
GENDER

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GENDER

Sherry C. M. Lindquist

Gender is a relatively new category of historical analysis, one that Joan Scott championed in an influential article in the *American Historical Review* in 1986, and which only began to appear in disciplinary encyclopedias and lists of key terms in the early 1990s.¹ At the time when Scott wrote her watershed article, general dictionaries, such as the *Oxford English Dictionary*, restricted the use of the term to what the *OED* gives as its second definition, which focuses on the term's grammatical meaning. This is no doubt related to the *OED*'s now obsolete first definition of "kind, sort, class." The term, which thus evokes notions both of classifying and of feminine and masculine, was appropriated in scientific studies about hermaphroditism in the 1950s by sexologist John Money and his collaborators; it then began to figure in the writings of other medical practitioners and social scientists as well as feminist theorists to describe socially determined characteristics attributed to biological sex.² They drew on the third definition of "gender" provided by the *OED*, which recognized that the word "gender" could refer to the biological sex of persons and not just grammatical categories. Although the *OED* had historically presented this usage only as a "jocular," in 1989 it acknowledged the new context for the word by adding definition 3b.³ The complete third definition, the one most relevant to our concern, remains unchanged at the time of this writing:

3. a. *transf.* Sex. Now only *jocular*.
- b. In mod. (esp. feminist) use, a euphemism for the sex of a human being, often intended to emphasize the social and cultural, as opposed to the biological, distinctions between the sexes.

The above definition betrays some unease with the serious implications of the term "gender," since it refuses to recognize its jokiness to be obsolete, even though the *OED* only offers examples of "jocular" that are centuries old. In 3b, the *OED* calls "gender" a euphemism for "sex," which suggests that the word is merely a substitute word for (biological) sex, whose virtue is that it does not have homonymous associations with sex (acts) or sexuality. The implication of interchangeability between sex and gender flattens out gender's theoretical complexities and,

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furthermore, works to deny a more complicated interrelationship among sex, sexuality, and gender. Gender is a term, Scott argues, that “emphasizes an entire system of relationships that may include sex, but is not directly determined by sex, or directly determining of sexuality.”⁴ The *OED* definitions of “gender” signal the perplexity, evasions, and precariousness that have been and still are attached to this term.⁵

It is a rare moment when one must turn from the *Oxford English Dictionary* to Judith Butler’s notoriously complicated texts in search of clarity, but her enormously influential article of 1988, “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory,” may shed some light on how to think about the intersection of gender and medieval art.⁶ Here Butler famously argues that gender identity is performative, that it is instituted through a “stylized repetition of acts.”⁷ Butler also says, significantly for our purposes, that gender is instituted through a “stylization of the body . . . understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and enactments of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self.”⁸ Much of medieval art can qualify as a “stylization of the body,” at least in the reinforcing arena of representation, and much recent scholarship drawing on reception theory shows that images serve as both models and instruments for constructing the gender of the self and of the other.⁹ Butler’s theory means that we fashion our own gender identities through the fusion of individual inclinations and social pressures. Of course, this model may also apply to how we form other aspects of identity including sexuality, which is intertwined with gender. Although there are those who, following Michel Foucault, accept sexual identity as a modern construct and hold that premodern societies were concerned with sexual behavior rather than identities, more recent scholarship is challenging this precept.¹⁰ The sharp break that Foucault and others insist upon between medieval and modern people is just as troubling an anachronistic distortion as the collapsing of the distance between them and us.¹¹ Medieval stylizations of the body are gendered in ways that are both utterly foreign and strangely familiar—and studies that help us sort these ways out have much to teach us both about our medieval forebears and about ourselves.¹²

One thing that the modern world certainly has in common with the medieval one is the function of gender as a structure of inequality.¹³ In the Middle Ages, notions of sexual difference determined where you could go; what you wore; whom you spoke to; what you could say; what profession you could pursue; how you were educated; to what organizations you could belong; the terms by which you could testify in court, inherit property, and earn wages; and countless other aspects of individual lives. And yet gender was not, of course, an exclusive determinant of identity; other factors such as wealth, power, birth, ethnicity, race, sexuality, profession and creed could inflect or disrupt expected gender

roles. When expectations based on these determinants were in evident tension or even conflict, it threatened the norms of social order. Such conflicts often had to be publicly resolved or at least negotiated, retheorized, clarified as exceptions, or, alternatively, safely obfuscated. Visual images could and often did serve such purposes, an operation that might call for them to be ambiguous and indeterminate with regard to gender. We should not necessarily assume, therefore, that medieval images that seem to transgress or subvert normative conceptions of gender were transgressive or subversive. It is more likely that such images were designed to reinforce normative ideas about gender and power in quite nuanced and sophisticated ways. This was a dangerous game, however, since a failure on the part of the creator and/or viewer in such cases, a misrepresentation or misreading of intended cues, might just undermine the very purpose of the image. These are the circumstances that allow for a “queer” reading, not necessarily (but neither exclusive of) a reading from a gay/lesbian perspective but a reading against dominant norms, as Karl Whittington describes in his contribution to this volume.¹⁴ Medieval images could visualize the things in which the dominant powers who patronized them were invested, and gendered readings of them help us to figure out what the images meant and how they functioned for viewers.

A gendered reading of a medieval work of art investigates the normative messages of a patriarchal, heterosexist culture that inflected the images, and how those messages were conceived, produced, disseminated, internalized, and/or undermined by and for audiences in particular historical contexts. Such an interpretation can also expose the ways in which ideologies of gender are enmeshed in other discourses of power and identity. Gendered readings help us to see crucial meanings in medieval art and architecture that we would otherwise overlook. A case in point is my own reading of a canonical monument—the Chartreuse de Champmol, a Carthusian charterhouse founded in 1385, which served as the dynastic mausoleum of the Valois Burgundian dukes.¹⁵ Given the male monastic context, previous scholars took for granted that women had little or nothing to do with the patronage, production, and reception of this monument and the art objects associated with it. Neither had anyone considered how this monument constructed and projected models of masculinity. In fact, assumptions in the past about a kind of monolithic, inviolate male authority in the Middle Ages led scholars not to see women in what were supposed to be male preserves, even if evidence suggests their presence and importance (or even the importance of their absence). Thus the traditional interpretation of the Chartreuse de Champmol stages it as an assertion of the power and authority of the duke, Philip the Bold, (which it no doubt was) and casts the Carthusian inhabitants in a minor role—presuming their adherence to their austere rule. The duke’s wife, Duchess Margaret of Flanders, was granted almost no role in spite of the facts that her inheritance was the source of the fabulous wealth that

made the new foundation possible; that she was in Dijon more than Philip at the time of its construction; and that she signed the foundation charter, laid the first stone, selected artisans, certified payments for work, and gave gratuities to workers. Indeed, as I have demonstrated, Margaret's participation was reflected in a spectacular private oratory, an extraordinary life-sized portrait on the door of the church, and in the endless repetitions of her arms and symbols throughout the decorative program of the monastic complex (Fig. 1). Certainly the duchess's presence was one contradiction (among others) that posed problems for the monks—in the face of which they had to reassert their ideological purity, especially since their rule, more than that of other orders, emphasized their isolation, particularly from women. I have reconstructed the Carthusians' participation in the conceptualization of the Chartreuse de Champmol, and I argue that these monks shored up their reputation partly through art and architecture that projected a heroic and implicitly masculine brand of devotionism, expressed through an innovative pictorial program as well as through architectural mechanisms that claimed to isolate the Carthusians from their surprisingly large and diverse constituency. It was precisely because of the evident influence of their powerful female patron that the Carthusians needed such strategies to help them maintain the inequalities of a gendered social structure that insisted on male superiority.

This kind of gendered reading, though offering new insight into canonical works, can also be problematic. One of the interpretive tasks I set for myself in the Champmol project was to examine the role of art and architecture in negotiating the ideologically charged interactions between men and women at the monastery. In doing so I took for granted that we all understand what the categories of "male" and "female" are in the first place, and the conception of a clear distinction between these categories risks reinforcing the notion that a male/female binary is stable and inevitable. These sorts of shortcuts, stemming from difficulties in finding adequate language to describe more complex models of sex and sexuality, are common in the literature and may have led Joan Scott to worry as early as the 1990s that the term "gender" might have lost its critical edge. Madeline Caviness has observed that "feminist praxis is thwarted as long as activists have to use the terms (and concepts) invented within a system of oppression."¹⁶ And yet, as Judith Butler argued in revisiting some of the "gender trouble" she had stirred up, we can emancipate the meanings of troubling terms by using them outside of their foundational modes.¹⁷ For example, Madeline Caviness's gendered reading of the Bayeux Embroidery not only makes us notice and ponder the significance of the scarcity of women in a famed work of art made by women, but it shows us that their absence enabled the embroidery to highlight the illustration of multiple masculinities.¹⁸ She argues that the embroidery constructs the Anglo-Saxon men as a "third sex" through culturally determined signifiers such as hair, clothing, position, and posture. They are not being feminized so much



Fig. 1. Claus Sluter, Margaret of Flanders with St. Catherine of Alexandria. Stone, detail of the portal of the Chartreuse de Champmol. 1385–1401. (Photo: Author.)

as shown as a different and inferior type of man whose deficiencies justify Norman domination. Caviness thus contributes to a much larger literature that reveals the inadequacy of a binary definition of sex in biological, cultural, and historical terms. Such scholarship interrogates and even redefines the current *OED*'s definition of "sex" as "either of the two main categories (male and female) into which humans and many other living things are divided on the basis of their reproductive functions" (1.a). Our gendered readings can both deconstruct and reshape our vocabulary, our concepts, our relationship to our history, and our lived realities.

The utility of gender as a category of analysis is tied to its plasticity—and the most valuable gendered readings of medieval works of art are explorations that do not attempt to substitute one kind of universalizing orthodoxy for another. They instead offer persuasive new interpretations that acknowledge that meaning depends on the subject positions of particular audiences in specific historical circumstances. Since we are all limited by our own subject positions, not to mention our discipline-centric skills in an interdisciplinary endeavor, the most revealing results must therefore come from aggregated scholarly activity.

Of the surprisingly few medieval objects that have received multiple gendered readings, one is the tiny devotional book now in the Beinecke Library at Yale, the *Rothschild Canticles* (MS 404). A brief examination of the various gendered readings offered for one bifolium (18v–19r; Fig. 2) can serve here as an instructive object lesson about the productive debates and rich accretive meanings that a chain of gendered readings produces. Jeffrey Hamburger’s erudite, magisterial study of the *Rothschild Canticles* (1990) begins the conversation. In his attempt to reconstruct the original viewing context of this manuscript, he makes the case that this book was likely made for a woman of Rhenish origin, probably a Dominican nun, while noting that the illuminations are in a northern French or Flemish style.¹⁹ This leads Hamburger to see the book as being tailored to a female devotional culture that was likely overseen by male church authorities as part of the *cura monialium*. According to Hamburger, a priestly advisor would school his female charge to use the image in question to help her envision herself in a passionate relationship with the Lord as evoked in the Song of Songs. She was to identify with the female figure pictured, whom we are to understand as the bride or *sponsa* from a verse (Song of Sg. 4:9) copied on a preceding folio (17v). The *sponsa* points to her eye to indicate that she is like the centurion Longinus, whose legend tells us that his blindness (both literal and spiritual) was cured when he was touched by the blood of Christ, which poured from the wound that he inflicted with the holy lance. Like Longinus, the nun is saved by the act of wounding Christ, and the miniature thus emphasized Christ’s Resurrection, evoked by his triumphant stance, his voluntary suffering (indicated by his free hands holding the whip and nails), and the representation of the cross as a budding tree of life. According to Hamburger, such images allow the female viewer to imagine herself as a protagonist working her way through stages of spiritual development that culminate in an ecstatic mystical romance between herself as bride and Christ as bridegroom (*sponsus*).²⁰ This romance is visualized in the scenes in the upper register in which the *sponsa* embraces the *sponsus* in a paradisaical garden. For Hamburger, imagining the intended viewer of the *Rothschild Canticles* as a nun under the tutelage of a learned Dominican advisor best explains the images’ complex relationships to monastic texts, which he expertly analyzes.²¹

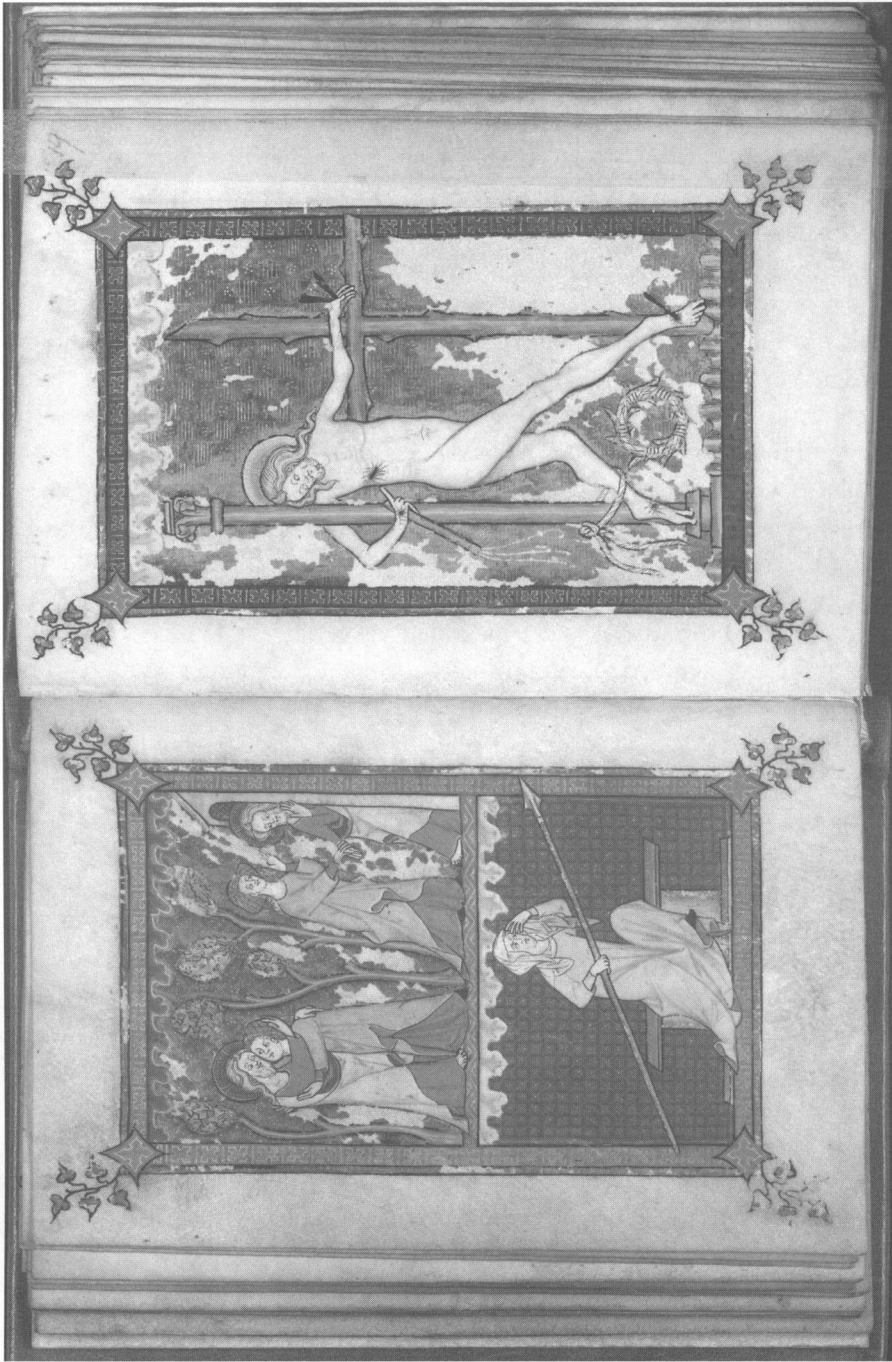


Fig. 2. Sponsa with Christ in the garden, and sponsa with a lance. *Rothschild Canticles*; Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library MS 404, fols. 18r–19v. Ca. 1300. (Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.)

In this and subsequent influential works, Hamburger argues that the use of visual images in mystical envisioning was at first the particular province of religious women, which was perceived by the male hierarchy as distinct from and inferior to the imageless devotion prescribed for male mystics.²² Although Hamburger acknowledges aspects of subjugation and inequality as part of female monastic culture, he prefers to focus on “alternative ways of life, communication, prayer, and devotion.” And he maintains that “[t]o recognize, or even to emphasize this aspect of female monasticism is not to romanticize the subject, let alone to make of medieval nuns proto-feminists; it is simply to give them their due.”²³ Indeed, the emphasis on this aspect of female monasticism has had a large impact and has stimulated much rich new scholarship.²⁴ And yet it can have the result of constructing a female cultural preserve that is unnaturally devoid of conflict or ideological negotiation, and this conception of medieval female agency can have misleading implications for how we generally understand the construction of gender in the Middle Ages.

Michael Camille started to address the ideological operations that might have been involved when a medieval nun attempted to use this image to access the divine. He draws on film theory to suggest that in order for a female viewer in a patriarchal culture to achieve the empowered gaze that Hamburger’s nun required to activate such a potent image—one that suggested she could merge body and soul with God—she needed to assume a subject position that was gendered male.²⁵ She must take on “a masculine role as bearer of the phallus” and conceive of Christ’s body as feminine, “elegantly elongated . . . unusually and audaciously totally naked, turning coquettishly to hide his sex but revealing large swelling thighs. Only by becoming a female body was it possible for God to become the focus of an eroticized gaze.”²⁶ Camille relies on the scholarship of Caroline Walker Bynum, which offers myriad textual examples in which both men and women feminize Christ’s body as they explore their imagined relationship to Christ in his dual nature.²⁷ According to Camille, the image allows the female viewer to try on another gender role and to be not quite female and not quite male, at least as these roles were defined by socially prescribed norms. We can see this operation as fostering a kind of resistance to or end run around the restrictions imposed by these socially prescribed roles, but also as forcing a potentially traumatic rejection or fragmentation of the socially acceptable gendered identity that such a viewer would have previously forged. Furthermore, the feminized body of Christ here and in countless other late medieval representations might have had the effect of associating humility, submission, and suffering with femininity, which could therefore function to justify and enforce the patriarchal status quo, not to mention other hegemonic structures, as scholars like David Aers, Lynn Staley, and Sarah Beckwith have shown.²⁸

But what happens to the gendered reading of this object if we allow that the *Rothschild Canticles* may have been intended for and/or used by other kinds of viewers? Hamburger thinks it likely that the compiler was male and acknowledged him as a potential first audience.²⁹ Several scholars have noted aspects of the manuscript that suggest male viewership, such as that the number of male witnesses to the sacred scenes throughout the book outnumber the female witnesses.³⁰ Another prospect for male viewership emerges if the book had been owned by a devout female patrician who was not in orders, as Hamburger and others acknowledge was possible.³¹ In lay contexts, books were normally commissioned with the awareness that they would likely circulate among a community of readers, both male and female, and that they were part of a family legacy that would be passed down to heirs who might be either male or female.

Robert Mills and Sarah Bromberg have both explored the imagery of the *Rothschild Canticles* from the perspective of a hypothetical male viewer.³² Robert Mills's analysis asks us to consider that the *sponsa/sponsus* bifolium in its manuscript context may have enabled a male viewer to explore a homoerotic mystical experience. He objects to Camille's model of inversion requiring a feminized Christ, contending that the body of Christ on folio 19r "remains perplexingly male."³³ It is hard to know which gender we are meant to associate with him, Mills argues, especially since agency, gendered male in the Middle Ages, is shared by the two protagonists: the female soul who wields the lance, and the Christ who brandishes his own whip and nails to indicate that he suffers of his own will. Mills invokes the parallelism, first noted by Flora Lewis, between the bifolium in question and a later scene in which an ecstatic naked virgin (standing in for the *sponsa* but also recalling the naked Christ) traps a unicorn, which is wounded with a lance (a metaphor for the passionate and loving sacrifice of Christ) (fol. 51r; Fig. 3).³⁴ In this scene, however, it is a male surrogate who wields the lance, creating a kind of *sponsus/sponsus* dynamic—that is, a male devotee could imagine himself penetrating the masculinized male unicorn/Christ.³⁵ Mills concludes that "positions of power and powerless in Christian discourse are in a state of perpetual circulation, the very *mobility* of which creates space for the excessive, transgressive and perversely erotic."³⁶

Bromberg further examines the operations by which male viewers might have related to the *sponsa* in order to unite mystically with Christ.³⁷ She is following up on Pamela Sheingorn's speculation that there existed a resistance on the part of some men to identify with the *anima* (soul) as gendered female in a material image; images, Bromberg suspects, might have been too concrete and immediate a way for men to identify themselves with the negative associations of weakness and submissiveness associated with the female body in the Middle Ages.³⁸ Therefore, she argues, the *Rothschild Canticles* offers other options for staging a more recognizably masculine, fraternal relationship with Christ (fol. 163r; Fig. 4).³⁹ Bromberg

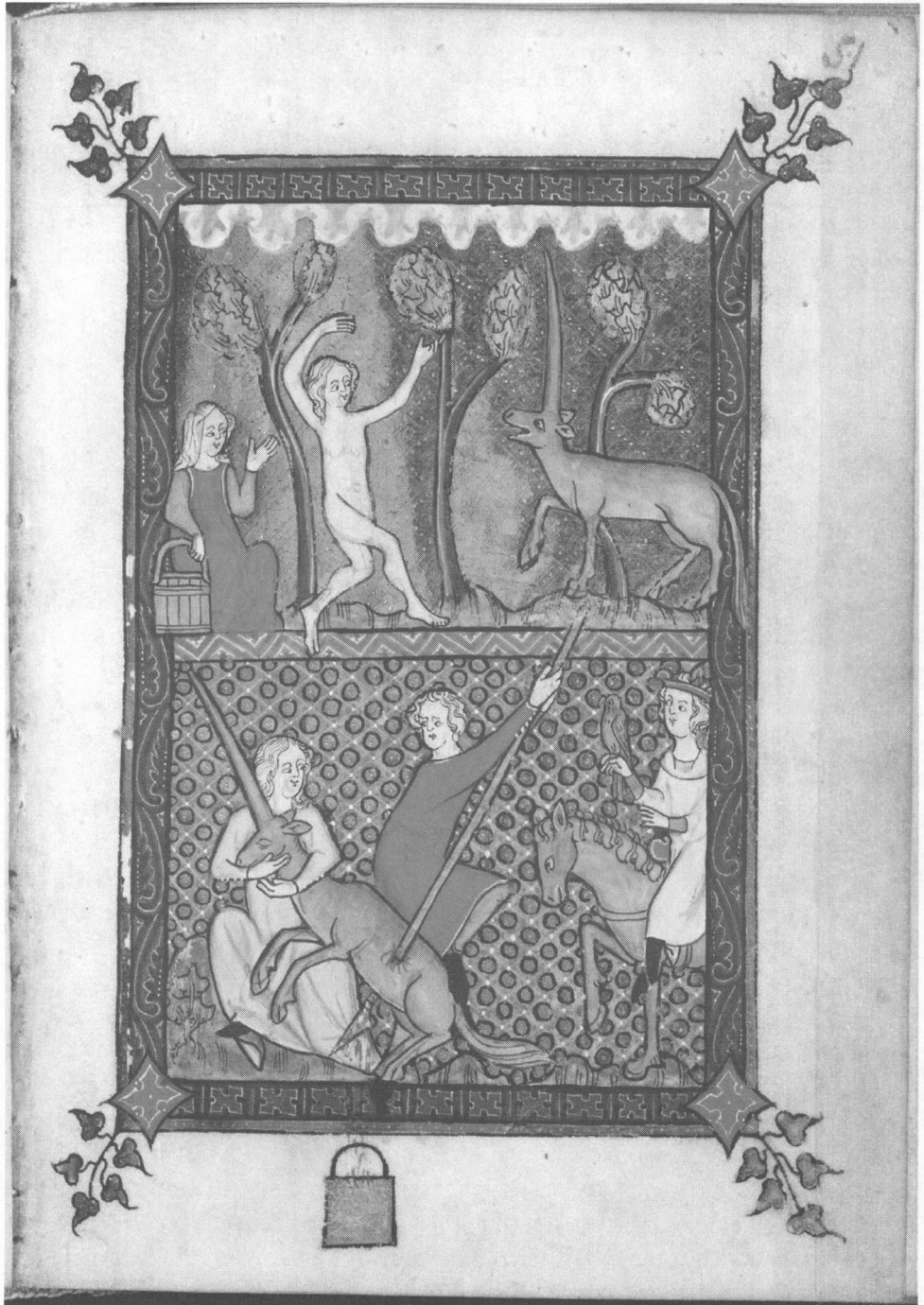


Fig. 3. Capture and killing of the unicorn. *Rothschild Canticles*; Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library MS 404, fol. 163r. Ca. 1300. (Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.)

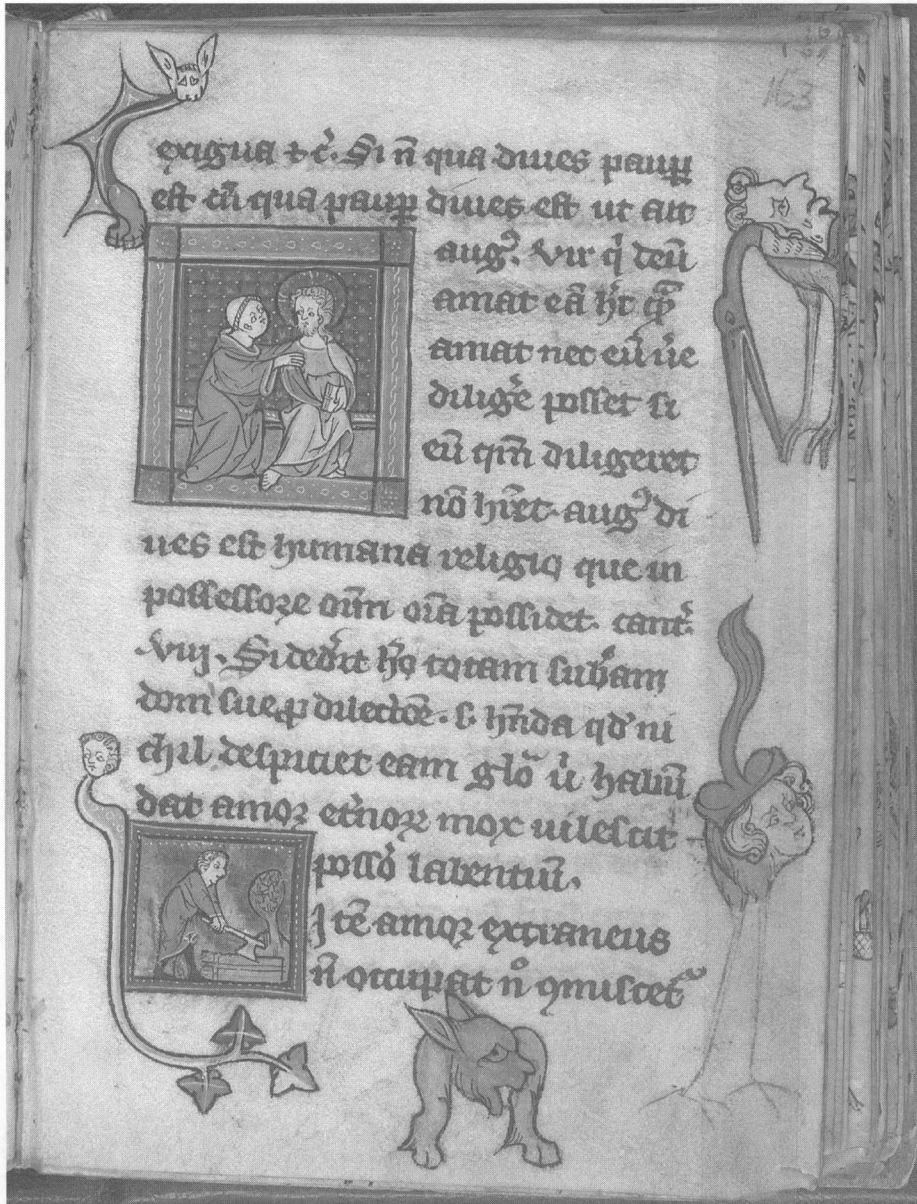


Fig. 4. Monk embracing Christ. *Rothschild Canticles*; Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library MS 404, fol. 51r. Ca. 1300. (Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.)

further identifies and discusses a series of ambiguously gendered or “ungendered” figures in the manuscript that she thinks also countered the eroticism of the *sponsa/sponsus* images. These were designed, she avers, to help the viewer—whether male or female—strive toward asexuality, like angels and virgins to whom religious viewers may have wished to compare themselves.⁴⁰

I would like to add to this chain of interpretations by suggesting an additional meaning the *sponsa/sponsus* bifolium may have had for an aristocratic female reader. As other scholars have noted, the unicorn folio is in dialogue with the *sponsa/sponsus* bifolium: the lancing of the christological beast evokes the *sponsa*’s lancing of Christ. If substituting a man in the role of lance bearer offered particular opportunities for male viewers, as Mills and Lewis have speculated, what did it mean to female viewers? The story of the slaying of the unicorn, derived from a rather astonishing tale from the *Gesta romanorum* about virgins killing an elephant, seems to have been transformed for this devout handbook.⁴¹ Here the privilege of piercing the christological beast—so crucial to the mystical union envisioned in the *sponsa/sponsus* bifolium—is taken away from the female virgin. Though the upper register pictures one of the maidens both in the nude and cavorting with abandon, her liminal moment is brought under control in the scene below, in which she is shown decorously dressed. Also in this scene, the king appears in a courtly costume, on a regal mount with a falcon on his wrist, much like the lovers in illustrated romances.⁴² His horse even lifts his right leg in a way that directly quotes the unicorn–Christ above, with whom he is aligned. This folio thus answers the *sponsa/sponsus* bifolium with an equally unusual and arresting image, but one that places the female surrogate in a recognizable courtly milieu, where the body of Christ is removed from view and secular male figures act as *sponsus* and/or intermediary to Christ. Other aspects of the textual and picture program in the manuscript also emphasize a female reader’s subordinate position. For instance, there is the cautionary story of the disobedience of Adam’s daughters, who eat fruit against his instructions and who are punished by giving birth to the freakish monstrous races, illustrated with eye-catching nudity (fols. 113r–114r; Fig. 5).⁴³ Several exempla and moralizing sayings follow up on the theme of wicked women, such as St. Bernard and the temptress (fol. 141r), a quarrelsome wife (fol. 141v), and condemnations of prostitutes (fol. 133r).⁴⁴ Thus we can see that while the *Rothschild Canticles* may have offered a female reader extraordinary opportunities for mystical union with Christ, it also contained them in a program that reminded her of socially constructed gender roles that insisted on female inferiority. We cannot know to what extent she availed herself of the ecstatic mystical experiences that certain folios were apparently meant to facilitate, and if so, whether she perceived them to be adequate recompense for the submissive social roles that the book reinforced.⁴⁵

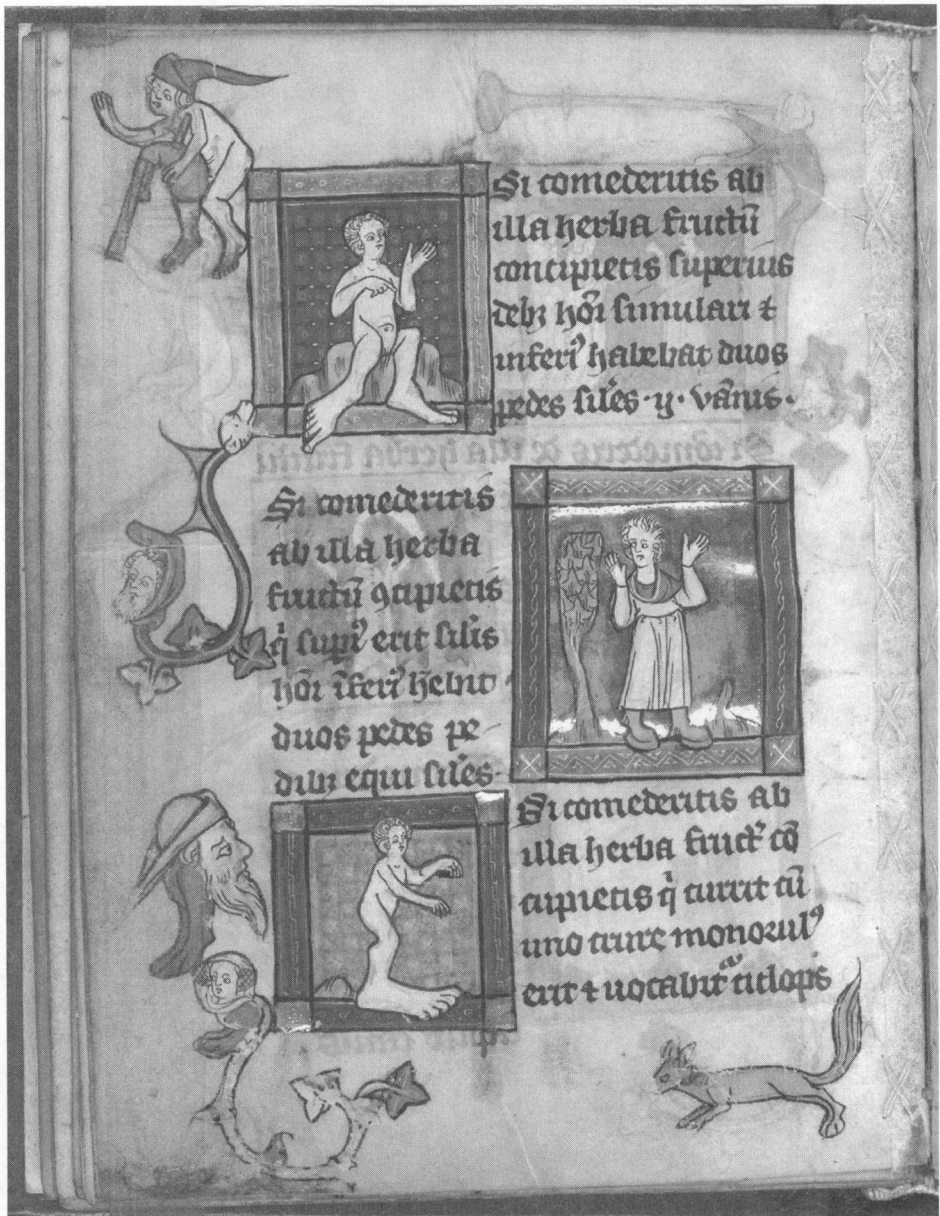


Fig. 5. Monstrous races: man with giant feet, man with horse's hooves, and sciopod. *Rothschild Canticles*; Yale University, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library MS 404, fol. 51r. Ca 1300. (Photo: Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.)

Clearly there is work left to be done. None of the studies cited here offers a gendered reading that considers the complex program of the entire manuscript. Even Hamburger's substantive monograph neglects to tackle the riotous, perplexing marginalia, so filled with gendered and sexualized imagery and other puzzles to decode. But even from this brief exercise we can see that gendered readings permit insight into why certain artistic choices were made in the creation of the *Rothschild Canticles*, as well as the range of interpretative options that they made possible to diverse viewers. In considering the usefulness of gender as a category of analysis for medieval art history, it is worth asking ourselves how we could understand an object like the *Rothschild Canticles* without it.

The *Rothschild Canticles* is an unusual work that was made, like the Chartreuse de Champmol and the Bayeux Embroidery, at a liminal moment of fissure, change and crisis. The ideology of gender in the Bayeux Embroidery was put into the service of explaining and justifying the Norman Conquest; at the Chartreuse de Champmol gender was a means of masking the contradictions resulting from the convergence of a powerful female patron, central to the formation of a consequential new dynasty, and to the masculinist claims of the Carthusian monks. The complicated dialogue between concepts of gender and authority that seems to characterize the *Rothschild Canticles* may well have been a response to the crisis about female mysticism taking shape at the turn of the fourteenth century in France and Flanders.⁴⁶ We learn much from these exceptional images because they throw into relief the conventional aspects of the images with which they are in conversation. Images convey ideas differently than words do. Figures can visualize notions that may not be possible to express in words, and often reach a different kind of audience as well. Without a sophisticated analysis of images, we are missing a whole category of evidence for understanding the history of gender.

The lacunae and unresolved questions in the *Rothschild Canticles*, an object that has nonetheless received more gendered readings than most others, testifies to the fact that gender is still a fledgling concern in medieval art history. The question remains whether we will capitalize on its potential. The concept of gender only emerged in the last few decades as a tool that allows feminists to recognize that "woman" is not necessarily a biological category, that femininity and masculinity are socially constructed corollaries, and that the male/female binary limits our ability to understand complex and unacknowledged realities. It is, however, possible to operate under the rubric of gender studies without accepting the premise that women, or gay or transgendered individuals should have social, political, and economic equality. As a result, gender studies is a discursive arena with an even greater potential for conflict and fragmentation than feminism. As so often happens in academic discourse, scholars will move to a different field of inquiry once they feel a question is exhausted or irresolvable. One summing up in the *American*

Historical Review's recent forum revisiting the impact of Joan Scott's article on "Gender as a Category of Historical Analysis" even takes the tone of a requiem: "Like all historiographic moments, this one, too, will no doubt pass. And when it does, what will we remember?"⁴⁷ Mark Hansen and W. J. T. Mitchell—the latter an important theorist for art history, especially for having posited "a visual turn" in the humanities—do not include "gender" or "feminism" in their 2010 book, *Critical Terms for Media Studies*, nor do these terms appear in the index.⁴⁸ Gender emerged as a key concept across several disciplines, and it may have arrived a little late to medieval art history. If we interpret Media Studies as the canary in the mine, it may be in danger of fading away before its time. But in spite of expressing some worry at the current state of affairs, historian Dyan Elliot, in her analysis of the influence of Joan Scott's article, still sounds a positive note, prophesying an age in which our interrogation of gender will move beyond merely recognizing that biological sex is not equal to historically constructed roles but will "be wielded against institutions, ideologies, and matters of high politics."⁴⁹ In order to get there we must shape our scholarship to resist the prospect of a post-gender society that has not yet properly defined the goals or reaped the rewards of what we might call a genderist movement.

NOTES

I want to thank Nina Rowe for inviting me to write this essay, and also for her very insightful comments and suggestions. Thanks are also due to an anonymous reader for useful remarks and interventions.

1. Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis," *American Historical Review* 91 (1986): 1053–75. For a recent forum on the legacy of this article, see "Revisiting 'Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,'" *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 1344–1429. Of particular interest to medievalists is Dyan Elliot, "The Three Ages of Joan Scott," *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 1390–1403.

2. The first use of "gender" in this capacity may have appeared in John Money, "Hermaphroditism, Gender, and Precocity in Hyperadrenocorticism: Psychologic Findings," *Bulletin of the Johns Hopkins Hospital* 96 (1955): 253–64. For the history of the term, see Joanne Meyerowitz, "A History of 'Gender,'" *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 1344–1429.

3. As discussed in Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category," 1053.

4. *Ibid.*, 1057.

5. Joan Scott demonstrates the continuing slipperiness of the politically charged word "gender" in her analysis of the way the term figured in the rhetoric surrounding the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995; see Joan Wallach Scott, "Gender: Still a Useful Category of Analysis?," *Diogenes* 57, no. 7 (2010): 7–14, esp. 8–9.

6. Judith Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory," *Theatre Journal* 40, no. 4 (December 1988): 519–31; reprinted in Alison Bailey and Chris J. Cuomo, *The Feminist Philosophy Reader* (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2008), 97–106. In the following year Butler expanded these ideas in her book *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (New York: Routledge, 1989). For a treatment of the historiography of gender and medieval art, see Brigitte Kurmann-Schwarz, "Gender and Medieval Art," in *A Companion to Medieval Art: Romanesque and Gothic in Northern Europe*, ed. Conrad Rudolph, Blackwell Companions to Art History 2 (Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006), 128–58.

7. Butler, "Performative Acts," 97.
8. Ibid.
9. For a useful summary of how reception theory has influenced medieval art history, see Madeline H. Caviness, "Reception of Images by Medieval Viewers," in Rudolph, *A Companion to Medieval Art*, 65–85.
10. Michel Foucault uses the Middle Ages simplistically as a foil for modernity in his *History of Sexuality*, trans. Robert Hurley, 3 vols. (New York: Vintage Books, 1988–90); and elsewhere. For an analysis, see Karma Lochrie, "Desiring Foucault," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 27 (1997): 3–15. As Christopher LeCluyse concludes in his summary of two recent references on medieval sexuality: "Since medieval people engaged in such acts with all the enthusiasm or social coercion that we do, the authors suggest, we can allow them to have sexual identities, too," in his review of *Gender and Christianity in Medieval Europe: New Perspectives*, ed. Lisa Bitel and Felice Lifshitz; and *Medieval Sexuality: A Casebook*, ed. April Harper and Caroline Proctor, *H-German, H-Net Reviews*, September, 2009, <http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=25230>. On this point, see also Robert Mills, "Ecce Homo," in *Gender and Holiness: Men, Women, and Saints in Late Medieval Europe*, ed. Samantha Riches and Sarah Salih, Routledge Studies in Medieval Religion and Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 152–73.
11. On how metanarratives about gender roles interfere with our understanding of the past, see Alexandra Shepard and Garthine Walker, "Gender, Change and Periodisation," *Gender and History* 20, no. 3 (2008): 453–62.
12. Madeline H. Caviness addresses this dilemma by suggesting a process of "triangulating" the past and present. On Caviness's methods and the impact of her work, see "Triangulating Our Vision: Madeline Caviness's Approach to Medieval Art," ed. Corine Schleif, special issue, *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 1 (2009), www.differentvisions.org; and my review of the issue for *CAA Reviews*, December 2, 2009, <http://www.caareviews.org/reviews/1358>.
13. On the argument that gender is a social structure that creates "difference that is the very foundation on which inequality rests," see Barbara Risman, "Gender as a Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism," *Gender and Society* 18 (2004): 429–50, at 430.
14. See Karl Wittington, "Queer," in this volume.
15. On this monument see Sherry C. M. Lindquist, *Agency, Visuality and Society at the Chartreuse de Champmol* (Aldershot, UK, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008); and Renate Prochno, *Die Kartause von Champmol: Grablege der Burgundischen Herzöge (1364–1477)*, Acta Humaniorum (Munich: Akademie Verlag, 2002).
16. See Scott, "Gender: Still a Useful Category," 10; Joan Scott, "Unanswered Questions," *American Historical Review* 113 (2008): 1422–29, at 1428; and Madeline H. Caviness, "Feminism, Gender Studies and Medieval Studies," *Diogenes* 57, no. 1 (2010): 30–45, at 32.
17. Judith Butler, "The End of Sexual Difference?," in *Feminist Consequences: Theory for the New Century*, ed. Elisabeth Bronfen and Misha Kavka (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 414–34, esp. 419–22.
18. Madeline H. Caviness, "Anglo-Saxon Women, Norman Knights and a 'Third Sex' in the Bayeux Embroidery," in *The Bayeux Tapestry: New Interpretations*, ed. Martin K. Foys, Karen Eileen Overbey, and Dan Terkla (Woodbridge, UK, and Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2009), 84–118.
19. Jeffrey F. Hamburger, *The Rothschild Canticles: Art and Mysticism in Flanders and the Rhineland Circa 1300*, Yale Publications in the History of Art (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), esp. 155–62. Wybren Scheepsma discusses the problems of definitively localizing the book in "Filling the Blanks: A Middle Dutch Dionysius Quotation and the Origins of the Rothschild Canticles," *Medium Aevum* 70 (2001): 278–303. Scheepsma notes that feminine forms of address in the Latin prayers indicate that the manuscript was at least made for a woman (281).
20. Summarized in Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*, 84.
21. Ibid., 161.

22. This is a leitmotif in Hamburger's work, a culmination of which is his orchestration of the very important exhibition of female monastic visual culture in Bonn and Essen in 2005, *Krone und Schleier, Kunst aus mittelalterlichen Frauenklöstern* (Munich: Hirmer, 2005). See also the collections of essays in Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, eds., *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries*, trans. Dietlinde Hamburger, with foreword by Caroline Walker Bynum (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008). Bynum endorses the argument idea in her forward (esp. xvi–xvii).

23. Jeffrey H. Hamburger, "Introduction: Histories of Female Monasticism," in *Crown and Veil*, 1–11, at 8.

24. For an interesting exchange about the impact of this scholarship on the field of medieval art history, see Willibald Sauerländer, "Images Behind the Wall," review of *The Visual and the Visionary: Art and Female Spirituality in Late Medieval Germany*, by Jeffrey H. Hamburger, and *Nuns as Artists: The Visual Culture of a Medieval Convent*, by Jeffrey H. Hamburger, *New York Review of Books* 49, no. 7 (April 25, 2002); and Jeffrey Hamburger's reply and Sauerländer's response in *New York Review of Books* 49, no. 11 (June 27, 2002).

25. Michael Camille, *The Medieval Art of Love: Objects and Subjects of Desire* (New York: Abrams, 1998), 38–39. Here Michael Camille is drawing on concepts introduced in the classic article on the gaze by Laura Mulvey, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," *Screen* 16, no. 3 (1975): 6–18. For a discussion of the implications and impact of this interpretive framework, see Vicki Callahan, "Introduction: Reclaiming the Archive; Archaeological Explorations toward a Feminism 3.0," in *Reclaiming the Archive: Feminism and Film History*, ed. Vicki Callahan, Contemporary Approaches to Film and Television Series (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2010), 1–9; as well as the other contributions to the volume.

26. Camille, *Medieval Art of Love*, 38–39.

27. See especially Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*, Publications of the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies 16 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982); and Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women*, The New Historicism: Studies in Cultural Poetics (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987).

28. E.g. David Aers and Lynn Staley, *The Powers of the Holy: Religion, Politics, and Gender in Late Medieval English Culture* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1996); and Sarah Beckwith, *Christ's Body: Identity, Culture, and Society in Late Medieval Writings* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

29. Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*, 155–56. Flora Lewis endorsed the notion of Hamburger's compiler as a user of the manuscript in her "The Wound in Christ's Side and the Instruments of the Passion: Gendered Experience and Response," in *Women and the Book: Assessing the Visual Evidence*, ed. Lesley Smith and Jane H. M. Taylor, The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture (London: British Library; and Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 204–29, at 214.

30. Pamela Sheingorn suggested the possibility of a male reader in her review of *The Rothschild Canticles*, by Jeffrey Hamburger, *Art Bulletin* 74 (1992): 679–81, at 680; Corine Schleif echoed this suggestion in her own review, in the *Medieval Feminist Newsletter* 15 (1993): 30.

31. Hamburger does not think this likely when he considers alternatives in order to exclude them (*Rothschild Canticles*, 155–56); see also Scheepsma, "Filling the Banks," 281.

32. Sarah Bromberg, "Gendered and Ungendered Readings of the Rothschild Canticles," *Different Visions: A Journal of New Perspectives on Medieval Art* 1 (2008): 1–26, <http://differentvisions.org/one.html>; Mills, "Ecce Homo."

33. Mills, "Ecce Homo," 161.

34. *Ibid.*, 162; Lewis, "Wound in Christ's Side," 213.

35. Lewis, "Wound in Christ's Side," 215; quoted in Mills, "Ecce Homo," 162.

36. Mills, "Ecce Homo," 162.

37. Bromberg, "Gendered and Ungendered Readings."
38. *Ibid.*, 8; and Sheingorn, review of *The Rothschild Canticles*, 680.
39. Bromberg, "Gendered and Ungendered Readings," 7–8.
40. Bromberg, "Gendered and Ungendered Readings," 13–23.
41. Hamburger, *Rothschild Canticles*, 99–100.
42. Hamburger associates him with a calendar illustration from the month of May, which frequently featured amorous themes; *ibid.*, 100.
43. *Ibid.*, 211–12.
44. *Ibid.*, 212–13.
45. Cf. Madeline H. Caviness's reading of the Hours of Jeanne d'Evreux, in "Patron or Matron? A Capetian Bride and a Vade Mecum for Her Marriage Bed," *Speculum* 68 (1993): 333–62.
46. This crisis is expertly chronicled by Dyan Elliott in *Proving Woman: Female Spirituality and Inquisitional Culture in the Later Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004).
47. Meyerowitz, "History of 'Gender.'"
48. W. J. T. Mitchell and Mark B. N. Hansen, eds., *Critical Terms for Media Studies* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).
49. Elliot, "Three Ages of Joan Scott," 1391–92.