relevant fields: Colette Sirat, ably assisted by Michèle Dukan, takes overall responsibility, with a particular interest in the palaeographic aspects; Patrice Caudelier comments on the Greek words and the papyrological ramifications, and contributes an appendix on the technique of weaving called 'sprang'; Mordechai Akiva Friedman applies his unrivalled knowledge of Jewish marriage documents to the reconstruction of the text and to the commentary; and Ada Yardeni has brought to bear her remarkable skills as a scribe, to elucidate the handwriting and also the way the papyrus was originally folded. Despite this wealth of expertise, a number of question marks remain: the text, although relatively well preserved, is still extremely battered, and much of the reconstruction is inspired guesswork; the commentary squeezes out the last drop of information — down to the bride's height and the socio-economic status of her family; and the reconstruction and decipherment of the Greek words is a particularly tricky business. The editors are to be congratulated for setting forth clearly and fully all the evidence on which future discussion will be based.

N. R. M. de Lange


The volume on Visions edited by R. E. V. Stuip and C. Vellekoop is the sixth in a series of Medieval Studies published by the University of Utrecht ("Utrechtse Bijdragen tot de Mediëvistiek"). The papers, in Dutch, are concerned with visions in Sanskrit literature (H. W. Bodewitz), Er in Plato's *Republic* and Thespesios of Soloi in Plutarch's dialogue *De sera numinis vindicta* (A. H. M. Kessels), Cicero and Virgilius (H. L. W. Nelson), Gregory of Tours (G. de Nie.), Celtic traditions (D. Edel), visual arts in the Middle Ages (A. J. van Rijn), the vision of Gottschalk (C. Vellekoop), Dante (M. Alinei), Hadewijch (P. Mommaers), and generalities (H. W. J. Vekeman, A. Vergote).

Although praiseworthy in general, most papers fall within the Dutch didactic tradition and could hardly find any readers outside this country and perhaps Germany. The attempt of the editors, Stuip and Vellekoop, is nonetheless meritorious.

Transcending generalities are a few of them. Since, with the exception of Sanskrit visionary literature, almost all major topics of the area have
been treated by us in two previous books (*Psychanodia I*, Leiden 1983, and especially *Experiences de l'extase*, Paris 1984), we are going to concentrate here on one of the most interesting of the visions analyzed in this volume: the vision of Gottschalk, introduced by C. Vellekoop.

Gottschalk was a poor and sickly but free German peasant from Holstein (between Kiel and Hamburg) in the second half of the XIIth century. On Tuesday, December 12, 1189, the ailing man, while being drafted by his Lord, Heinrich Duke of Saxony and Bavaria, to surround the soldiers of the latter's enemy Adolf of Dassel closed in the stronghold at Segerberg, got seriously sick in his tent. Between December 17 and December 20, he entered a comatous state, and on December 20 the soul left his body altogether. The draftees left their position on December 24, taking with them their almost lifeless colleague. It took him five weeks to recover, but thenceforth he had frequent hallucinations and headaches, suffering also very seriously from the wounds he had incurred during his exploration of the other world. He was not quite a human being any more: once one of his legs got stuck in the chimney, but fire did not harm him. Two religious men took interest in his vision and wrote two reports, a shorter and a longer one, showing no notable discrepancies between them.

Separated from the body, Gottschalk's soul was intercepted by two angels dressed in snowwhite robes who took him to the south, where they met many other souls. From the canopy of a lime-tree, one of the angels got fourteen pairs of shoes, which he handed to fourteen people in the assembly, chosen because of their good deeds. The others had to cross barefoot, in agony, a two miles long field full of a sort of sharp thorns. After a while, Gottschalk fell to the ground and could not stand any more. The angel showed mercy upon him and brought him a pair of shoes. On the other side of the field, the wounds of twenty-five sinners were miraculously healed, as a sign that they had repented.

They came then to a most wide river, and there was no other way to cross it than walking on the tips of terrible swords and spears. For the fourteen righteous and the twenty-five repentants there were rafts floating on the river, so that they should stay unharmed. The others were incredibly mutilated; but, with the exception of six of them, they were restored to the community of righteous because of their repentance. Thus the people came to a crossroad: five of those who had received shoes could go to Heaven, transfigured in glorious beings. Most of the others took the way of the middle, leading to Purgatory. Only Gottschalk and the six sinners were led by the angels to contemplate the formidable tortures in the fire of Hell. Gottschalk recognized in there several people from his province, mainly notorious criminals. But punishment was not eternal. After being roasted and cooled again many times, some of the sinners were