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ARCHITECTURAL REPRESENTATION IN MEDIEVAL TEXTUAL AND MATERIAL CULTURE

Edited by
**HANNAH M. BAILEY, KARL KINSELLA,
and DANIEL THOMAS**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Illustrationsvii

Acknowledgements ix

Introduction: Architectural Representation in Medieval Textual and Material Culture
HANNAH M. BAILEY, KARL KINSELLA, and DANIEL THOMAS 1

Chapter 1. Designing the Regensburg Spire and Harburg Tabernacle: The Geometries
of Two Great German Gothic Drawings
ROBERT BORK15

Chapter 2. Wilfrid’s Restoration of the Church at York and the Permanence of Sacred
Buildings in Post-Conversion Northumbria
CONOR O’BRIEN 41

Chapter 3. Heaven-Roofs and Holy Altars: Envisioning a Seventh-Century English
Church in Aldhelm’s *Carmina Ecclesiastica* 3
SHANNON GODLOVE57

Chapter 4. “Beaten Down and Built Anew”: *Saint Erkenwald* and Old St. Paul’s
BRENDAN O’CONNELL79

Chapter 5. Castle Viewscapes in Literature and Landscapes
SCOTT STULL, MICHAEL TWOMEY, and MICHAEL ROGERS99

Chapter 6. Architectural Alignment in Early Medieval English Settlements: Zoning,
Meaning, and Function
ANASTASIA MOSKVINA 127

Chapter 7. Underneath the Arches: Peter of Eboli and the Orderly Architecture of Norman Sicily
PHILIPPA BYRNE 151

Chapter 8. Reading the Saint’s Church: A Northern Perspective
CHRISTIANIA WHITEHEAD 171

Select Bibliography..... 189

Index 195

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1.	Detail of carving, Shenington, Holy Trinity Church	2
Figure 2.	a. Left, the Harburg tabernacle drawing. b. Centre left, the Regensburg single-spire drawing. c. Centre, the bottom half of the Harburg tabernacle drawing. d. Centre right, modern redrawing of the Regensburg single-spire drawing. e. Right, the top half of the Harburg tabernacle drawing	17
Figure 3.	a. Top, the steps in pinnacle design after Matthäus Roriczer, 1486. b. Bottom, basic geometrical relations in quadrature and “octature”	20
Figure 4.	a. Left, overall elevation (bottom) and detail (top) of present Regensburg Cathedral façade, after survey drawings from 1935. b. Middle, triangular porch as seen in single-spire drawing (top), and as built (bottom). c. Right, alignment of plan and elevation of Ulm Minster ((left), contrasted with misalignment between Ulm Minster plan and single-spire drawing from Regensburg (right)’	23
Figure 5.	Comparison showing alignment between ground plan of Regensburg Cathedral and single-spire drawing from Regensburg, with geometrical overlay	26
Figure 6.	Upper-middle section of Regensburg single-spire drawing, with geometrical overlay (left). b. Upper section of Regensburg single-spire drawing, with geometrical overlay (right)	29
Figure 7.	a. Harburg tabernacle, lower section (geometrical armature). b. Harburg tabernacle, lower section (drawing). c. Harburg tabernacle, lower section (plan)	33
Figure 8.	a. Harburg tabernacle, lower section (detail with geometrical overlay). b. Harburg tabernacle, upper section (geometrical overlay). c. Harburg tabernacle, upper section (drawing). d. Harburg tabernacle, upper section (plans)	34
Figure 9.	Sebba and Ethelred (monument)	86
Figure 10.	St. Paul’s, the nave	93

Figure 11.	St. Erkenwald (monument)	96
Figure 12.	Trim Castle Keep, Co. Meath, Ireland	105
Figure 13.	Trim Castle and the River Boyne	107
Figure 14.	View of Porchfields from Trim Castle	107
Figure 15.	Fourteenth-century bridge in Trim	108
Figure 16.	3D scanning team at Trim Castle, 2016	111
Figure 17.	Point cloud record of Trim Castle and landscape	112
Figure 18.	Digital reconstruction of missing north tower, Trim Castle.	113
Figure 19.	Reconstructed view from missing north tower, Trim Castle.	114
Figure 20.	Lancelot crossing the sword bridge while Guinevere looks on from the tower, ca. 1475	118
Figure 21.	David gazes at Bathsheba from a tower, late fifteenth century	120
Figure 22.	Yeavinger	130
Figure 23.	Cowdery's Down	136
Figure 24.	Cowage Farm	139
Figure 25.	Chalton	141
Figure 26.	Drayton-Sutton Courtenay	143
Figure 27.	Sprouston	144
Figure 28.	Palermo at the death of William II, with the different areas of the city depicted in mourning.	157
Figure 29.	Constance's arrival in Messina, with some geographical and architectural features of the city shown and labelled	158
Figure 30.	The colonnades within the royal palace, labelled by region	164
Figure 31.	The scheme of the six ages within the chambers of the royal palace	166

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Introduction

ARCHITECTURAL REPRESENTATION IN MEDIEVAL TEXTUAL AND MATERIAL CULTURE

Hannah M. Bailey, Karl Kinsella, and Daniel Thomas*

IN THE HIGH ground in the far north of Oxfordshire, where the hills around Banbury slowly rise up toward their rim at Edge Hill with its sharp drop to Warwickshire's broad Vale of the Red Horse beyond, there lies the cluster of eight medieval churches whose seven parishes form the "Ironstone Benefice" of the Church of England—named for the principal building material which gives these churches their distinctive red-brown appearance.¹ The present churches are predominantly fourteenth-century in date, although most incorporate earlier features stretching back to the Norman period. Each year, visitors are attracted by the combination of fine architecture and picturesque settings, together with an assortment of surviving medieval wall paintings, window glass, and carvings, and the eight churches of the Benefice are now connected in the landscape for both tourist and worshipper following the inauguration in 2015 of a 12.6-mile circular pilgrimage route.²

One of the churches of the Benefice is that dedicated to the Holy Trinity at Shenington, best known today as reportedly the last parish in Britain to continue the tradition of "grass-strewing" (whereby the floor of the church is covered with fresh-cut grass for the three weeks following Whitsunday). Standing at the edge of the hilltop village, the church offers its broad south side to the sun. There on the outer wall of the south aisle, positioned between a drainpipe and a window, is a small relief carving of an ox (or possibly a bull) standing in profile with its face turned toward the viewer, and beside it a figure (apparently male) with raised hands standing inside some sort of arch or niche (Figure 1). The carving is badly weathered. The animal's hindquarters have worn away almost to nothing and the face of the standing figure has been largely obscured. In its current state it is not clear what this scene is meant to represent. It may be incomplete, beyond the simple effect of weathering, and the irregular shape of the ironstone block,

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1 The Ironstone Benefice, <https://ironstonechurches.wordpress.com/> (accessed June 26, 2021).

2 Ironstone Benefice Pilgrimage, www.ironstonepilgrimage.org/ (accessed June 26, 2021). On the embodied experience of medieval spaces and places facilitated by modern pilgrimage routes and heritage trails, see Carole M. Cusack, "History, Authenticity, and Tourism: Encountering the Medieval While Walking St. Cuthbert's Way," in *Journeys and Destinations: Studies in Travel, Identity, and Meaning*, ed. A. Norman (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, 2013), 1–21, and Jonathan M. Wooding, "Changing Roles of Pilgrimage: Retreating, Remembering, Re-Enacting," in *The St. Thomas Way and the Medieval March of Wales: Exploring Place, Heritage, Pilgrimage*, ed. Catherine A. M. Clarke (Leeds: Arc Humanities, 2020), 25–36.



Figure 1. Detail of carving, Shenington, Holy Trinity Church.
Used with permission of Matthew Stevens.

which disrupts the otherwise regular ashlar-faced wall, hints at a subtly awkward effort of spoliation, or reuse of earlier material.³

Located just too high to get a good look at from ground level, the carving is nevertheless sure to arouse the interest—and, perhaps, the bafflement—of those who notice it. Such an unusual image must, it seems, represent something definite, but what? A biblical scene, perhaps? An episode from one of the lives of the saints? Perhaps a local legend or a miracle involving some local herdsman? The posture of the human figure—standing with forearms raised from the sides, palms facing forwards—suggests an attitude of prayer, reminiscent of the *orans* position. But what is the relationship between this figure and that of the ox? Is the figure blessing the animal or could the posture be read instead as an impulsive gesture of surprise or fright, or even rebuke? What, if anything, does the detail of the clothing tell us about the date of the carving

³ The description of the church in the Victoria County History volume covering the parish of Shenington states that the south aisle in which the carving is located, which dated originally to the thirteenth century, was rebuilt in the fourteenth century (“Parishes: Shenington,” in *A History of the County of Oxford*, vol. 9, *Bloxham Hundred*, ed. Mary D. Lobel and Alan Crossley (London: Institute of Historical Research, 1969), 139–50, digitized at British History Online, www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol9/pp139-150 [accessed February 9, 2021]). Whether the carving was part of the older structure of the church or dates to the rebuilding of the south aisle is unclear.

or about the gender or status of the figure depicted? And what of the ox itself? Is the surviving scene part of a narrative in which the animal figured or is the ox intended symbolically rather than literally (and, if it is symbolic, of what)?

An observer seeking answers to such questions would be frustrated in their desire. Almost every available source of information about the church at Shenington mentions the carving, but none provides a satisfactory explanation of it (or, indeed, any explanation at all). Turning first to the various websites dedicated to the parish, the village, or the Benefice, the observer will find descriptions of the carving, variously labelled either “interesting” or “intriguing,” but no explanation of its origin or significance.⁴ Leafing through the relevant volumes of the Victoria County History or Pevsner’s “Buildings of England” series offers little more enlightenment. The former merely notes the presence of “a medieval sculpture representing a man and an ox.”⁵ The latter, in an entry written by Jennifer Sherwood, describes “a lively rustic carving of a man and an ox under a C14 canopy.”⁶ A determined search might unearth the work of local historian Nan Clifton, who contributed a history of “the village on the shining hill” to the Banbury Historical Society’s magazine in 1974. In her description of the church, Clifton goes so far as to suggest that the human figure in the carving is “possibly a priest,” but ultimately concludes that “[w]hat these figures represent is not known.”⁷

The contributors to this volume, to whom we showed the carving, were also unable to solve the mystery of “that funny little fellow from Shenington.” The heavily framed archway in which the figure stands seems to imply a threshold, suggesting a distinction between internal and external spaces. The arch itself—a five-lobed pointed arch—recalls contemporary ecclesiastical architecture, not entirely dissimilar from the fourteenth-century Gothic window next to which the carving is located. The scene may, therefore, reflect concerns about the boundaries of sacred space (“no cows in church, please!”).⁸ But the apparently fragmentary nature of the scene continues to frustrate

4 See, e.g.: “Shenington Holy Trinity,” The Ironstone Benefice, <https://ironstonechurches.wordpress.com/about/shenington-holy-trinity/>; “A Church Near You,” The Church of England, www.achurchnearyou.com/church/480/find-us/; Shenington with Alkerton Parish, <http://sheningtonalkerton.btck.co.uk/> (all accessed May 10, 2021).

5 “Parishes: Shenington,” 139–50, British History Online, www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/oxon/vol9/pp139-150 (accessed February 9, 2021).

6 Jennifer Sherwood and Nikolaus Pevsner, *Oxfordshire, The Buildings of England* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1974), 754. Cf. Jennifer Sherwood, *A Guide to the Churches of Oxfordshire* (Oxford: Robert Dugdale in association with Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, 1989), 165.

7 Nan Clifton, “Shenington: The Village on the Shining Hill,” *Cake and Cockhorse* 6, no. 1 (1974): 5–12 at 10. Clifton’s article is accompanied by a pen-and-ink drawing of the carving executed by the cartoon-strip artist Hugh Stanley White (11, fig. 4). Either White exercised considerable artistic license in “restoring” the carving in his illustration, or the figures have undergone alarming weathering during the past half century.

8 For a discussion of the problems posed by the violation of sacred space in the later medieval period, see Laura Varnam, *The Church as Sacred Space in Middle English Literature and Culture* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018), 150–51.

attempts to interpret it. Our contributors felt that the carving, which may well not be in its original location, could have been part of a sequence of panels whose narrative and/or iconographic significance has now been irretrievably lost.

The example of the Shenington carving epitomizes the double effect of attraction and alienation that so often results from modern encounters with medieval architecture. This small man in an arch oddly positioned on a church wall is just sufficiently legible and just sufficiently unexpected to exercise a strange draw that compels everyone who speaks of the church to mention it, and just opaque enough to close down claims about it beyond an affective response to it as “lively” or “curious.” It provides a moment of contact for a modern viewer, gazing upon a scene which must have been part of the daily experience of individuals occupying the same physical space over a period of some six or seven centuries, promising but also, in its unreadable state, denying access to the worldview of those responsible for the commission, design, creation, installation, and preservation of the carving. Whilst it is possible for us to find meanings in the carving today, the meanings that we see are unlikely to correspond exactly to the various meanings which the scene has conveyed to viewers in the past.⁹

This simultaneous sense of proximity and distance, of accessibility and remoteness, that characterizes encounters with the architecture of the past provides the starting point for this volume’s exploration of the importance of architecture as a category of medieval thought. As the Shenington carving shows, architecture’s power to build meaning extends beyond the mere physical remnants which survive today. The carving itself is an architectural feature—both a decorative detail and, as part of the fabric of the wall of the south aisle, an integral part of the church building. It accrues meaning in context through its incorporation into the totality of the church and in relation to the various individual features—such as the Gothic windows—which comprise that building. But the carving also represents architecture in its depiction of the arch in which the human figure is framed. Understood as an ecclesiastical feature, this arch stands in a complex (if ultimately unknowable) metonymic relationship both to the church on which it is depicted and, further, to the ideal of sacred ecclesiastical space and community of which the church itself is an iteration. The Shenington carving is thus both an example of a representation/depiction of architecture and an example of representation/symbolism expressed through architecture, and so epitomizes the expanded definition of “architectural representation” which is embraced in this multi-disciplinary volume.

⁹ On “the longevity of medieval works and the aspect of time as a factor in shaping our interpretations of them,” see Jennifer M. Feltman, “Why the Long Lives of Medieval Art and Architecture? An Introduction,” in *The Long Lives of Medieval Art and Architecture*, ed. Jennifer M. Feltman and Sarah Thompson, AVISTA Studies in the History of Medieval Technology, Science and Art 12 (London: Routledge, 2019), 1–14 (quotation at 1) and the essays collected in that volume. See also the discussion by Stull, Twomey, and Rogers, in chap. 5, concerning modern responses to medieval castle architecture and the potentialities of digital reconstruction.

Architectural Representation: Sources and Approaches

The term “architectural representation” (and variations thereon) has traditionally been used in art historical and architectural contexts to refer specifically to more-or-less formal architectural drawings or, increasingly, computer modelling and designs (whether in two or three dimensions), understood (in Pari Riahi’s words) as “the intermediary between thought and action in architecture.”¹⁰ The study of the European tradition of such representations through history stretches back to the medieval period and beyond. In the first century BC, the Roman architect Vitruvius outlined three types of architectural representation: plans, elevations, and drawings in perspective.¹¹ Vitruvius’s *De Architectura Libri Decem* was available throughout the European Middle Ages, even before its supposed “rediscovery” in 1416 by the Italian humanist Poggio Bracciolini. Parts at least of the text were known to Carolingian scholars such as Einhard, Alcuin of York, and Hrabanus Maurus, and manuscript copies of the *De Architectura*, sometimes transmitted in abbreviated form, are known from the tenth century onwards.¹² Following the post-Roman decline of the professional architect, architectural drawings were, however, apparently rare during the early medieval period.¹³ But the early thirteenth century witnessed a re-emergence of plans and elevations which coincided with the development of the Gothic style throughout Europe.¹⁴

10 Pari Riahi, “Expanding the Boundaries of Architectural Representation,” *Journal of Architecture* 22, no. 5 (2017): 815–24 at 822. See also the other articles collected in this special issue, to which Riahi’s article serves as the introduction, which focuses on “The Medium of Architecture and the Dilemmas of Representation.”

11 Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture* 1.2, ed. and trans. Ingrid D. Rowland and Thomas Noble Howe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24–25.

12 Carol Herselle Krinsky, “Seventy-Eight Vitruvius Manuscripts,” *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 30 (1967): 36–70; Kenneth J. Conant, “The After-Life of Vitruvius in the Middle Ages,” *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 27 (1968): 33–38; John Onians, *Bearers of Meaning: The Classical Orders in Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 91–94; Anat Tcherikover, “A Carolingian Lesson in Vitruvius,” in *Medieval Architecture and its Intellectual Context: Studies in Honour of Peter Kidson*, ed. Eric Fernie and Paul Crossley (London: Hambledon, 1990), 259–67; Tessa Morrison, “Architectural Planning in the Early Medieval Era,” *Journal of the Australian Early Medieval Association* 5 (2009): 147–63. See also Hugh Plommer, *Vitruvius and Later Roman Building Manuals* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973).

13 The “St. Gall Plan” (St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek, Codex Sangallensis 1092; ca. 820) is perhaps the best-known medieval architectural plan from before the thirteenth century. Made in the ninth century by a Carolingian monk, the plan’s intended purpose remains uncertain. See Walter Horn and Ernest Born, *The Plan of St. Gall: A Study of the Architecture and Economy of, and Life in a Paradigmatic Carolingian Monastery*, 3 vols. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979); Mary Carruthers, *The Craft of Thought: Meditation, Rhetoric, and the Making of Images, 400–1200* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 229–38.

14 There is no extended study of architectural drawing over a medieval *longue durée*. Most discussions of the subject begin, however, with the portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt in the second quarter of the thirteenth century (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Fr 19093;

Such drawings, examples of which are discussed by Robert Bork in the first essay in this volume, may have fulfilled a variety of functions. In addition to their possible use as plans for construction, they could (as Bork discusses) have been used to impress prospective patrons or to attract commissions, as well as serving as repositories both for technical aspects of building design and for the aesthetic ideals associated with particular architectural styles.¹⁵ They may increasingly have also fulfilled legalistic and programmatic functions, not only as plans *per se* but as representations of an envisaged or promised structure.¹⁶ Such representations were, however, not only practical and necessary documents but also cultural artifacts. They embody particular attitudes toward and ideas of architecture and the wider world. As such, they not only serve as representations of architecture, but also reveal something of architecture's own rich and complex representational power.

It is this representational power—defined by the semiologist Umberto Eco as architecture's communicative capacity—which provides the connecting impetus for the essays collected in this volume.¹⁷ With regard to physical monuments, architecture's representational value is expressed through both design and use. Theoretical approaches to the study of the built environment have repeatedly demonstrated that architectural meaning exists as a negotiation between intended meaning and perceived meaning, and is fundamentally multivalent, dynamic, and conditioned by context and by the lived experience of a given individual.¹⁸ Attempts to read the medieval built environment

ca. 1230). Despite the wealth of literature on Villard, little is known about him except that he was a talented artist with a strong interest in the built environment. For an edition and facsimile of the portfolios, see: *The Portfolio of Villard de Honnecourt* (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, MS Fr 19093): *A New Critical Edition and Colour Facsimile*, ed. Carl Barnes, Jr. (Farnham: Ashgate, 2009). For further discussion, see: Francois Bucher, *Architector: The Lodge Books and Sketchbooks of Medieval Architects*, vol. 1 (New York: Abaris, 1979); Roland Bechmann, *Villard de Honnecourt: la pensée technique au xiii^e siècle et sa communication* (Paris: Picard, 1993); Arnold Pacey, *Medieval Architectural Drawing* (Stroud: Tempus, 2007); Robert Bork, *The Geometry of Creation: Architectural Drawing and the Dynamics of Gothic Design* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011); Jean Wirth, *Villard de Honnecourt: architecte du XIII^e siècle* (Geneva: Droz, 2015).

15 Robert Branner, "Villard de Honnecourt, Reims and the Origin of Gothic Architectural Drawing," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 61 (1963): 129–46.

16 Franklin Toker, "Gothic Architecture by Remote Control: An Illustrated Building Contract of 1340," *The Art Bulletin* 67 (1985): 67–95.

17 Umberto Eco, "Function and Sign: The Semiotics of Architecture," in *Signs, Symbols, and Architecture*, ed. Geoffrey Broadbent, Richard Bunt, and Charles Jencks (Chichester: Wiley, 1980), 11–69. See also *The City and the Sign: An Introduction to Urban Semiotics*, ed. M. Gottdiener and Alexandros Ph. Lagopoulos (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986).

18 For a cogent summary, see William Whyte, "How do Buildings Mean? Some Issues of Interpretation in the History of Architecture," *History and Theory* 45 (2006): 153–77. For recent discussions, see also Holger Kleine, *The Drama of Space: Spatial Sequences and Compositions in Architecture* (Basel: Birkhäuser, 2018) and the essays collected in *The Production Sites of Architecture*, ed. Sophia Psarra (New York: Routledge, 2019) and *Architectural Space and the Imagination: Houses in Literature and Art from Classical to Contemporary*, ed. Jane Griffiths and Adam Hanna (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020). Such ideas are, of course, far from exclusively

must, therefore, pay attention to the shifting and transient historical, cultural, and ideological factors governing its production and use.

In bringing together this collection, we have therefore assumed a definition of architectural representation that extends beyond a restrictive, traditional definition to include not only the communicative or representational capacity of physical architecture itself, but also representations of architecture in a variety of media and genres. Our use of the term is deliberately open, intended to attract a wide range of different critical and methodological approaches and to place the study of traditional architectural drawing in dialogue with modes of representation that encompass literary and pictorial representation as well. The volume consciously juxtaposes approaches to medieval architectural sources from a range of different scholarly disciplines. It is our contention that architecture as a category of medieval culture not only rewards, but in fact requires such a multi-disciplinary approach.¹⁹ In taking this approach, we do not assume a dynamic that progresses from thought, to representation, to action. We recognize instead that the dynamic of the representational program, conditioned by thought and imagination, very often begins rather than ends with the architectural product, and, further, that the cultural value of architectural representation (of whatever sort) is not fully, and often not primarily, determined by its relationship to actual buildings (whether surviving or not).²⁰

The scope of the volume therefore includes representations of hypothetical, symbolic, or imagined architecture, as well as representations of structures which may have existed (or been thought to exist) in other times and places. The evocation of architecture is, of course, a deliberate choice, and one which has its origins in architecture's communicative capacity. Several of the essays collected here therefore focus on the symbolic and figurative use of architecture within medieval literature and art. The borrowing of real or imaginative structures in this context was inevitably inflected by the concerns and aims of the individual authors who wielded their representations as a force of symbolic or allegorical thought. And so, part of our aim is

modern. See, e.g., William Whyte, "Ecclesiastical Gothic Revivalism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Victorian Medievalism*, ed. Joanne Parker and Corinna Wagner (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 433–46, and Edward N. Kaufman, "Architectural Representation in Victorian England," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 46, no. 1 (1987): 30–38.

19 It was this belief that led to the formation in 2015 of a multi-disciplinary research network dedicated to Architectural Representation in Early Medieval England. As the project progressed, it became clear that the national and period boundaries imposed by our reference to "Early Medieval England" were as limiting and artificial modern constructs as the disciplinary boundaries we had originally set out to overcome. In 2017, we formally expanded the chronological and geographical scope of the network to cover Architectural Representation in the Middle Ages.

20 Within a medieval context, see, e.g., Mary Carruthers's seminal work on the use of imagined architectural structures as "mediative machines" within monastic mnemonic systems ("The Poet as Master Builder: Composition and Locational Memory in the Middle Ages," *New Literary History* 24 (1993): 881–904 at 895; *The Craft of Thought*, 228–31). See also the discussion on this point in Godlove's chap. 3.

to demonstrate how various levels of architectural representation—the literal and the allegorical—can sit together well enough to propose new ways of thinking about the past, as well as the objects and people who inhabited it.

The Volume

In organizational terms, this collection begins with a painstaking and illuminating investigation of two surviving examples of medieval architectural drawing and their use of geometric principles of design; it ends with a masterful panoramic study of architecture as an abstract site of allegory in medieval hagiographic discourse. It would be a mistake, however, to see these two approaches to architectural representation—arising, as they do, out of the formally (but artificially) separate disciplines of art history and literary scholarship—as fundamentally distinct, or even as two opposite points on a spectrum from concrete and literal to abstract and figurative. The essays share with each other and with the other essays collected here a concern with investigating imaginative and artistic engagement with architecture and its capacity as a site of embedded meaning which transcends the apparent differences in the immediate subject matter and the authors' particular approaches and concerns.

The organizational principle of this volume is, accordingly, juxtaposition; we have arranged the contributions in a sequence which we hope highlights the surprising resonances and moments of clarity that arise when we do not sequester readings of medieval architectural representation in separate silos according to modern disciplinary or period boundaries. Attending to the conversations and intersections between the chapters therefore requires the reader to move from the particular to the general and back again, providing the grounds for a more holistic understanding of architecture as a source of meaning across multiple domains of medieval culture. Our intention is to demonstrate that it is possible to link these conversations in a way that has never been fully attempted before and that the results are fruitful to the wider analysis of medieval architecture and architectural representation.

Individually, the essays represent valuable contributions to their respective scholarly fields of enquiry, demonstrating new methodologies and cutting-edge technology, challenging prevailing orthodoxies, and filling demonstrable gaps in existing scholarship. Taken together, they also offer new insights into both modern scholarly interpretations of the medieval architectural and the interpretative strategies applied to architecture by medieval figures themselves. A number of the essays began as papers presented at a two-day conference on Architectural Representation in the Middle Ages held at the University of Oxford in 2017. Others were chosen for inclusion in order to highlight the common ground among studies of medieval architecture and representations of architecture in medieval culture that might otherwise exist in isolation from one another due to boundaries of discipline, geography, or periodization.

The collection begins with a focus on the representation of ecclesiastical architecture and the development of design technologies which enabled the creative imagination of medieval draftsmen to envisage fantastical and intricate Gothic forms. **Robert Bork's**

geometrical analysis of two surviving architectural drawings for an unrealized Gothic spire and a tabernacle provides innovative insight into the creative practices which underpinned the Gothic style. The essay paves the way for a clearer appreciation of the direct connection between images on parchment and structures on the ground. Demonstrating continuities and movements of expertise, style, and technique across both time and space, Bork's work shows how geometric analysis can help to locate and date such drawings and reveals how idealized but unrealized designs can contribute to our understanding of Gothic architecture. Such architectural representations help to shed light upon the intentions of those people responsible for commissioning and creating the monumental structures of Gothic architecture.

Developments in architectural technology often serve not only aesthetic, but also ideological purposes. The political work which architecture can do is the focus of the chapter by **Conor O'Brien**. O'Brien offers a new contextualization of Stephen of Ripon's early eighth-century hagiographical account of Bishop Wilfrid's restoration of the stone church at York in the 670s: while Stephen's extensive use of biblical phraseology in his account of Wilfrid's cleansing and renovation of the existing early seventh-century structures has previously been read typologically or dismissed as a rhetorical flourish, O'Brien demonstrates that Stephen's prose (and Wilfrid's rebuilding) does urgently topical ideological work on more than one level. First, he argues that the restoration of the church makes a theological point about the permanence of a church as a sacred space—a point which was radically novel in a context in which buildings were typically understood to have limited life-cycles, stone churches were vanishingly rare, and the pre-Christian practices the church was supplanting may not have included the use of any distinctly "religious" class of building. Secondly, O'Brien situates Stephen's writing in the context of the introduction of legal innovations such as charters (which sought and often failed to provide political stability to religious foundations), the general volatility of elite society, and the ideological reorientation of Northumbria's ecclesiastical establishment from Lindisfarne and Iona to York and Rome. Wilfrid (in Stephen's account) uses the representational power of architecture in order to transcend the essential impermanence of contemporary landholding, writing ecclesiastical permanence into the landscape of seventh-century Northumbria.

The focus of Stephen's account is on the meaning ascribed to the church building as a unified architectural statement. His account of Wilfrid's restoration of the church therefore emphasizes repairs to the structural and spatial integrity of the building through the bishop's attention to the roof, walls, and glazing of the church. Stephen notes in passing, however, that Wilfrid also "adorn[ed] the inside of the house of God and the altar with various kinds of vessels and furniture."²¹ The interior architectural features of ecclesiastical buildings were, throughout the early medieval period and beyond, fertile subjects for allegorical interpretation in their own right. Just such an

²¹ Stephen, *Vita sancti Wilfridi* 16, ed. and trans. Bertram Colgrave, *The Life of Bishop Wilfrid by Eddius Stephanus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1927), 34–35: "Iam enim non solum domum Dei et altare in varia suppellectili vasorum intus ornavit."

allegorizing impulse is the concern of the chapter by **Shannon Godlove**, which, though touching upon issues of permanence and *Romanitas* raised in the previous chapter, focuses specifically upon the representation of interior ecclesiastical architecture in the Anglo-Latin poetry of Wilfrid's West Saxon contemporary, Aldhelm of Malmesbury. Aldhelm's *Carmina Ecclesiastica* are a set of verse commemorations of churches and altars which largely follow the epigraphical conventions of Roman *tituli*. The third poem in the series departs, however, from the typically hagiographical focus of such inscriptions to offer an extended ekphrasis on the interior and furnishings of the church which it commemorates. Godlove argues that Aldhelm's encomium on this church—which was built by the Abbess Bugga—blends Latin and vernacular literary conventions in moving the reader through the building to construct an idealized space orientated on a motif of ascent. Aldhelm employs the physical architecture of the church as a “machine for thinking” about the relationship of the parts to the whole and, simultaneously, the relationship of the earthly church to its counterpart in the heavenly citadel.

Aldhelm's epigraphic poems stage for the reader an imaginative engagement with an architectural structure which would have been unfamiliar to at least some of the texts' audience. As such, Aldhelm is concerned with an ideal representation of ecclesiastical space. The following chapter by **Brendan O'Connell** considers instead the representation of a major ecclesiastical monument which draws upon the existing symbolic value which the structure would have carried for a medieval audience. O'Connell examines the textual architectural encounters in the understudied fourteenth-century Middle English alliterative poem *Saint Erkenwald*, which depicts a miracle that occurred during an imagined phrase of rebuilding in the early history of St. Paul's in London. The eponymous Erkenwald, bishop of London in the late seventh-century, was a contemporary of Wilfrid, and the rebuilding represented in the poem stands, therefore, as a sort of southern counterpart to the story of Wilfrid's renovations at York. As O'Connell demonstrates, however, the architectural setting of *Saint Erkenwald* cannot simply be read as commentary on *the church* in the abstract; it is about *a church* and its meaning for its original audience is rooted in that specific architectural reality. *Saint Erkenwald* relies upon its audience's easy familiarity with the medieval Gothic cathedral of Old St. Paul's—the centre of religious life in London and simultaneously a symbol of endurance and continuity, a site of regeneration, and a canvas for developing architectural styles—to construct a mutually enriching experience of narrative and architecture. Read in this light, *Saint Erkenwald* emerges as a sophisticated work of art in which the intrinsic relationship between the textual and the architectural promotes the poet's subtle theological and ideological agenda.

O'Connell's reading of *Saint Erkenwald* ends with a consideration of how the poem can be appreciated afresh in the light of a modern “representation” of the sights and sounds of Old St. Paul's as they existed before the cathedral's destruction in 1666. The opportunity, afforded by modern technological advances, to experience through approximation the absent space of Old St. Paul's facilitates an appreciation of the cathedral's existence through time which (O'Connell argues) captures something of the fourteenth-century poem's play with ideas of time and space. A similar notion of reconstructing and

reexperiencing the architecture of the past is central to the following chapter, which moves from the focus on ecclesiastical architecture in the opening of the volume to a consideration of architecture as an expression of secular power. **Scott Stull, Michael Twomey, and Michael Rogers** take us through the process of creating a cutting-edge modern representation of medieval architecture in its landscape environment: using LiDAR scanning to build a digital reconstruction of Trim Castle, which was built during the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland. This technology does not simply allow them to create a digital representation of what the castle would have looked like in its medieval prime, but also to reconstruct the viewscape that it would have afforded over the surrounding area. As part of the reconstruction process, they were able to digitally rebuild the castle's missing tower and to explore the sight-lines its windows would have provided. The work at Trim demonstrates the value of such state-of-the-art technology for the study of *in situ* architectural remains. By using this technology, the authors are able to reconstruct the ideology and power relations established and reinforced by the viewsapes of Trim Castle. Their analysis of these viewsapes as an expression of secular authority is supported by a comparative reading of the widespread use of the narrative motif of looking out castle windows in French and English literature of the time.

A similar concern with locating medieval architecture within a social landscape informs **Anastasia Moskvina's** study of the archaeological evidence for functional grouping and zoning in late sixth- to early seventh-century English settlement sites such as Yeavinger and Cowdery's Down. The ephemeral nature of the evidence for such sites reflects early medieval concerns, apparent in earlier chapters of this volume, with the (im)permanence of architectural structures: we read them as representations in archaeologists' diagrams, interpretations of the existence through time of structures now known only by the shadowy footprints they have left behind in the ground. Through careful study of this body of evidence, Moskvina identifies an inclination for axial alignment in the design of these sites and demonstrates a hitherto underappreciated tendency for functional zoning in the arrangement of architectural structures. She argues that this development can be read as an expression of evolving social patterns and cultural models: as in the case of Trim Castle, social practices are thus inscribed on the landscape and represented in material form in the structure of the buildings and through the spatial relationships between them.

The role of architectural representation in articulating ideology in a period of change links Moskvina's work to the following chapter, despite the geographical and temporal differences in the subject matter. **Philippa Byrne's** contribution focuses on Sicily's transition from Norman to Staufen rule in the last decade of the twelfth century. There have been prior studies on both the architecture of Norman Sicily and on the Staufen buildings erected some decades later, but Byrne takes us into the very moment of transition between the two regimes through an examination of the representation of architecture in the text and images in the sole extant manuscript of Peter of Eboli's *Liber ad Honorem Augustii*. She argues that this unusual Latin poetic text draws on widespread medieval tropes such as the category slippage of architecture and ecology and architecture as cosmos to authorize its depiction of the Palace at Palermo as a

metonym encompassing the whole Staufen empire. By doing so, Peter appropriates the explanatory power of architectural representation to present Staufen rule of Sicily as crucial to the inevitable unfolding of imperial and providential history.

The final chapter of the volume returns to a focus on the representation of ecclesiastical architecture, as it simultaneously signifies the whole span and exists within discrete moments of providential history. **Christiania Whitehead's** chapter asks what happens when patristic and scholastic allegorical readings of church architecture in the timeless abstract meet the specific temporal material reality of individual churches as depicted in northern English saints' *vitae*, and the abstractly representational becomes enmeshed with the embodied and affective. Though modestly framed, this masterful chapter in fact takes the reader on a journey through the shifting relationships between materiality and allegory that spans a full eight centuries, from the early medieval to the late, with implications for every one of the preceding chapters. It traces subtle developments across the chronological span of the volume, not only in the representational significance of architecture, but in the broader cultural assumptions about the mechanisms of representation itself.

Despite their frequent differences in subject matter, time periods, and scholarly approaches, the chapters collected here are connected by attention to persistent themes that recur across the volume as a whole. Meaningful connections between the contributions thus develop not only out of the linear, chapter-by-chapter progression of the volume outlined above, but also through the force of constellation working across the volume.

One major theme in the collection is the interaction of architecture and power, as inscribed in text, image, and on the landscape. At a most literal level, this theme is addressed in relation to the landscape of power uncovered at Trim by Stull, Twomey, and Rogers, but it is equally evident, for example, in Byrne's discussion of how Peter of Eboli reimagined the architecture of medieval Sicily in order to promote the providential authority of the Staufen regime. Architecture can also be seen as a medium for the expression of authority in Stephen of Ripon's emphasis on permanence in his account of the stone-built church at York. But O'Brien's discussion of this source also emphasizes a second major theme of the collection: the relationship between architectural construction and repair and notions of identity and ideology. This theme, which is reflected in O'Brien's analysis of the theological and political work performed by the account of Wilfrid's restorations, is also a major theme in Moskvina's discussion of functional zoning and alignment as reflecting realities of social and cultural identity. Whilst both of these discussions relate to realized architectural structures, Bork's conclusions regarding the aspirational potential of unrealized drawings shows how the connection between architecture and identity extended beyond the literal built environment.

Indeed, a further connecting theme within this volume relates to the ways that art and literature can defamiliarize and thus modify encounters with familiar buildings. This is evident not only in Byrne's account of the reimagining of the Sicilian landscape mentioned above, but also in O'Connell's description of how the *Saint Erkenwald*-poet