The Art of Memory and the Art of Page Layout in the Middle Ages

Mary J. Carruthers

Since the theme of this issue is 'back to the future,' especially to the ways in which information formats before the age of printing anticipate and perhaps even may give some guidance to principles of organization and cognitive layouts for the 'new' science of information design, I am going to focus in my presentation on the design of memory storage, as it was taught and practiced in the Middle Ages. It is important to recognize that 'memory-art' accompanied every aspect of education in the ancient trivium, though different aspects and capacities of human memory were emphasized as appropriate to its various disciplines. What is commonly now taken to be 'the art of memory,' namely the advice to link powerful images of 'content' (*imagines rerum*) together in dramatic scenes conceived within a mental location (*locus*) (as described most completely in the early first century B.C. *Rhetorica ad Herennium*) is not a universal technique but specifically a device of Rhetoric, and thus of composition. There is also an 'art of memory' associated with Dialectic, and this is the device of the 'topics' or 'seats' (*topoi*) of argument, syllogism and enthymeme arranged in an orderly schematic of specific mental 'places.' Aristotle expounded this scheme as a variety of mnemonic art in his treatise *Peri Topoi*, and in turn it was further disseminated to later antiquity and the Middle Ages in works by Cicero and Boethius.

Finally there is the 'art of memory' associated with Grammar. In actual sequence it is the foundation of the other two, as Grammar is the foundation of Dialectic and Rhetoric. Like them, it is locational but it is concerned with the habitual memorization 'by rote' (as we say in English) of the foundational cultural texts. The principle is simple, and indeed still in use among those who still do such a thing. A child would first 'divide' a text into mnemonically-effective pieces or 'bits' and then lay each bit of matter into an orderly scheme within which it would be uniquely 'located' mentally. Any locational scheme that has a rigorous internal order will serve, but the simplest, and most often used, were schemes of numbers or of the alphabet. I will begin my presentation by discussing a twelfth-century treatise for learning such a 'grammatical memory' scheme. After that I would like to present several spatial layouts that were designed to aid the cognitive work of readers – cognitive work that was given, during the Middle Ages, the general term *memoria*. Thus 'memory' and 'the arts of memory,' in pre-modern centuries, included a great variety of cognitive activities, in particular memory, imagination, and cogitation. It is important to keep this in mind, because we now quite rigorously distinguish among them, but it would be anachronistic of me to do so in my presentation to you.

The number scheme is most fully described by Hugh St. Victor in a text virtually overlooked by modern scholars called 'De Tribus Maximis Circumstantiis Gestorum.' Hugh's description is one of the fullest, and clearest, of any mnemonic system. The

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method utilizes psychological principles similar to the method using images in backgrounds, but in this case the 'background' system is numerical and the 'images' are of short pieces of text written into the numbered backgrounds, as though within a grid. The images of written text are impressed as they appear in the particular codex from which they were first memorized, including their location on the page (recto, verso, top, middle, bottom), the shapes and colors of the letters themselves, and the appearance of each page including marginalia and illuminations, to make a clear visual image. Finally, Hugh advises that the physical conditions under which one had memorized the original material should also become part of one's total memory of it.

The preface was composed about 1130, and is addressed to very young students beginning their study of scripture in the cathedral school of St. Victor. It preceeds a Chronicle of Biblical history, set out as columns seventy folio pages worth in the fullest versions – of names, dates, and places, which the students were to memorize as an elementary part of their education. This preface was unedited until 1943; it survives in 34 manuscripts, a relatively small number for Hugh's works (by contrast, his most popular, the curricular treatise called *Didascalicon*, is found in 125 manuscripts). Nearly all the copies of 'De tribus maximiis circumstantiis' were written in the 12th and 13th centuries; two are from the fourteenth, and one from the fifteenth century. Of those whose provenance is known, most are claustral. The largest number of manuscripts is French, as we would expect, including several from the library at St. Victor (now of course in the Bibliothèque Nationale). So, the evidence suggets that this particular treatise was not regarded as major or original enough to deserve wide dissemination, despite its author's eminence; that it was never known much beyond the precincts of St. Victor; and that it sank into oblivion by the early fourteenth century, because it had been superceded by or incorporated into other pedagogical tools. Its very ordinariness, however, makes it important to my presentation today.

The method Hugh describes for his novices displays the principles basic to classical mnemonics, as we find them described by Aristotle, the *auctor ad Herennium*, Cicero, and so many others. One must first have a rigid, easily retained order of places (*topoi, loci*), that has a definite beginning. Into this order one places the components of what one wishes to memorize and recall. As a moneychanger ('nummularium') separates and classifies his coins by type in his money-bag ('sacculum,' 'marsupium'), so the content of wisdom's storehouse ('thesaurus,' 'archa'), which is the memory, must be classified according to a definite, orderly scheme. Without retention in the memory, says Hugh, there is no learning, no wisdom. 'The whole usefulness of education consists only in the memory of it.' ('In sola enim memoria omnis utilitas doctrinae consistit'; ed. Green, p. 490, lines 39–40).

The example Hugh gives is how to memorize the Psalms. There are one hundred and fifty in all, and to learn them one first constructs a series of mental compartments, numbered consecutively from 1 to 150 – in other words, a rigid system of backgrounds with a definite starting-point. To each number is attached the first few words (the incipit) of each psalm, so that as one visualizes the number 'one', one simultaneously visualizes 'Beatus vir qui non abiit'; upon seeing 'xxii' one also sees the text 'Dominus regit me'; and so forth. In Hugh's scheme the images are the written words as they actually appear in a manuscript and the locus is simply a number, but the incidental difference of this scheme from the architectural one described famously in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (III. 16. 29-III. 19. 32) is less important than its fundamental psychological similarity;

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they both employ a system of consciously constructed, rigidly ordered backgrounds as a grid which is then filled with *imagines* (mnemonically efficacious cues).

Hugh counsels that this same method of numerical ordering can also be used to learn the texts of the individual psalms. Under number twenty-two (for example), one visualizes a subsidiary set of numbers, again beginning with 'one' and proceeding in consecutive numerical order; to these one attaches the rest of the text, in short pieces (verses), however many one needs to complete the task. The crucial task for recollection is the construction of the orderly grid of numbers which one can see in the memory. This enables one 'when asked, without hesitation [to] answer, either in forward order, or by skipping one or several, or in reverse order and recited backwards' whatever is in the memorized text as a whole. And it also enables one to construct mentally a concordance of the text, thus 'compounding with interest the authority of some one psalm' by citations from a multitude of other, related texts.

Moreover, this scheme will work for any book of the Bible (or for any text at all, for that matter). A long text must always be broken up into short segments, numbered, then memorized a few pieces at a time. We have some clue as to exactly how short 'short' was from the length of verses in the medieval format of the Psalms, and from the number of words enclosed in cola and commata divisions. Obviously, optimal length varies slightly from one individual memory to the next, but the medieval texts of the Psalms generally contain more verse divisions than do modern texts. Psalm 23, for instance, is six verses long in the Revised English Bible of 1611, but has nine divisions in the 'Paris' text of the thirteenth century. The longest of these is the first, containing thirteen words; by contrast the King James contains thirty words in verse four and twenty-two in verse five. The fewer number of words in the medieval format may well reflect the psychological realities of the relatively strict limits of short-term memory, that is, what one can take in during a single memorial *conspectus*, or 'glance,' to use the terminology of the memorial *artes*. (It should be noted that the rules for forming backgrounds given in the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* are governed by the need for the person remembering to see at a glance, clearly and without confusion, what is there.)

Any long text can be treated as though it were composed of a number of short ones:

> For the memory always rejoices [says Hugh] in both brevity of length and fewness in number, and therefore it is necessary, when the sequence of your reading tends toward length, that it first be divided into a few units, so that what the memory could not comprehend as a single expanse it can comprehend at least in a number.

This is advice which Hugh repeated in *Didascalicon*. In this treatise Hugh extolls even more the dependency of all wisdom and the liberal arts upon an organized memory, the training of which is now sadly decayed because students do not learn proper habits:

> We read that men studied these seven [arts] with such zeal that they had them completely in memory, so that whatever writings they subsequently took in hand or whatever questions they posed for solution or proof, they did not thumb the pages of books to hunt for rules and reasons which the liberal arts might afford for the resolution of a difficult matter, but at once had the particulars ready by heart. Hence, it is a fact that in that time there were so many learned men that they alone wrote more than we are able to read.

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This same contempt for the cumbersome, inefficient, and chancy method of turning the pages of a book to look for a text that one needs is found in Hugh's preface. Do you think, he asks his boys, that people wanting to cite a particular psalm turn over the pages of a manuscript hunting for it? 'Too great would be the labor in such an task.'[1] It is also striking that Hugh makes an exact correlation here between the amount stored in one's memory and the amount of written composition one produces.

But Hugh's most concrete advice in *Didascalicon*, a work which teaches the arts of reading as its title indicates, is to 'gather' (colligere) while reading, 'reducing to a brief and compendious outline things which have been written or discussed at some length.' Again the principle of dividing a long text ('prolixius') is to be observed, because, Hugh says, the memory is lazy and rejoices in brevity.[2] Therefore, we ought to gather something brief and secure from everything we learn which we can store away in the little chest of our memory.

One should not assume that Hugh meant that one should retain only a compact summary of what one has read; what he means is that one should break prolixity, a long text, into a number of short, securely retained segments which can be gathered in the memory. The phrase 'brevem . . . et compendiosam summam,' 'a brief and compendious summary,' might seem self-contradictory, except that Hugh is clearly giving the same advice he spells out more fully in his *Chronicon* preface. He advises memorizing a compendious summation of brief segments of the text one is trying to master – the scholar's method of note-taking, in other words, except written in the memory instead of on note-cards. It is worth recalling by those who might dismiss such advice as mere florilegiality, born of distaste for the comprehensive knowledge of a text, that note-taking and serious scholarship are not exclusive activities. How 'compendious' the summation of a text might be would depend on the industry and talent of each individual reader, and the importance to him of a particular text.

This principle of grouping or 'gathering' respects the limits of human short-term memory. While the storage capacity of memory is virtually limitless, the amount of information that can be focused upon and comprehended at one time is definitely limited, to a number of units somewhere between 5 and 9; some psychologists express it as a law of 'Seven plus-or-minus two.' So one of fundamental principles for increasing mnemonic (recollective) efficacy is to organize single bits of information into informationally richer units by a process of substitution that compresses large amounts of material into single markers. In this way, while one is still limited by one's capacity to focus on no more than 8–9 units at a time, each unit can be made much richer. As the psychologist George A. Miller has written (quite unconsciously echoing one of Hugh of St. Victor's favorite images), if my purse holds only six coins I can carry six pennies or six dimes; similarly, it is as easy to memorize a list containing a lot of information coded into 'rich' units as it is to memorize one containing 'poor' units, for the limiting factor is the number, not the nature of each item. Miller describes 'gathering' in this way:

> The material is first organized into parts which, once they cohere, can be replaced by other symbols – abbreviations, initial letters, schematic images, names, or what have you – and eventually the whole scope of the argument is translated into a few symbols which can be grasped all at one time.

This is exactly what Hugh counsels doing when he substitutes number-coordinates for the verses of a Psalm – the active memory first focuses on the number, and then that

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numerical 'address' leads to the text 'placed' there, itself composed of a few words at a time, grouped into phrases. In recollection, one first focuses on the informationally richest sign, say 'Psalm 22.' That sign stands in for a set of six sub-units or verses, and one might next focus on one number amongst those, 'two,' for example. In turn, that number both 'stands for' and 'leads to' the words 'In loco pascuae, ibi me collocavit. Super aquam refectionis, educavit me,' themselves grouped into four syntactic sub-units or 'phrases.'

Because of the substitution process that creates 'rich' units, one can skip material, rearrange it, collate it, or whatever, simply by manipulating a few digits mentally – recalling the second verse of every Psalm, perhaps, or reciting a couple of psalms by alternating verses from one with the other, maybe one in ascending order and the other in the reverse. Any number of impressive parlour-tricks (ancient and medieval pedagogy would have called them exercises) can be played, for one is actually just counting a few digits at a time. One can also use the ability conferred by this process for serious ends, such as concording texts on a particular topic, as Hugh suggests in his preface, by 'proferentes numerum,' 'bringing forth their number,' that is, memorizing only the number coordinates to a text under the topical key-word. These coordinates then can trigger the recollection of each separate text.

Two Roman school masters of the fourth century, Consultus Fortunatianus and Julius Victor, define these matters very clearly, and since each was quite influential throughout the history of medieval pedagogy, it is worth pausing over what they have to say. For Julius Victor, memory as a subject in rhetoric is chiefly important for *invention*, the procedure of finding one's material: 'Memory is the secure perception [literally 'gathering together'] in the soul of words and themes for composition.' He quotes Cicero, *De oratore* I, 18 to the effect that memory is a treasure-house ('thesaurus') of everything an orator needs, safe custodian of the words (*verba*) and subjects (*res*) required for thought and invention. He recommends particularly, as Cicero did, that one learn the best compositions of the orators, historians, and other worthies by heart, for then one will carry within oneself models for imitation and sources for substance and style.

The procedure of composing depends, Julius Victor says, upon the symbiotic activities of *divisio* and *compositio*. As Quintilian had also observed (*Inst. orat.* XI. 2. 36), he who properly 'divides' the basic structure of an oration can never err when he 'composes' it again. Both 'dividing' and 'composing' are thought of as specific, definite tasks performed to ensure against error (failure of memory) by imposing a numerical order (one, two, three, etc,).

This security will hold true not only when one arranges the questions one intends to address, but in expounding them as well – if the first and second and so on are bound together correctly, then one will securely remember all the content which follows. Similar advice concerning the advantages of properly dividing a theme for the sermon is found in the late medieval arts of preaching. *Divisio* means dividing a text into short segments for memorizing, and *compositio*, is putting the segments together in their order from one to two to three, and so on. One needs, as Aristotle said, a starting-place, simply a beginning marked 'one.' By dividing and composing, one is constructing a series of numbered sequences for each text one memorizes, whether it be one's own work or a set piece from one of the great stylists of the past. Quintilian's otherwise cryptic advice to orators (*Inst. orat.* X. 7. 7) always to have before them the 'modus' and 'finis' of their speech, 'and for this division is absolutely necessary,' makes some sense when one understands 'divisio' in its mnemonic context. The order of numbers cues both the *modus* or 'way' and the *finis* or 'goal' for

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a speech; it allows for digression and all sorts of extempore speaking, while keeping one from losing one's way, forgetting how much one has left to cover, or one's chief points.

The mnemonic requirement for a firm starting-point also gives a practical context for the critical importance given in medieval commentary to the title of a work, an emphasis that often seems to us bizarre. '*Titulus*' is derived from 'titan,' says Remigius of Auxerre (*Commentary on Donatus*), because it is the illuminating 'sun' of the entire text. The *titulus* was one of the basic 'categories' or 'circumstances' that every student had to know about a work. Mnemonically speaking, the 'starting-point' of a text is its title; everything else both in the text itself and its accompanying commentary will be linked in an order from this point.

Julius Victor's contemporary, the teacher Fortunatianus, also says that the best procedure for memorizing is first to divide a long piece into sections. Next we memorize by constant and intense concentration, and then we join one piece to the next in numerical order, until we have learned the whole. 'What best helps the memory? Division and composition; for order most secures the memory.[3]

Those passages we find hard to memorize should be additionally marked with *notae*. We should repeat often what we have learned, and write passages down on wax tablets. To exercise our memories, we should begin by memorizing poems, then orations, and then harder material such as legal writings. Reciting in a low voice or murmur is also very useful technique ('voce modica et magis murmure'). We also retain better and recall more clearly what we have learned at night, when distractions are few.

One of the commonest and oldest distinctions made in memory advice is between memory for things and memory for words. The meaning of 'memory for words' is perfectly clear, even to us, for it denotes the word-for-word repetition that we identify with memorization. What exactly constitutes 'memory for things' is somewhat less self-evident. The distinction drawn in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is probably the clearest of the ancient accounts. There, 'memory for things' means organizing memorial cues by means of a composite scene of mental images associated with various key-words and subjects (illness, poison, heir, will, witnesses). 'Memory for words' also involved constructing images, but seriatim, following the exact phrasing of the original. Fortunatianus discusses when to select one method or the other. Should we always learn word-for-word ('ad verbum')? Only if time permits; but if it doesn't we should retain only the matter ('res'), and suit our own words to it later, according to the occasion.

It is a very bad practice to have to excuse ourselves and refresh our memories by a prompt, or by reference to a book. If your memory is poor or time is short, do not tie yourself down by trying to speak word-for-word from memory, for if you should forget even one word in a series it will lead to an awkward pause or to silence. So it is best to remember res rather than verba, for one can suit words to the *res* as occasion demands and not run the risk of needing prompting or forgetting altogether.

Word-for-word memorizing of a number of outstanding literary and Scriptural texts was also always considered to be essential for education. Quintilian advises acquiring such a memorial foundation in earliest education, and the habit of setting pupils to daily memorizing exercises persisted through the Middle Ages.

But even though they had stored away a great many texts, when they composed new matters, many writers gave only paraphrases of texts. They did so even when manuscripts containing the complete texts were available to them. The reason is not far to seek. They are quoting from memory *sententialiter*, according to the *res* rather than word-for-word.

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The important thing to realize is that such alteration can result from a choice made consciously by the memorizer and writer – it does not automatically reflect poor training or a 'bad' manuscript. On its face, alteration like this is completely neutral. Modern scholars tend to assume that accuracy of reproduction is a function of continual access to written texts, and thus that the extent of an author's reliance upon his memory can be gauged in inverse proportion to the fidelity of his quotations. I think this is a naive assumption. It is clear from what Fortunatianus says that he urged his students always to memorize *verbatim* in the first instance. Only if one is pressed for time should one fall back on memorizing *ad res* (it is also clear that *res* could refer to anything from a summary aphorism to all the main words of a text).

Memorizing *ad res* greatly increases the efficiency of recollection. George Miller observed that a hypothetical sentence can be thought of as 100 letters or 25 words or 3 phrases or one proposition. If one considers a sentence as one proposition, one will obviously be able to grasp it more effectively and securely than if one regards it as 100 letters. It is, says Miller, 'those larger, subjective units, loosely called ideas, that we must count to determine the psychological length of any text.' This is exactly what ancient and medieval writers called *memoria rerum.*

To demonstrate how this fundamental 'techne of memory' persisted until well into late medieval scholastic education, I turn to a scholastic 'art of preaching.' The fourteenth-century English Dominican, Thomas Waleys, a careful scholar of decidedly non-florid style, advises against rote memorizing of one's composition in his *De modo componendi sermones* (ca. 1342), for: 'Words easily pass out of the memory, and from such a trivial action, the memory of what one is saying is disturbed, because words, sooner than concepts, fail to hold together. Often, from forgetting a single syllable, one forgets everything. Thus, the preacher can be confounded because he has bound himself to words rather than to their matter.'

Waleys also disapproves of relying on an overly polished style, composing the whole sermon in rhythm, or too many divisions of the text, for these devices also engender mistakes of recollection and the consequent confusion of the preacher. So too does citing too many authorities. Forgetfulness and its attendant embarrassment is the fault of the preacher who strives to excel in mere ingenuity.

To ward off such preacher's perils, one should memorize not word for word, but according to the 'sententia' of one's authorities. By this advice, Thomas Waleys means that one should remember the most important words, but not worry about the lesser ones.

> And if there are words in these authorities (i.e. the texts) which are singularly weighty in merit, one should especially strive to retain and speak them, caring less about the others. And it is certainly true that there are many authoritative texts of the saints which because of their length and obscurity it is better and more useful to speak according to their sense alone than to recite word for word. And given that they can be recited word for word [by the preacher], where the authorities are obscure at all, their meaning can be set forth in other clear words, for, when they are not understood by the listeners they miss all the fruit.

Waleys makes several interesting distinctions in this section, beginning with a basic one between *sententialiter* and *verbaliter*, a variation on the ancient distinction between memory for matter and memory for words. His advice is directed toward the delivery of an already composed sermon; the preacher should retain his *sentence* and deliver his sermon

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with the aid of his *memoria* ('memoriter retinere et dicere'). This procedure is preferred to rote recitation for reasons of security as well as elegance.

Sententialiter has a specific technical meaning in the context of mnemonics, one that links the mnemonic value of the colon divisions marked off in a written text with the advice to remember 'by the *sententiae*.' A *sententia* was not merely an impressionistic content division, but, according to a well-known definition of Isidore of Seville, it coincides with a *colon*; it is a coherent though not a complete semantic unit, and a number of such cola/sententiae make up the completed thought that is a *periodus*.

So remembering material *sententialiter* would mean to remember it in chunks which are the equivalent of colon-divisions. The verbs *retinere* and *dicere* are used by Waleys with the abverb *sententialiter*; by contrast, the verb *recitare* is used with *verbaliter*. 'Recitare' is the verb also used for the elementary school-room exercises, in which children train their memories first by rote, 'word-for-word.'

What Thomas Waleys says here is essentially also Cicero's advice in *De oratore* and elsewhere, that one prepare a speech for delivery by remembering it according to its topics and major parts, rather than word for word. For Thomas Waleys, the fault of an overly ingenious preaching style is that one may literally lose one's way in it, for one must learn an ornate composition word for word, and that method risks losing everything in the memory loss of a syllable. But, Thomas Waleys is quite clear, one does not choose absolutely between *sententialiter retinere* and *verbaliter recitare*. Waleys says that the preacher knows his memorized texts 'verbaliter,' and then adapts them to the occasion and to the circumstances of his auditors – 'dato quod verbaliter recitentur,' 'given that the texts can be recited word-for-word [by the preacher].' Whether or not we believe that all preachers conformed to this behaviour, it is significant that Waleys expects it as a norm. Fortunatianus gave similar advice: we should learn texts word-for-word whenever we can, but, so long as we are careful to convey the *res* of our original, we may accomodate it in our own words to the occasion, thus producing our own new work.

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Notes

The edition of Hugh of St.Victor's 'De tribus' which I used for the translation of this text I am appending to my resumé is by William M. Green in the medieval journal *Speculum* 18 (1943), pp. 484–493. Thomas Waleys's *ars praedicandi* is edited in T.M. Charland, *Artes praedicandi* (Ottawa, 1936). An edition of Hugh of St. Victor's *Didascalicon* can be found in the *Patrologia latina*, vol. 176, but a better one is by C.H. Buttimer (Washington, D.C., 1939). I used the edition of Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria* by M. Winterbottom for the Oxford Classical Texts series (Oxford, 1970), and for Cicero's *De oratore*, the edition of A.S. Wilkins (Oxford, 1892). All modern editions of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* derive from that of F. Marx for Tuebner (Leipzig, 1923). Editions of both Fortunatianus and Julius Victor's rhetorics can be found in C. Halm, *Rhetores latini minores* (Leipzig, 1863).

The essay by George A. Miller, 'The Magical Number Seven, Plus or Minus Two' is in *Psychological Review* 63 (1956), pp. 81–97.

The illustrations which follow offer two examples of the help provided in medieval manuscripts for different types of cognitive operations, such as the learning of elementary facts or routines, the in-depth study of important corpora of texts and the invention of logical arguments and new compositions. Within the structure of the classical trivium, these tasks are part of grammar, dialectic and rhetoric. These illustrations are just a small sample of the richness of medieval manuscripts in this field.

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ILLUSTRATION 1: Trinity College, Cambridge, MS. B. 5.4., p. 134 v.

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ILLUSTRATION 2: Beinecke Library, Yale, MS. 416, p. 8.

Illustration 1 is a page taken from a study manuscript made by Herbert of Bosham, a member of Thomas à Becket's household. It is laid out in two columns, with the main text (Psalm 51) copied *breviter* or 'briefly' in small units, with longer commentaries written around it. This manuscript presents a summary of commentaries by Augustine, Cassiodorus and Jerome, with additional glosses and drawings of the authors of those commentaries in the margin close to their actual words. Here, 'Augustine' holds a banner bearing the inscription '*Non ego*', and a spear pointing directly to the words of Cassiodorus, with whom he disagreed. The commentary was therefore not considered to be just a cumulative and harmonious process, but also the place for debate between the readers of the time. This manuscript dates from the second half of the 12th century, shortly after the writings of Hugh of Saint Victor.

Illustration 2, entitled 'The Cherub', was an illustration popular with monks and friars. It was associated first of all with a model for sermons composed at the end of the 12th century and entitled '*De sex aliis*' (*On the Six Wings*). This consisted of a section taken from a meditation composed quite some time previously by Hugh

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of Saint Victor on the prophet Isaiah's vision of God (Isaiah 6) and a plan of suggested subjects and texts for sermons on the sacrament of penitence. This plan takes the form of the six wings of the angel, each wing bearing the title of a main subject and each feather indicating a sub-theme. In all, this offered the main themes for 30 meditative sermons on the subject of penitence, together with ideas for other relevant material. This cognitive scheme remained popular from the end of the 12th century until the 17th century, particularly in the large prayer books produced for noble houses (where numerous clerics lived, carrying out the functions of chaplains and tutors) and in books for preachers who needed material for their sermons. This illustration was redesigned (simplified a little and translated from the Latin), drawing on a 14th century version of the 'Six Wings' found in a manuscript from Kempen Abbey in Germany. The manuscript itself is now in the Beinecke Library at Yale University.

* Blackwell Publishing would like to thank Rosemary Dear for her assistance in part of the translation/editing of this paper.

1. *An putas eos, quociens aliquem psalmorum numero designare volebant, paginas replicasse, ut ibi a principio compotum ordientes scire possent quotus esset quisque psalmorum? Nimis magnus fuisset labor iste in negotio tali* (ed. Green, p. 489, ll. 42–44).
2. *Memoria hominis hebes est et brevitate gaudet* (*Didas.* III. 11; ed. Buttimer, p. 60, lines 24–25).
3. *Quid vel maxime memoriam adiuvat? Divisio et conpositio: nam memoriam vehementer ordo servat.*

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