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Recalibrating through Remembrance

The Apostles as Guides of Spiritual Renewal in Mediaeval Europe

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Abstract

The twelfth and thirteenth centuries witness a complex appeal to the “age of the apostles,” referring to the first centuries of Christianity as model and foundation. Both the Catholic Church and various apostolic movements claim to be true imitators of the *vita apostolica*. In early thirteenth-century centres of reform, the apostles as founding figures of the Christian religion are frequently visualized, most elaborately in stained glass windows where the apocryphal Acts or “Lives” of the apostles inspired the scenes distributed over the panes of each window dedicated in general to one apostle (or pair of apostles). The choice of scenes and the analysis of what in the apocryphal Acts is left out reveals the way the Catholic Church, in its endeavour to reform, applied the apostles as breaches and bridges in the development of its doctrine and self-definition, also in response to claims to apostolicity outside the mainstream Church.

Keywords

reform – apocryphal Acts of the apostles – stained glass windows – mediaeval religion – liturgy

1 Introduction

To talk about spirituality in a mediaeval European context is by definition a delicate enterprise. In a mediaeval Latin context, the word *spiritualitas* has a rather confined general meaning, used in opposition either to “the material” or to the “non-clerical.”¹ *Spiritualitas* in the sense of the Christian religious way

1 For examples, see Ludwig Hödl, “Spiritualität,” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters*, 10 vols. (Stuttgart:

of life is found only rarely, especially before the year 1000.² As André Vauchez states in his *La spiritualité du Moyen Age occidental*, the distinction between religious doctrine and religious practice in a mediaeval Christian context is referred to rather by the terms *doctrina* and *disciplina* respectively.³ Vauchez consequently points to the risk of applying a too narrow perspective to the study of mediaeval spirituality, taking into consideration only the well-defined written accounts of the “inner life” in a clerical, generally monastic setting. Vauchez includes other testimonies of the relation between the “Christian mystery” and lived practice as well, such as gestures, chants, iconographic representations, but also rites, prayers, and devotions.⁴ In his attempt to avoid a limited perspective on clerical spiritual life, Vauchez includes the laity and “unorthodox” layers of Christianity.

The present contribution focuses on iconographic representations of Christianity’s founding figures, the apostles from the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. This period is marked by a strong appeal to the apostolic era, both in the mainstream church that propagates renewal and reform,⁵ and in a variety of evangelical movements. The latter, while sometimes deemed heretical by the mainstream church, saw themselves as representations of the true apostolic life. At the same time, the mainstream church likewise reconsidered its apostolic foundations. Sources in which this becomes clearly visible are the stained glass windows with which Gothic cathedrals were decorated in this period. In the present article, I aim to comment on the way in which the hagiographic narratives on the apostles are represented in these windows. I shall demonstrate how the mainstream church mobilized the apostles both as bridges and as breaches – as bridges in order to connect the contemporary period with the glorious past of Christianity’s foundation and the age of the martyrs; as

Metzler, 1977–1999), vol. 7, 2124–2125. It is interesting to see that Jean Leclercq, François Vandenbroucke and Louis Bouyer, *La spiritualité du Moyen Age*, Histoire de la spiritualité chrétienne, 2 (Paris: Aubier, 1961) start their work without any semantic or conceptual reflection on the notion of spirituality. I would like to thank Daniela Müller for her valuable comments on earlier drafts of this article. In addition I thank the cathedrals of Bourges and Chartres for their hospitality during site visits in 2009 and 2010 respectively.

- 2 Albert Blaise, *Dictionnaire latin-français des auteurs chrétiens* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1954), s.v.
- 3 André Vauchez, *La spiritualité du Moyen Age occidental, VIIIe–XIIIe siècles*, 2nd edition (Paris: Seuil, 1994), 7.
- 4 Vauchez, *Spiritualité*, 8.
- 5 Lateran Council IV uses the words *corrigentes et reformantes; novitate; reformare* (const. 12) and *reformatur* (const. 14): Norman P. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, 2 vols. (London: Sheed and Word, 1990), vol. 1, 241 and 242.

breaches in order to define itself in regard to the contested other. To do so, I shall investigate the pictorial representation of specific characteristics of the apostles and of scenes from the narratives of their lives and acts in this particular iconographic medium. The question then is how these windows fit in a broader attempt from the side of the church and clergy to contest contemporary currents they defined as heretical. In order to find this out, I shall examine what characteristics are expressed most colourfully by the windows, and which elements remain invisible.

This paper does not deal with spirituality as against institutionalized religion. Instead, it examines the definition of spirituality of the mainstream religious institute, the mediaeval church, at a certain point in time when alternative currents press on its validity and its claim to universalism and unicity. This is all the more interesting given the fact that both the “centre” and the “periphery” appeal to the same foundational figures in order to shape their identity.

2 A Reformer’s Appeal to the Apostles

Throughout the history of Christianity, a tendency is visible to appeal to the life of the apostles as a reference point and point of departure. The apostolic era counts as the model concerning the foundation of the church’s organization and worship, its doctrine and preaching, and, most prominently, its *conversatio* or way of life. The attraction of the apostolic life as described in the Lucan Acts (2, 43–47; 4, 32–35) was a driving force in the early Christian period,⁶ while it remained strong in the Middle Ages and the early modern period as well as in the most recent times.

At various moments in the tidal movement of reform by which mediaeval Christianity is characterized, this appeal to the apostles becomes visible, particularly in the reform movements from the late eleventh to the early thirteenth centuries. During the so-called Gregorian reform in the second half of the eleventh century, attempts to reform the clergy and to reinstall Catholic Christianity in Byzantine and Islamized regions were accompanied by a renewed interest in the cult of individual apostles. Clashes between and within religions in these areas in the first millennium had necessitated the hiding and partial forgetting of cults that were often concentrated around relics of saints. At various moments in this period, relics were rediscovered and provided with new sanctuaries and cults. This was the case, for instance, in the reform centre of

6 Cf. Anton Hilhorst, ed., *The Apostolic Age in Patristic Thought* (Leiden: Brill, Boston 2004).

Salerno, where Pope Gregory VII (1073–1085) spent his last years and found his burial place.⁷ At the same time, monastic and canonical communities strove for reform through concentration on imitation of the *vita apostolica*, a life in ascetic communities without private possessions, in poverty and celibacy.⁸ The movement, dedicated to imitation of the apostolic life, became widespread and multiform. The *vita apostolica* inspired not only ecclesiastical reforms and monastic renewals but also currents that moved away from the established church and its hierarchic structures and sacraments, such as the Cathar movement in the South of France.⁹

The present article focuses on the appeal to the apostles from the side of ecclesiastical reformers around the year 1200, discussing the visualization of the ecclesiastical ideal of spiritual renewal and reform in pictorial representations of the apostles, namely, stained glass windows in a number of French cathedrals. Whereas the model of the *vita apostolica* is based primarily on canonical Scripture (Lk 10:1–12 about the mission of the disciples; Acts 2 and 4 about the earliest forms of Christian communal life), the visualization of reform in stained glass windows refers to extra-biblical sources as well, mainly the Latin transmissions of the early Christian apocryphal Acts of the apostles. The following analysis of a selection of apostle windows will demonstrate how the “rewriting”¹⁰ of these apocryphal Acts (or *Virtutes apostolorum* as I shall call them henceforth) in stained glass, a process in which a careful selection of nar-

7 The cases of the apostle Matthew and of Bartholomew in Benevento are discussed in Els Rose, *Ritual Memory. The Apocryphal Acts and Liturgical Commemoration in the Early Medieval West (c. 500–1215)* (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 198–206 (Salerno); Els Rose, “Re-inventing the Apostolic Tradition. Moments of Transition and Appropriation in the Cult of the Apostles Through the Middle Ages,” in *Devising Order. Socio-Religious Models, Rituals, and the Performativity of Practice*, eds. Bruno Boute and Thomas Småberg (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 123–144 (Salerno and Benevento).

8 Vauchez, *Spiritualité*, 73–95; Brenda Bolton, *The Medieval Reformation* (London: Edward Arnold, 1983), 19–20.

9 Beverly Kienzle, “The Clash Between Catholics and Cathars Over Veneration of the Cross,” in *Iconoclasm and Iconoclasm: Struggle for Religious Identity*, ed. Willem van Asselt e.a. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 263–278, at 273; Vauchez, *Spiritualité*, 100, 106–118; Daniela Müller, “Les historiens et la question de la vérité historique: l’église Cathare a-t-elle existé?,” in *1209–2009, cathares: une histoire à pacifier?: actes du colloque international tenu à Mazamet les 15, 16 et 17 mai 2009*, ed. Anne Brenon e.a. (Portet-sur-Garonne: Loubatières 2010), 139–151, part. 149.

10 My use of the term here is inspired by Colette Manhes-Deremble, *Les vitraux narratifs de la cathédrale de Chartres: étude iconographique*, Corpus Vitrearum France Études 2 (Paris: Léopard d’Or 1993), 6.

rative scenes is made, proclaims, through the apostles, the message of renewal and recalibration on the one hand, and the rejection of the teachings of “heretical” movements on the other.

3 Stained Glass Windows – Message and Perception

There is a wide variety of possible approaches to the stained glass windows that decorated the cathedrals of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The idea that these windows functioned as didactic material for the illiterate has long proved problematic. Indeed, a comprehensive observation of the large narrative windows, often placed at the higher levels of lofty cathedrals and developed to a high degree of pictorial detail, demands not only unusually sharp eyes but also a good deal of literacy, or at least familiarity with the stories and traditions visualized here.¹¹ More than forty years ago, art historian Robert Sowers already defended a much more abstract approach to the thirteenth-century windows and their architectural context in which measure and light replace didactic imagery.¹² Other specialists of the genre have made a more elaborate endeavour to understand the iconographic programme and the motives that inspired their creation. Thus, Colette Manhes-Deremble studied the windows of Chartres cathedral, one of the most elaborate collections of stained glass windows from the Gothic period, as a coherent programmatic setup, reflecting the reform movement of the later twelfth and early thirteenth centuries.¹³

11 Cf. Ronald N. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe, c. 1215–c. 1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 85–86. Although Swanson mentions the same objections as are listed above, he maintains the idea that stained glass windows and other visual representations in the church building were meant for education.

12 Robert Sowers, “The 12th-century Windows in Chartres: Some Wayward Lessons from the ‘Poor Man’s Bible,’” *Art Journal* 28 (1969): 166–174, at 171. A vast literature on the role images played in mediaeval culture has developed since, among which I highlight the special issue of *Word and Image* 5 (1989), ed. Herbert L. Kessler; Jeffrey E. Hamburger and Anne-Marie Bouché, ed., *The Mind’s Eye: Art and Theological Argument in the Middle Ages* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Michel Lemoine, ed., *L’image dans la pensée et l’art au Moyen Âge. Colloque organisé à l’Institut de France le vendredi 2 décembre 2005*, (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); Mariëlle Hageman and Marco Mostert, ed., *Reading Images and Texts: Medieval Images and Texts as Forms of Communication* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005); Jérôme Baschet, *L’iconographie médiévale* (Paris: Gallimard, 2008); see now Colette Deremble, “Le vitrail: l’image dans la cathédrale,” in *Les images dans l’Occident médiéval*, eds. Jérôme Baschet and Pierre-Olivier Dittmar (Turnhout: Brepols, 2015), 97–108.

13 Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*.

The building and decoration of Chartres cathedral, after the destruction of its predecessor by the great fire of 1194, took place in the same period as what is called one of the most important moments of mediaeval Christianity in the second millennium: the Fourth Lateran Council.¹⁴ This council, guided by the influential Pope Innocent III (1198–1216) as a continuation and culmination of the twelfth-century Lateran councils (1123, 1139, and 1179), is described as one of the most pan-European events of the period, due to its large number of attendants, both clergy and lay people.¹⁵ The Lateran councils contributed to the reform of clergy and the ecclesiastical life, a sharper profile of the papacy, and opposition to religious ideas that conflicted with Catholic doctrine. Many of the French participants in the Third Lateran Council (1179) were linked to the theologically influential school of Chartres, most prominently John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres until his death in 1180.¹⁶ The Third Lateran Council dealt with a number of issues that would become the central topics in 1215, such as the issue of raising arms against heretics, formulated here for the first time,¹⁷ the organization of a crusade to capture

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- 14 Cf., e.g., F. Donald Logan, *A History of the Church in the Middle Ages* (London: Routledge, 2002), 193: “There can be little doubt that the Fourth Lateran Council was the most important general council of the church in the Middle Ages”; Bolton, *Medieval Reformation*, 107: “This greatest of the ecumenical councils of the Middle Ages” which produced “... the most important single body of disciplinary and reform legislation of the medieval Church.”
- 15 Logan speaks of “an assembly of Latin Christendom”: Logan, *History of the Church*, 195. Specific details about the attendants are given in “4. Laterankonzil, 1. Vorbereitung und Verlauf,” in *Lexikon des Mittelalters* 5, 1742–1743, which lists over 400 bishops, over 800 abbots and priors and many representatives of royal houses and cities. According to this lemma, the Fourth Lateran Council was the best attended of all mediaeval general church councils. The council’s intended aim was primarily not confined to Western Europe alone, since the patriarchs of the Eastern Church were also invited. However, as a result of the disastrous course of the Fourth Crusade, none of them responded to the invitation; Logan, *History of the Church*, 194.
- 16 Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 30.
- 17 Lateran Council IV, *const.* 3: *Catholici vero qui, crucis assumpto caractere, ad haereticorum exterminium se accinxerint, illa gaudeant indulgentia, illoque sancto privilegio sint muniti, quod accedentibus in Terrae sanctae subsidium conceditur*, in Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 234. Tanner describes the taking up of arms against mercenaries (and heretics) in *const.* 27 of Lateran Council III (1179) as an “innovation,” Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 224–225. Moore, in addition, describes the preamble to this constitution in the preceding centuries. Robert I. Moore, *The Formation of a Persecuting Society: Authority and Deviance in Western Europe*, 2nd edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 8. According to Moore, the second half of the twelfth century is precisely

Jerusalem,¹⁸ and pastoral renewal and the practical application of ecclesiastical reform to the laity.¹⁹ Spiritual matters are at the forefront in the Fourth Lateran Council's decisions and constitutions,²⁰ which do not start with matters related to ecclesiastical organization, but with a newly phrased confession of the Catholic faith.²¹ Particularly, the Fourth Lateran Council is marked by emphasis on the apostolic authority of the pope and the central role of the clerical hierarchy.²²

The iconographic programme of the windows in Chartres clearly reflects the centrality of the apostles in this period, as we will see in the following section. While Manhes-Deremble convincingly demonstrates that the apostles form the heart of the iconographic programme of these windows, she discusses the narrative apostle windows²³ primarily within the scope of the presentation of the miraculous in the Chartres windows²⁴ and the tension between magic and miracle.²⁵ The reading of the apostle windows only as representations of the "popular faith" in miracles and a humoristic image of the devil and demons marginalizes the importance of the apocryphal legends of the apostles by which the window makers were inspired.²⁶ In the following sections, I shall

the period in which the approach to the problem of heresy, formally an episcopal responsibility, became gradually more centralized, Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 23.

- 18 Lateran Council IV, *const.* 71, Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 267–271. See also Innocent's inaugural address at the opening of the council (11 November 1215); cf. Logan, *History of the Church*, 195.
- 19 Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 205–225.
- 20 Cf. Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 227.
- 21 Lateran Council IV, *const.* 1: *Firmiter credimus et simpliciter confitemur ...* Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 230–231. In this respect, Innocent III's council clearly differs from the twelfth-century Lateran Councils.
- 22 Cf. the first constitution of Lateran Council IV, which repeats that the administration of the sacraments is solely entrusted to the priests, ordained within the apostolic succession, Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 230.
- 23 The term "narrative windows" is likewise inspired by Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*.
- 24 Window of John the Evangelist; Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 182–190. Manhes-Deremble's surprise about the "audacity" of the presence of apocryphal material in a liturgical environment (p. 189) is, to my mind, not in tune with the ample use of apocryphal material in liturgical prayers and chants, see Rose, *Ritual Memory*.
- 25 Window of Simon and Jude; Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 190.
- 26 In the second half of the Middle Ages, apostles were favourite topics to window makers, as becomes visible from a survey of stained glass windows in England, France, and (Southern) Germany from the twelfth to fifteenth centuries (unpublished database of windows

examine the visualization of apostles in stained glass windows in order to find out how the apostles were deployed as spiritual guides, as markers of mainstream Christianity, and as guards against groups that moved away from the Catholic centre.

4 Bridges and Breaches

4.1 *A Bridge: Vita apostolica in Stained Glass*

The windows in early thirteenth-century cathedrals depicting the acts and martyrdom of the apostles reflect a double approach to these founders of a worldwide *ecclesia*: as bridges to connect to a desired image or identity, and as breaches to contrast to a contested other. In Chartres cathedral, we find the apostolic life to which the reforming Church wishes to relate depicted in the central apse window, surrounded by four windows depicting the narrative of individual apostles: Simon and Jude, Andrew, Paul, and James the Greater.²⁷

The central apse window depicting the life of the apostles with Christ is remarkable because it is located where traditionally the soteriological work of Christ is represented, for example, in the form of a crucifixion or a tree of Jesse. This was the case in the previous church in Chartres.²⁸ This central element in mediaeval theology seems to be replaced now by a “new ecclesiology,”²⁹ in

depicting the apostles in mediaeval Europe, constructed by Fenna Visser MA, Utrecht University 2008–2009). Traditionally, the depiction of members of the guilds in the windows as the letters’ donors has led scholars to believe that the laity was influential with regard to the construction of the windows’ iconographic programme. In more recent research, however, the conviction that the clergy (in the case of Chartres the canons of the cathedral) played the central role in the thematic arrangement of these windows is dominant – leaving the donors with the financial care of the church’s embellishment, Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 18–28.

27 Manhes-Deremble suggests that in the mediaeval situation a window dedicated to Matthew was there as well: Colette Manhes-Deremble and Jean-Paul Deremble, *Vitraux de Chartres* (Paris: Zodiaque, 2003), 83. For an overview of the apostle windows in Chartres see Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 59–61.

28 Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 40 and 72. A traditional situation is still found in, e.g., Beauvais, where in the central apse a window depicting the Tree of Jesse and one dedicated to Christ’s childhood are crowned by a rose window depicting the crucifixion; cf. Michael Watt Cothren, *Picturing the Celestial City: The Medieval Stained Glass of Beauvais Cathedral* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), 15–24.

29 Cf. Manhes-Deremble and Deremble, *Vitraux de Chartres*, 83.

which the apostles and the hierarchy of the Church are central.³⁰ The window is all the more remarkable because the narrative of the crucifixion does not have a place in any of the 34 panels, whereas full attention is paid to other elements of the Passion narrative, such as the Last Supper, the Washing of Feet, the Agony in the Garden, Betrayal, Capture, as well as to the Apparition after the Resurrection, Ascension, and Pentecost.³¹ In the depiction of Christ's passion and resurrection, those scenes are selected in which the apostles are most prominent, thus telling the story of Christ's life from their perspective. The same is visible in the scenes where Christ teaches his disciples to preach the Gospel (panel 20; fig. 1), celebrate Mass, and administer Baptism (panel 21; fig. 1). The window at this central location accentuates the importance of the apostles as the root of ecclesiastical hierarchy. The apostles, who were instructed by Christ, instruct the Church, taking care of its formation and reformation through preaching and celebrating Mass and baptism.

4.2 *A Breach: Contesting the Doctrinal Other*

While the apostle window in Chartres cathedral refers to the apostles in order to depict the apostolic, missionary, and sacramental identity of the Church in reform, the windows surrounding the apse window in Chartres show how the apostles are commemorated in order to react against what was seen as conflicting with Catholic doctrine. The window next to the central apse window deserves special attention. It is dedicated to the apostles Simon and Jude, who are celebrated together on October 28.³² According to the Latin tradition, the two apostles shared mission and martyrdom in Babylon and the other provinces of Persia. Their main opponents were a pair of sorcerers, Zaroës and Arphaxat, whose teachings are classified as a "depraved doctrine" (*doctrina*

30 Manhes-Deremble, *Vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 271.

31 For an image and description of the entire window see Manhes-Deremble and Deremble, *Vitraux de Chartres*, 84–85. The authors indicate that six panels of the apostle window are nineteenth-century restorations, but since the panels depicting the passion and resurrection of Christ are all mediaeval, there is little reason to assume that the window in its original setup did include the crucifixion.

32 Cf. Rose, *Ritual Memory*, 213. For a modern translation of the Latin account of the *Virtutes Simonis et Iudae*, see Dominique Alibert e.a., trans., "Passion de Simon et Jude," in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, eds. Pierre Geoltrain and Jean-Daniel Kaestli, vol. 2 (Paris: Gallimard, 2005), 837–864. See on the problematic nature of the so-called "Collection of Pseudo-Abdias" and the early modern edition history Els Rose, "Abdias scriptor vitarum sanctorum apostolorum? The "Collection of Pseudo-Abdias" reconsidered," *Revue d'histoire des textes* n.s. 8 (2013): 227–268.

prava). In the narrative account on acts and martyrdom of Simon and Jude (*Virtutes Simonis et Iudae*), we find a summary of this doctrine. It is marked by a dualistic image of God in that the Old Testament God is presented as a god of darkness (*deum dicerent tenebrarum*). The sorcerers teach that the creation of the body is performed by this evil god (*corporis figmentum a deo malo factum*), while the soul possessed a part of God (*animam homini partem dei habere dicerent*). The sorcerers are said to venerate the sun and the moon as gods, as well as water, but they deny the incarnation, passion, and resurrection of a God-made-man (*dei autem filium dominum Ihesum Christum fantasiam fuisse, nec uerum hominem ex uera uirgine natum, nec uere temptatum, nec uere passum, nec uere sepultum, nec uere tercia die resurrexisse a mortuis affirmabant*).³³

The window of Simon and Jude in Chartres cathedral consists of 20 panels, the majority of which depict the apostles' contestation with the sorcerers and the deities they venerated (see fig. 2).³⁴ For those spectators who were able to understand what they were seeing, the *doctrina prava* of the sorcerers resonates, reminding them of dualistic views on God and the created world. To an early thirteenth-century audience, the teachings of the sorcerers represented a Catholic response to the tenets attributed to contemporary groups condemned as heretical ("Manichean") because of their rejection of the materiality of human life as inferior and the incarnation of the divine in Christ.³⁵

33 Text according to twelfth-century codex Paris, Bibliothèque de Ste Geneviève 547, f. 43^v: *Simon itaque Chananeus et Iudas Zelotes apostoli domini nostri Ihesu Christi cum per reuelationem spiritus sancti Persiden fuissent regionem ingressi, inuenerunt ibi duos magos Zaroen et Arfaxat, qui a facie sancti Mathei de Ethiopia fugerant. Erat autem doctrina eorum praua, ita ut deum Abraham, et deum Ysaac, et deum Iacob blasphemantes deum dicerent tenebrarum, Moysen dicerent maleficum, omnes prophetas dei a deo tenebrarum missos assererent. Animam hominis partem dei habere dicerent, corporis uero figmentum a deo malo factum, et ideo duabus contrariis diuersisque substantiis contraire, ut unde letatur caro, anima contristetur, et in quibus exultat anima, corpus affligatur, solem et lunam deorum numero applicantes, aquam simul deitatem habere docebant, Dei autem filium dominum nostrum Ihesum Christum fantasiam fuisse, nec uerum hominem ex uera uirgine natum, nec uere temptatum nec uere passum, nec uere sepultum, nec uere tercia die resurrexisse a mortuis affirmabant.*

34 For an image of the entire window, see Manhes-Deremble and Deremble, *Vitraux de Chartres*, p. 87.

35 "Docetism is but one aspect of the fundamental dualism of Catharism," Anne Brenon, "Cathars and the Representation of the Divine: Christians of the Invisible," in *Iconoclasm and Iconoclasm: Struggle for Religious Identity*, eds. Willem van Asselt e.a. (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 247–261, at 252; cf. on Cathar Docetism Vauchez, *Spiritualité*, 110; Robert I. Moore, "Afterthoughts on *The Origins of European Dissent*," in *Heresy and the Persecuting Society*

The formulation of traditional Manichean doctrines and practices as the core characteristics of the preaching of those that were considered as heretics was common in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, as Jean-Louis Biget, for instance, has shown for the Cistercians and their fight against the late twelfth-century “heretics” of Toulouse. Under the denominator of a dualistic world view, these and similar movements were accused of rejecting baptism, the Eucharist, and the resurrection of the body.³⁶ A similar tendency is visible in the narrative of the apostles Simon and Jude and particularly its depiction in the windows of Chartres cathedral, which illustrates the battle of the catholic reform movement against ideas that were perceived as contradicting the reform programme. The dedication of a window in the heart of the church to the story of this pair of apostles fighting a rejected doctrine reflects the centrality of this battle (and the presumed victory of the Catholics?) in the early thirteenth-century church in reform.

In the twelfth- and thirteenth-century controversy between orthodoxy and heresy, not only the approach to material creation was at stake. The conflict concentrated on the differences of opinion concerning the traditional commemoration of Christ’s life and passion in material gestures such as the Eucharist and baptism.³⁷ Against this background, the frequent depiction of

in the Middle Ages. Essays on the Work of R.I. Moore, ed. Michael Frassetto (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 291–326, at 308–309.

36 Jean-Louis Biget, “Les Albigeois”: remarques sur une dénomination,” in *Inventer l’hérésie? Discours polémiques et pouvoirs avant l’inquisition*, ed. Monique Zerner (Nice: Centre d’études médiévales, 1998), 219–255, esp. 238. Cf. Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 64 and Moore, “Afterthoughts,” 299–300. Moore indicates the twelfth and thirteenth centuries as the period in which “the medieval manichee” was created, Moore, *Formation of a Persecuting Society*, 84. For a summary of the state of the art see Müller, “Les historiens et la question de la vérité historique.”

37 Cf. Lateran Council II, *const.* 23, which condemns, as was shown above (footnote 22) as heretic all religious currents (*religiositatis speciem simulantes*) that reject the Eucharist, infant baptism, the priesthood and other clerical orders, and legitimate marriage: *Eos autem qui religiositatis speciem simulantes, Domini corporis et sanguinis sacramentum, baptismum puerorum, sacerdotium et ceteros ecclesiasticos ordines, et legitimarum damnant foedera nuptiarum, tamquam haereticos ab ecclesia Dei pellimus et damnamus, et per potestates externas coerceri praecipimus. Defensores quoque ipsorum eiusdem damnationis vinculo innodamus*, Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 202. Lateran Council IV, *const.* 1, underlines the legitimacy of marriage: *Non solum autem virgines et continentes, verum etiam coniugati, per fidem rectam et operationem bonam placentes Deo, ad aeternam merentur beatitudinem pervenire*, Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 231.

the apostles celebrating the Eucharist or baptizing people in the windows of Chartres and contemporary centres of reform is significant.

4.2.1 Eucharist

The emphasis on the celebration of the Eucharist in stained glass windows of this period not only reflects the fight against heresy, but also, more positively, the church's programme to revive the celebration of Mass as the heart of the Church's spirituality in the context of a hierarchical apostolic ministry.³⁸ The centrality of the Eucharist is stressed in a particular way during the Fourth Lateran Council. One of the most famous decrees of the council (21) formulates the so-called "Easter obligation," which implies an appeal to all Christians, men and women alike (*omnis utriusque sexus*), to come to confession annually and to participate in communion at least once a year during Easter.³⁹ Several windows in Chartres depict the apostles celebrating Mass. Thus, the window dedicated to James the Greater shows the apostle amidst a crowd of faithful, to whom he hands over the chalice (fig. 3). A similar scene is found in the window dedicated to Andrew (fig. 4).

4.2.2 Baptism

Baptism has a prominent place in the window dedicated to the apostles in Chartres cathedral (fig. 1). It is likewise visible in the window representing the life and acts of Thomas in the cathedral of St. Stephen in Bourges, next to Chartres one of the most important centres of reform related to the Lateran movement.⁴⁰ It houses an important series of narrative apostle windows in

38 Lateran Council IV stresses the exclusive right of the ordained clergy to administer the sacraments: *Et hoc utique sacramentum nemo potest conficere, nisi sacerdos, qui fuerit ordinatus secundum claves ecclesiae, quas ipse concessit apostolis et eorum successoribus Iesus Christus*. Lateran Council IV, *const.* 1, Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 230.

39 Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 245; Logan, *A History of the Church*, 197.

40 The older literature on Bourges cathedral and its windows I studied pay little to no attention to the position of Bourges in the reform movement of the Lateran councils; see Louis Grodecki, "A Stained Glass *Atelier* of the Thirteenth Century: A Study of Windows in the Cathedrals of Bourges, Chartres and Poitiers," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 11 (1948): 87–111; Kurt Haselhorst, *Die hochgotischen Glasfenster der Kathedrale von Bourges. Studien zur Geschichte der Glasfensterkunst des 13. Jahrhunderts in den Kathedralen Frankreichs* (PhD diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität, Munich, 1974); Robert Branner, *La cathédrale de Bourges et sa place dans l'architecture gothique* (Paris: Tardy, 1962); Tania Bayard, *Bourges Cathedral: The West Portals* (New York: Garland 1976). These authors seem to build their arguments about the relation between the windows in

the choir ambulatory. Windows in the apse chapels depict the acts and martyrdoms of the apostles Peter and Paul, James the Greater, and John the Evangelist, while one of the large windows in the wall of the ambulatory features Thomas. These apostle windows are dated to the second or third decade of the thirteenth century.⁴¹ The Latin *Virtutes Thomae*, strongly related to the ancient Greek *Acts of Thomas*, tell the story of Thomas's mission to India, where he is supposed to build a palace for the king. During an interval in his journey, he is present at the wedding banquet of a young couple. Thomas blesses them, and subsequently baptizes them, as is visible in the window on Thomas in Bourges Cathedral (fig. 5). The window thus reflects not only the importance of baptism with water, but also the apostolic support of Christian marriage.

The stained glass programmes discussed in the foregoing are important indications of the way the mainstream church mobilized the apostles to demonstrate the roots of the sacerdotal function of those consecrated in succession. They also make clear how the importance of the commemoration of Christ in material gestures such as baptism and the Eucharist is emphasized in a time span in which their validity is contested. The message of reform, then, is not only written down in Church councils and decrees, but also rewritten in stained glass, in the depiction of the apostles as models of the ecclesiastical hierarchy and as those who first ministered at the celebration of Mass and baptism.

5 Conclusions and Further Questions

Stained glass windows in French cathedrals of the Gothic period visualize some of the main concerns that occupied the mainstream church throughout Europe at the end of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth centuries. New or renewed views on the Church and its spirituality developed in this period are reflected by colourful windows, the iconographic programmes of which are an important contribution to a better understanding of the wide spread of centrally formulated reform programmes. The cathedrals under consideration are found in cities like Chartres and Bourges, but also Auxerre and Sens, where local bishops were highly involved in the reform movement of the period, poignantly expressed in the most influential and most "European" of mediaeval church

Chartres, Bourges, and other contemporary cathedrals solely on aspects of style and other art-historical evidence. More revealing on the position of Bourges in the early thirteenth century is Richard Kay, *The Council of Bourges 1225: A Documentary History* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2002).

41 Grodecki, "Stained Glass *Atelier*," 108.

councils: the Fourth Lateran Council. During this council, the clerical hierarchy was emphasized, as well as the fact that only the church in this hierarchy offered salvation: *Una vero est fidelium universalis ecclesia, extra quam nullus omnino salvatur*.⁴² In order to strengthen the church's unity, the fight against beliefs at odds with its teaching became more determined. Six years earlier, Innocent III had been the first to organize armed action against fellow Christians in the form of the Albigensian Crusade.⁴³

The windows of the cathedrals in reform centres, built or rebuilt around 1200, respond to and reflect the church's programme of reform. The central position of the apostles in Chartres cathedral represents the apostles as the beginning of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The battle against heresy, particularly those movements in which a dualistic, neo-Manichaean character was assumed, is found in the window of Simon and Jude. On the basis of the textual narrative of their *Virtutes*, these apostles represent more than others the fight against religious ideas coloured by dualism and Docetism.

Apart from the question how and by whom these windows were perceived, loaded as they are with a high degree of pictorial detail and perhaps only accessible to the visually literate, the traditional reading of the apostle windows in Chartres and elsewhere from a perspective of the miraculous only⁴⁴ does not do full justice to the message displayed. A different reading, in close connection with an interpretation of the apocryphal Acts of the Apostles, or *Virtutes apostolorum*, as foundation myths, brings to the fore the aim and significance of the windows in much sharper profile. The apostles, as first missionaries of the Christian faith, embody the first configuration of the church. As such, they are the most obvious models in periods of spiritual renewal and reform. As we saw in the cases of Salerno and Benevento, the apostles were deployed earlier as patron saints of ecclesiastical reform during the pontificate of Gregory VII. The same is happening in the windows of Chartres, Bourges, and other centres of the Lateran reform movement of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The traditional approach to the *Virtutes apostolorum* and their visual representation in windows and other visual expressions as mere satisfaction of the simple Christian's curiosity or as documents for education and enjoyment does not enlarge our understanding of the vital role the apostles played in periods of renewal

42 Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 230.

43 Cf. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, 14. In the *constitutiones* of Lateran Council IV, those are marked as heretics who differ in confession from the catholic faith as expressed in *constitutio* 1; who preach without mission to do so (*const.* 3), Tanner, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*, vol. 1, 233–235.

44 Manhes-Deremble, *Les vitraux narratifs de Chartres*, 190.

and spiritual change in mediaeval Christianity. A rereading of these *Virtutes* as foundation myths helps to explain why so much attention was paid to the visual rewriting of the apocryphal Acts in churches erected or decorated in the late twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, contemporary with the Lateran reform movement. Then, as in other periods of ecclesiastical renewal, the apostles, commemorated in text and image, functioned as bridges between old beliefs and new spiritualities and, at the same time, as strongholds against unwanted alternative movements.

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FIGURE 1 *Chartres Cathedral, apostle window, panel 20 and 21. Christ teaching his disciples to preach and to administer baptism.*

PHOTO: JAAP TUIJN



FIGURE 2 *Chartres Cathedral, window of Simon and Jude, panel 3–6. The apostles in altercation with the sorcerers Zaroos and Arphaxat; panel 5 and 6 depict the sorcerers' idol who is bound to silence by the presence of the apostles.*

PHOTO: JAAP TUIJN



FIGURE 3 *Chartres Cathedral, window of James the Greater, panel 4. James is celebrating the Eucharist.*
PHOTO: JAAP TUIJN



FIGURE 4 *Chartres Cathedral, window of Andrew, panel 24. Andrew is celebrating the Eucharist.*
PHOTO: JAAP TUIJN



FIGURE 5 *Bourges Cathedral, window of Thomas, panel 10 and 12. Thomas blesses the bridal couple and baptizes them.*

PHOTO: JAAP TUIJN