³ Rabbi Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, p. 84.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

property by force.”¹⁸⁵ He asks the servant to have his wife return the property, and the gives the servant the assurance that he will physically be in “such-and-such” place tomorrow in order to verify the servant’s veracity. The following day, the dead man is seen in the place he appointed to the servant, and it is found that he is no longer in his grave. The servant then says “return the property to its rightful owner, then the deceased will have peace.”¹⁸⁶ The story notes that “this happened to a non-Jew, and you may wonder whether or not it is true that a non-Jew must return stolen property, but surely for a Jew the law is that stolen property must be returned to the victim.”¹⁸⁷ By using the non-Jew as an example, the admonishment to return stolen property gains in magnitude.

Ultimately, the writer asks “How can it benefit a person in the World to Come if others are doing for him something he himself failed to do while alive?”¹⁸⁸ Here the rhetoric of intent and contrition comes to the fore, as the narrator argues that for the meritorious sinner, “the person benefits when people are praying or donating tzedakah (charity) for him, or if his heirs restore to the rightful owners something he misappropriated.”¹⁸⁹ Regardless of the intention of the living, it is the intention of the dead that is foremost of importance, and without merits, the dead have no chance of being helped. The evildoer “who has no merits at all will not be helped after death, no matter what good deeds are done for him here on earth, unless during his lifetime he gave specific instructions for certain good deeds to be done, and these instructions are carried

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ Rabbi Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, p. 84.

out after his death.”¹⁹⁰ This echoes Caesarius’ usurer who on his deathbed restored the stolen property to those whom he had wronged, and only because of this was able to escape the demons.

The act of contrition is revealed to be even more important in the story of the “money of a usurer which devoured the money of a monastery when it was placed near it.”¹⁹¹ In this story, Caesarius relates that a usurer entrusted a certain sum of money to a cellarer of the Cistercians. The cellarer sealed up the money in a safe next to the money of the monastery. “Later, when the other reclaimed his deposit, the cellarer, unlocking the safe found that both it and the monastery money had disappeared.”¹⁹² Upon realizing that the locks of the safe had not been tampered with, the cellarer realizes that “money of the usurer had destroyed both the monastery money and itself. From [which] it can be gathered that the property of a monastery is not only not increased, but actually diminished by the alms of usury.”¹⁹³ The fallibility of the monastery in this tale makes it even more valuable as a lesson as it is not a mere mortal who goes astray but rather those who have dedicated themselves to God, which is probably one of the reasons that such stories were included in exempla literature. Such a story increases both the readability of the story for both clerics and lay alike, while imparting a particularly powerful moral at the end when the monk tells the novice that “contrition does not consist in tears but in the emotion of the heart, whose outward signs are indeed tears of the eyes, but the heart has

¹⁹⁰ Rabbi Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, p. 84.

¹⁹¹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 121.

¹⁹² Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 121.

¹⁹³ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 121.

tears of its own.”¹⁹⁴ The tears of the *heart*, undetectable to all but the sinner and God, are the most critical movements of contrition that speak about faith, as opposed to merely going through the motions of contrition. Only God can truly see the contrition of the sinner, and it is through the miracles of the Holy One speaking to the wise man, the victory of the angels over the demons, or the consumption of the monastic money that God can directly show the importance of intention.

In the narratives in *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, penance was increasingly focused on expiating one’s own sins in the act of faith between oneself and God. No longer was it simply enough to make restitution to the community; rather, the individual purged oneself in order to be acceptable to God, both in this world, and in that which was to come.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹⁴ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. I, p. 121.

¹⁹⁵ Following Cyrille Vogel’s work, the concept of personal intention received a great deal of attention by a variety of scholars, and was followed up by Peter Brown, who agreed with Vogel and argued that medieval society was forced to cope with the problem of the sinner in its midst. Brown noted that the sacred and profane were first blurred by the ordeal “a ‘controlled miracle’ brought to bear on the day-to-day needs of the community,” (Peter Brown, “Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change,” 307-8). The sinner did not just make peace with God through penance, but also made peace with the community: either through actions of space by becoming a monk, or exile; or through the action of what Brown calls the “histrionic” – a public mark of penance.

Brown argued that the twelfth century changes in penance (and indeed in all areas of religious devotion) had its markers in the tenth century. The line between the sacred and the profane was “defined in terms of the objectified non-human against the subjective human,” (Brown, 321). In the early middle ages, the sacred and profane were able to intermingle due to the subjective and objective human experience being intermingled; although Brown maintained that even the objectivity of the supernatural was simply a veneer. Rather, the supernatural of late antiquity had been quite personal and changed into the eleventh century with dense population growth. Brown then traced a lessening of such strangleholds of urbanization through the improvement of farming techniques, which he argued allowed for growing a sense of independence. More importantly, Brown argued that the twelfth century moved away from ceremony such as the ordeal, which had been a theatrical bid for consensus in a society. He claimed that the ruler was no longer a peacemaker, he was the imposer of law and order, and, somewhat reminiscent of Henry Charles Lea, signaling a shift from consensus to authority. Peter Brown, “Society and the Supernatural: A Medieval Change,” in *Society and the Holy Man in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982) 302-332.

In *Sefer Hasidim*, we are told that three men go before sages in order to confess. Each has committed a different type of sin, and wonders what type of penance they will receive. The sins are of a unique nature in that they are attempts to provoke evil thoughts, rather than evil deeds. One of the sinners walks around a forest in an attempt to find a man who continually taunts him in town. Yet, even though he has sought out the insulter, when face-to-face, he doesn't act. The sinner tells the sage

My father acted the same way for several years. This is why I am asking you [the sage]: is it counted as a virtuous deed, as a religious act? In regard to myself, did I act correctly by holding my temper, or must I confess for having brought myself to the point of sinning by drawing my sword, insulting and cursing him, so that he would fight with me? Or do I merit a reward for performing a religious act?¹⁹⁶

There is a conflict about the differences of intention. Does it count that the sinner has been at the point where intended to draw his sword? Or, because he ended up “holding his temper,” is he to be commended for his good deed? The sage ultimately tells all three men, including the one who has not drawn his sword, that, “you require a penance for the sins you committed. For we are commanded to purge those who act sinfully, and you have come very close to sinning intentionally.”¹⁹⁷ Here again the boundaries between the larger community and the individual are being simultaneously created and torn down. The purity of the community is of utmost concern, yet this requires very personalized judgments about the intentions of individuals within the community. The intentionality is what determines the type of penance, as opposed to simply the act itself. The narrative further explains “a person is suspected of sinning only if he actually committed a sinful

¹⁹⁶ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 221-222.

¹⁹⁷ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 223.

act, or actually entertained a sinful thought, or was pleased when others did.”¹⁹⁸ Again, the act itself is not necessarily the defining characteristic requiring *poenitentia*, but rather, it is the *intentio* of the individual.

The Profaning of God: The Divine Name and Host Desecration

While intention is one of the central themes in *Sefer Hasidim* and the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, the sacrality of God, as God is represented in the world, is also critical. Physical manifestations of God’s divinity suggest that there is a gap between practice and right belief which only faith can bridge. That faith requires that both the community *and* the individual define oneself – over and above the competing “other.” Exclusive rights to salvation are both the province of both the corporate group and the individual persons that make up such groups. Concerns with the desecration of God, present for Judah the Pious in the name, and in the host for Caesarius of Heisterbach, permeate both narratives. These concerns with the divine, indicate the movement towards the infinite, that have so concerned this thesis.

In *Sefer Hasidim*, the reader is told “if a Torah scroll develops a tear in the Four-Letter Name of God, you should not mend it by stitching through the Name, because you would be piercing God’s Name.”¹⁹⁹ The sanctity of God is visible in the real world, and the sacred is held within the written word.

Caesarius handles the sacred nature of God in the world differently in the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, in which various tales of the host are narrated. Many of the tales

¹⁹⁸ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, in *Rabbinic Fantasies*, p. 223.

¹⁹⁹ R. Judah the Pious, *Sefer Hasidim*, p. 51.

are fantastic; in one, bees build a shrine for the host that a woman has placed in one of the hives.²⁰⁰ Interestingly, she is not punished for having misused the host, but rather has a miracle worked through her sinful act. Yet, others in Caesarius' narrative are stricken with a variety of ills for misuse of the host: a woman is stricken with paralysis for having spread the Lord's body over her cabbages,²⁰¹ a priest is unable to leave the church because of his wicked intent towards a parishioner,²⁰² a fly is stricken because it has hovered over the host.²⁰³ The host itself becomes a pivotal character in these stories, able to drown heretics when it is cast into the river,²⁰⁴ or able to sustain an adult woman.²⁰⁵

In all of these stories, both in *Sefer Hasidim*, as well as in the *Dialogus Miraculorum*, the presence of God is a tangible quality. Nor does it require translation through rabbinic authority, or the hands of a priest – but rather the presence of God is immediately accessible to the character of the story, and thereby to the reader of the story. The individual emerges as the predominant actor, evident through either the primacy of the intention of the agent in the story, or the agency given to the individual by the narrator. Faith, and the movement of faith that occurs from right practice to right belief, indicates a high level of tension and anxiety for both Jews and Christians attempting to negotiate the historical forces of competing religions. While there are many similarities, even beyond the few stories that have been explored here, there are also significant differences in the ways that Jews and Christians recounted the exempla.

²⁰⁰ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 114.

²⁰¹ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 115.

²⁰² Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 112.

²⁰³ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 116.

²⁰⁴ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 118.

²⁰⁵ Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogus Miraculorum*, Vol. II, p. 150.

Such differences, between the sanctity of the spoke word, as opposed to a physical substance, or the tension implicit in a positivist miracle story, as opposed to a resignation for the punishment of sins, indicate some of the problems that Jews and Christians would have faced in what were most likely extremely fluid communal boundaries. Regardless, both reached for an ecstatic devotion to God, present in a multitude of ways. As Judah the Pious tells the reader,

Our Creator commanded us to serve Him with love...so that the love of our soul be bound up with Him in joy, in love, and with gladness.

The joyous feeling of this love is passionate and utterly overpowering. In fact, a man who has not been with his wife for many days and has a great desire for her does not find the moment that he ejaculates as exhilarating as the intensity and power of loving God and finding joy in the Creator. And all the pleasures of playing with one's children are like nothing compared to the spiritual joy of the man who loves God with all his heart and soul and might, which means with all his thoughts...His love of the Creator must be so great and overwhelming that he becomes lovesick, like a person who is starved for the affections of a woman and is consumed with love when sits, rises, goes, and comes, and when he eats and drinks. His love even robs him of his sleep. The love of the Creator should be far more ardent than this...How can a person come to love God and be in awe of Him? When one contemplates the great and wondrous works of God, which are unfathomable and infinite, he immediately loves, praises and glorifies, and yearns deeply to know that great, revered and awesome Name.²⁰⁶

That joyous feeling of love that was passionate and overpowering must have resonated with Caesarius praising the miracles of Christ, with the martyrs who joyfully went into the flames, the proud victims of the Kiddush Ha-Shem, Maimonides making his movement towards a statement of faith, and Christian Scholastics attempting to define orthodoxy through statements of intent. Yet, ironically, these parallel movements of joy

²⁰⁶ Rabbi Judah the Hasid, *Sefer Hasidim*, trans. Avraham Yaakov Finkel, (Northvale: Jason Aronson Inc, 1997), p. 6.

by Jews and Christians ultimately created new boundaries, which in turn gave rise to increased anxiety between the two cultures.

CONCLUSION

Moments of Being

Amidst the increasing violence continually engendered by the two cultures living side-by-side, engaged in similar acts of creating faith statements, the concern with *being*, or what Heidegger termed *Dasein*, becomes preeminent. The textualization of these ecstatic movements of faith is what becomes the decisive expression of such moments of being. Ultimately, it is the narrator's choice of inclusion and exclusion that demonstrates a particular anxiety that resounds throughout the text. Martin Heidegger defined the project of the author

To be involved in saying is the mark of a saying that follows something to be said, solely in order to say it. What is to be said would then be what by nature belongs to the province of language. And that, thought metaphysically, is particular beings as a whole. Their wholeness is the intactness of the pure draft, the sound of wholeness of the Open, in that it makes room within itself for man. This happens in the world's inner space. That space touches man when, in the inner recalling of conversion, he turns toward the space of the heart. The more venturesome ones turn the unwholesomeness of the unshieldedness into the soundness of worldly existence. This is what is to be said."²⁰⁷

Perhaps these Jewish and Christian authors, in an attempt to master language; are the "venturesome" Heidegger is addressing, attempting to put into language the inner spaces of the heart, the "unshieldedness," into the "soundness of worldly existence." The deception of language is what fascinates and creates the confusion, not the ability to articulate. Articulation seems to be little more than a fantasy, an ideal that is never

²⁰⁷ Martin Heidegger, *Poetry, Language Thought*, (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2001), p. 135.

actually reached. The text of *jouissance* is never based solely on language alone, but rather, the complications of language and the placement: silence, or what is not put into language, is most often the means of creating *jouissance*. Expression in any sense, however, is limited. Even if we enlarge our definition of language to include all and every conceivable type of art, there is still the problem with mediation. All art is a mediated form of expression, it is only able to encompass as much as it is valued. Regardless, these highly complex narratives highlight the tensions and anxieties of a shifting and changing world, in which communal and religious boundaries were often fluid, and the *intentio* of the individual is emerging out of institutionalized power. I would suggest returning to Hugh of St. Victor, who predates Heidegger when he says that

Faith, then, is necessary by which those things may be believed which are not seen, and those things which are not yet present to us through species may subsist in us through faith. And so the substance of those things is faith, since through faith alone they now subsist in us, and similarly the proof of those is faith, since through faith alone are they proven by us.²⁰⁸

The silence of textualization is mirrored by that of the statement of faith, in which those things that are not present must subsist through faith. The boundaries created by faith statements, and the mediation of individuals across such boundaries, result in desperate acts of ecstatic religiosity, in which moments of being emerge out of intent.

“Living Together, Living Apart”

²⁰⁸ Hugh of St. Victor, *De Sacramentis*, trans. Roy Deferrari, (Cambridge: The Medieval Academy of America, 1951), p. 167. “*Fides ergo necessaria est qua credantur quae non videntur, et subsistant in nobis per fidem, quae nondum praesentia nobis sunt per speciem. Sic itaque substantia illorum est fides, quia per solam fidem subsistunt nunc in nobis: et argumentum similiter illorum est fides, quia per solam fidem probantur a nobis.*”

I have been concerned with the statement of faith as a particular manifestation of religious expression in the long twelfth century, not because such expressions were new, but the frequency of such expressions transcending the socio-economic strata of medieval society are striking. The new attention to intentionality also suggests something distinctive in the anxieties of medieval communities.

Jews and Christians continued to live side-by-side throughout the Middle Ages in relatively fluid communities, resulting in violence where anxieties about the *other* emerged. In the creation of boundary lines, a shared semantic culture is critical in understanding where such boundaries may lie, and yet, can paradoxically create more violence as discourse is co-opted and perverted by competing groups. The tension and fluidity of these boundaries can be seen in the shared concerns of Jews and Christians in the theological tracts produced by Jewish and Christian scholastics, in martyrdom,²⁰⁹ and in exempla literature. In creating communities that lived side-by-side with the “other,” shared discourse created a language of intention, in which both Jewish and Christian communities encountered the concern with selfhood.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹ Fantasies of ritual murder, and stories of host desecration also betray anxiety over shared discourse. Host desecration serves as one of the most obvious examples of the anxiety over right practice and orthodoxy. In these chimerical narratives of violence²⁰⁹ Jews are accused of murdering Christ yet again, and utilizing the body for a variety of sinister motives. These stories hold all of the concern of Christians about right practice, and whether or not consumption of the host was murder or absorption. From these stories, in which Jews desecrate the body of Christ – which wasn’t difficult to imagine when the Jews were depicted as the murders of Christ – it was merely another emplotment to fold Jews into legends of child murder. For more on the shift from xenophobic stereotypes to chimerical fantasies, see Langmuir, *Towards a Definition of Anti-Semitism*.

²¹⁰ In considering a shared semantic discourse, George Simmel has argued that the dualistic nature of sociological forms that are constantly shaping, coming into conflict, and then re-establishing themselves in new ways, indicates that in order to fight, one must actually fight under *mutually* recognized rules and normatives. Yet this begs the question – what happens when one doesn’t fight under mutually recognized mutually rules? Simmel seems to hint that urbanization marks out one of the greatest threats – an

The systemic problem of historiography on shared culture, and one that this thesis shares, is that while it is easy to trace similarities between Jewish and Christian approaches to society, culture, economics, and even, as argued here, religion – the question of *why* such similarities existed still plague the historian. While many modern historians have traced the narrative of Jews and Christians “living together, living apart,”²¹¹ the attempt to distinguish a particular reason for the dynamism of the twelfth century and the eruption between Jewish and Christian relations seems to elude us. Ivan Marcus has suggested that Latin Christendom and medieval Jewish culture shared a “dynamic of retrieving ancient sources of authority and adapting them to new shared circumstances,” resulting,

In paradoxically two opposite trends in Jewish-Christian social relations. One trend was an increase in the possibilities for individuals to make new choices among different religious groups. Such a choice might also include crossing over the boundary to join the other religious culture as a convert. The other trend, which occurred at the same time, and in some ways was stimulated by the dangers perceived in the first, involved an upsurge of each religious culture’s sense of group solidarity and identity.²¹²

Max Weber has argued that all religions must make the transition from ecstatic right belief to the maintenance of right practice in order to remain viable. While I agree that religions make this movement from orthodoxy to orthopraxy, I see it rather as ebb and flow throughout history. While the statement of faith had been of importance in Late Antiquity, it waned in the Early Middle Ages, and again became critical in the twelfth

exacerbation of tendencies towards conflict, with the added threat of physical closeness with the “other.” George Simmel, *Conflict and the Web of Group-Affiliations*, trans. Kurt H. Wolff and Reinhard Bendix, (New York: The Free Press, 1955).

²¹¹ The title of Jonathan Elukin’s book of Jewish-Christian relations seems particularly apt.

²¹² Ivan Marcus, *The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*,” p. 32.

century. As Jews and Christians rediscovered the primordial narratives of ancient religious texts, new trends surfaced, which would have grave consequences for both communities.

With the creation of community the articulation of right belief is often manifested by violence. In the competing need for origins, shared semantic discourse becomes evident, but often distorted. How can a dialogue ensue if each party has a different meaning behind shared semantic terms? If martyrs do not care if they die, then putting them to death is no longer punishment, and violence no longer works as a unifying strategy, but is rather a futile gesture. The very act of martyrdom itself may be called into question if semantic discourse is not shared – it may be considered suicide, or inevitability. Ritual murder accusations may be seen as martyrdom accounts, to be reenacted by various participants.²¹³ Host desecration accounts take the language of anxiety about orthodoxy and create new myths. The permeable boundaries of community are continually transgressed and renegotiated both by the violence they perpetuate, and the violence that is then perpetuated. Within these negotiated spaces, individual choice emerges, and makes the movement of intention.

Perhaps then the answer really does lie in the violence of 1096, in which the “increase in individual choice among religious groups...and an intensification of group solidarity”²¹⁴ served to ignite fears and anxieties amongst competing religious groups.

²¹³ This is particularly true in Thomas of Monmouth’s description of the ritual murder of William of Norwich, in which he begins his account by arguing that William “had been predestined to martyrdom from the beginning of time.” The ritual murder account contains many of the primordial origin narratives, particularly the Christ narrative.

²¹⁴ Ivan Marcus, *The Dynamics of Jewish Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, p. 41.

The conflagration of such fears created a unique space in which the individual attempting to make new choices, and the group attempting to solidify boundaries created a need for self-definition, a turning inwards not seen since Peter Brown's new mood in late antiquity. While historians are uncomfortable with a particular event creating a new paradigm, it nevertheless is evident that 1096 marked a significant turning point in the interactions of both groups and perhaps mark the beginning of that elusive period currently known as the twelfth century renaissance.

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