

The Acre Bible: Recasting Hebrew Scripture for Crusaders and the Christian Flock*

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I.	PRELUDE.....	76
II.	HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION PROMPTING RESTATEMENT OF THE VULGATE: THE CRUSADER ONSLAUGHT; ORGANIZATION OF THE LATIN KINGDOM IN THE HOLY LAND	78
	A. <i>Genesis and Implementation of Christian Polemic</i>	79
	B. <i>“The Jews’ Disbelief Must Be Reproved, . . . Nevertheless Through Them Our Own Faith Is Truly Proved”</i>	81
	C. <i>The Jews’ “Inveterate Obduracy” as a Scriptural Touchstone</i>	82
	D. <i>Catechism a Vessel for Jewish Touchstones and Their Christian Analogues</i>	83
	E. <i>Illustrating the Emergence of a Catechism in the Interstices of Torah</i>	83
III.	GLOSSES, PROPHECIES, AND MIRACLES	84
	A. <i>Old Testament Symbols Embedded in Christian Polemic</i>	86
	B. <i>The Holy Sepulchre in Babylon’s Grip</i>	87
	C. <i>Circumcision and Baptism: Christian Rite Relaxes the Rigor of a Jewish Commandment</i>	89
	D. <i>Polemics and Superstitions</i>	90
	E. <i>The Trinity and Jesus’s Dual Nature, Originating in Anthropomorphic God</i>	90
	F. <i>Jews’ Hardened Hearts</i>	91
IV.	MALIGN ORIGINS OF THE ANTI-CHRIST AND THE SARACENS.....	92
	A. <i>The Antichrist</i>	92
	B. <i>Saracens</i>	93
V.	CRUSADER KINGDOM’S SEIGNEURIAL HIERARCHY MIRRORED IN ACRE BIBLE.....	94

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A.	<i>Crusaders as Exemplars of Scriptural Nobles</i>	95
B.	<i>Feudal Nomenclature Illuminated Torah's Political Organization</i>	96
C.	<i>Old Testament's Social Hierarchy Illuminated by Feudal Nomenclature</i>	96
VI.	LEGAL CONTINUITIES BETWEEN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE ACRE BIBLE.....	97
A.	<i>Procedural and Substantive Institutions</i>	97
1.	Procedure	97
2.	Regulations of Substantive Law	98
VII.	CODA	99

I. PRELUDE

This Article investigates the Acre Bible (Acre Bible), a Norman French version of the Torah.¹ The volume includes only Genesis and Exodus, the Torah's first two books. Likely prepared around 1240 in a monastic scriptorium of the crusader stronghold of Acre,² the book is thought to be among the most ancient French bibles in existence. French scholarship on the Acre Bible is meager, English scholarship nearly nonexistent. Housed in the French national library (Bibliothèque Nationale de France), the original vellum-and-leather Acre Bible boasts handsome illuminations, but its faded manuscript is difficult to read. Fortunately, this difficulty has been mitigated by Pierre Nobel's volume *La Bible d'Acre: Genèse et Exode*.³ In modern typography, Nobel's book is illuminated by editorial notes and enriched by both an instructive glossary and an extensive bibliography.

According to Nobel, the Acre Bible is principally a translation of Jerome's fourth century Latin Vulgate. But, observes Nobel, "the translator strays somewhat from the textual source in not rendering [some] terms precisely. Rather curiously, he has recourse to lexemes that do not occur in popular French."⁴ A nineteenth-century scholar, Samuel Berger anticipated both Nobel's criticism of the Acre Bible and its description as a translation. Instead of describing the text as "curious"

1. The Bible of Acre reproduced the Torah, which constituted the first part of the Tanach (Torah, Prophets, and Other Writings).

2. Acre is a city in Israel.

3. LA BIBLE D'ACRE: GENESE ET EXODE (Pierre Nobel critical ed., Presses Universitaires Franche Comte, Besancon, France, 2006) [hereinafter ACRE BIBLE]. For the digitized form of the original Bible d'Acre, consult La Bibliothèque Nationale de France, listed as "nouv acq fr 1404 [n], BNF.fr/Gallica.

4. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at lxxiv (author's translation).

and “imprecise,” Berger described it as a collection of Bible extracts, “maladroit,” sometimes “deplorably inaccurate” and in “bastardized style.”⁵ Unlike Nobel and Berger, we believe that the Acre Bible purposely Christianized the Old Testament, transforming it into a Norman French catechism for clerics and their congregants. Perhaps our contrasting perspectives have stemmed from viewing the text through different filters; Nobel and Berger, like the Acre Bible’s earliest readership, evaluated the text as a vindication of the Christian message; in contrast, we have evaluated the text’s fidelity to the Jewish narrative. We argue that its “deplorable inaccuracies” arose from its authors’ desire to compose a Christian polemic rather than a faithful translation of the Vulgate or the Hebrew Bible.

By illuminating passages in the Hebrew Bible that they considered prophetic of the Christian narrative, the translators sought to subordinate Judaism to their own faith and to legitimate a newly acquired Christian sovereignty over the Holy Land. Bolder than a modern translator whose paramount concern is fidelity to an original text, the clerical authors of Acre Bible took liberties in fitting Jesus’s narrative into Jerome’s Vulgate version of the Old Testament. Reinforcing the Christian filters mentioned above, their marginal glosses highlighted Old Testament prefigurations of dramatic events they perceived as touchstones of the Christian narrative. In a sense, the translators’ restatement of Hebrew scripture sanctified for Christendom the Old Testament grant of the Holy Land to the Jewish tribes.

I have purposely employed the term “restate” to characterize the translators’ project; in modern legal practice, a contractual restatement (as distinguished from a Restatement of Law) denotes a double-tiered agreement in which enduring elements of the parties’ earliest understanding have combined with modifications of that understanding to reflect important changes reflected in their continuing performance. Assuming the Acre Bible constituted a restatement, then the changed circumstances, in the present case transformational in nature, would have included Christianity’s rise, and the decisive success of the crusades. The original fourth-century Vulgate would be likened to the preserved original agreement, and the modifications to glosses and reconstituted Old Testament passages of the Vulgate.

For their project, the translators also consulted teachings of early church fathers and polemical literature inspired by the Iberian Reconquista, an archetype for the crusades to the Holy Land.

5. SAMUEL BERGER, *LA BIBLE FRANCAISE AU MOYEN AGE* 102 (1884).

Flourishing during Gregory's great church reforms (1050-1080) and a crusading fervor fueled by the church's imperial ambitions, this literature featured Christian speakers who vilified both Jews and Muslims for beliefs the church condemned as misguided and even heretical. Christians heaped opprobrium upon Jews for having misinterpreted the Old Testament and taunted them mercilessly for rejecting Christ as savior. Clerical recruitment for the first crusades to the Holy Land intensified Christians' yearning for anointment as God's chosen people. Soon after the crusader invasion, churchmen and crusading nobles joined forces to administer the Latin Kingdom. Following feudal patterns characteristic of medieval French society, Christian leaders parceled out the land to heroic knights and military orders.

The translators' project centered upon their search in the Old Testament for prophecies that illuminated Christianity's role in God's plan and figures and sites seen as avatars of the Christian narrative. In our study, the functions of prophecy are frequently seen in convergences of the Vulgate with the Christian polemic. Part II, after depicting the crusading zeal that animated the Acre Bible, illustrates the polemicists' efforts to redeem the Jews by preaching a catechism from the Torah itself. Part III further explores the role of Old Testament prophecies and miracles in Christian doctrine. Part IV illuminates malign origins of the Anti-Christ and the Saracens. Part V examines seigneurial parallels between the Acre Bible and the Assises of Jerusalem, the Crusader Kingdom's principal corpus of legal regulations. Part VI addresses legal continuities between the Old Testament and the Acre Bible. The Coda addresses linguistic, religious, and legal convergences identifiable in the Acre Bible's fabric.

II. HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION PROMPTING RESTATEMENT OF THE VULGATE: THE CRUSADER ONSLAUGHT; ORGANIZATION OF THE LATIN KINGDOM IN THE HOLY LAND

In 1099 A.D., a phalanx of European crusaders lay siege to Jerusalem, seized its sacred sites, and slaughtered large numbers of inhabitants whom the church condemned as offspring of the Antichrist.⁶

6. JAMES CARROLL, *JERUSALEM, JERUSALEM: HOW THE ANCIENT CITY IGNITED OUR MODERN WORLD* 136 (2011). According to an anonymous warrior,

all the defenders fled along the walls and through the city (of Jerusalem), and our men went after them, killing them and cutting them down as far as Solomon's Temple where there was such a massacre that our men were wading up to their ankles in enemy blood. . . . Crusaders raced around the whole city, seizing gold and silver, horses and mules, and houses full of all sorts of goods, and they all came rejoicing and weeping

Crediting its recovery of the Holy Land to divine providence, the church launched an ambitious imperial program that would have been the envy of medieval nation states. Churchmen, considering the invasion a homecoming and the herald of a new age for Christ and his faithful, claimed to have wrested the Holy Land from heretics with no right of occupation. The warrant for the heretics' eviction also justified their execution, for the churchmen had concluded that their savior's blood had stained their hands. Viewing the crusaders as exemplars of both the apostles and ancient martyrs, churchmen assured them spiritual salvation and material enjoyment of the conquered territory. Because the clerics were not militarily equipped or authorized violently to safeguard their newly founded Latin Kingdom, they delegated its governance and defense to a crusader elite. Medieval France's social and political organization inspired that of the crusaders' Latin Kingdom. Its celebrated jurists organized the jurisprudence of the kingdom's tribunals into the Assises of Jerusalem; this compilation, akin to a Domesday book for the Latin Kingdom, recorded its principal fiefdoms and seigneurs,⁷ alongside a rich jurisprudence produced in a complex hierarchy of tribunals.

A. *Genesis and Implementation of Christian Polemic*

Medieval churchmen, convinced that the crusaders' resounding victory confirmed the church's invincibility, but unsure of Christian rights in the land, incorporated into the Acre Bible rationales for Christian hegemony. They found inspirations for the rationales principally in scripture and polemical condemnations of the Arab

from excess of gladness to worship at the Sepulchre of our Savior Jesus, and there they fulfilled their vows to him.

Id.

7. A crusading fief holder's title typically linked his Christian name with both his European realm and a fiefdom in the Holy Land over which he ruled. For example, Beimont's acquisition of Antioch, a province of the Latin Kingdom, began as follows:

Beimont was the son of Robert Guichart [Guiscard?], a conqueror of Puglia; and he was prince of Taranto [Italy], coming overseas with the barons who conquered the land; and when they took Antioch, he was granted [the land]; and because he was the prince of Taranto he and later seigneurs of Antioch are called princes, and Antioch their realm.

For the fiefdoms and their seigneurs, see *Les Lignages d'outremer*, in 2 ASSISES DE JERUSALEM 435, 446, reprinted in RECUEIL DES OUVRAGES DE JURISPRUDENCE COMPOSES PENDANT LE XIIIEME SIECLE DANS LES ROYAUMES DE JERUSALEM ET DE CHYPRE (M Le Comte Beugnot ed., Paris, 1843). In the Latin Kingdom, other seigneurial titles followed the pattern of Beimont: for example, Cecile, Comtesse de Tripoli; Wigrin, Chanoine de St Sepulchre; Gauthier, Seigneur de Cesarea; Amaury, comte d'Ascalon; Vivien, Comte de Haifa; Ibelin, Comte de Japha et Ascalon, and Seigneur of Cyprus.

caliphates that had repressed Christians and ruled Iberia from the early eighth century.⁸ The polemical literature glorified the Christian narrative, branded Jews and Muslims as heretical offspring of the Antichrist, and equipped a rhetorical Christian armory (*armarium Christianum*) with weapons for defense of the faith.⁹ As Peter the Venerable, the abbot of Cluny and a leading polemicist, assured Bernard de Clairvaux, the crusaders' guiding spirit, the rhetorical armory was calculated to combat "every knowledge that exalteth itself against the height of God."¹⁰ While Bernard charted the crusaders' mission and organization, Peter anchored his influential Christology in Old Testament themes that he believed prefigured Jesus's narrative.¹¹ As Peter preached the rewards of the Iberian Reconquista,¹² he commissioned translators to render the Koran into Latin the better to discredit Islam. His treatise, *Against the Inveterate Obduracy of the Jews* (circa 1150) condemned the Talmud as a "monstrous beast" (*portuentsuosa bestia*)¹³ created by misguided men, not God or his prophets. Repeatedly ridiculing Jews as dull-witted believers in Talmudic "fables." Peter's treatise characteristically rebuked the Jewish interlocutor: "O Jew, I dare not avow that you are human, lest I lie."¹⁴

Across space and time, a disparate array of scriptural episodes and figures seems to have been unified by an enduring antagonism between goodness, symbolized, on one hand, by Christ, the holy trinity, the apostles, and holy sites associated with his life, and, on the other hand, evil, symbolized by the devil, the Saracens, and the Antichrist. The translators' deft chiaroscuro techniques emphasized a particular figure's goodness or evil; darkness and murkiness signified sin and evil; light, righteousness and goodness.

8. For polemical literature, see DOMINIQUE IOGNA-PRAT, *ORDER & EXCLUSION: CLUNY AND CHRISTENDOM FACE HERESY, JUDAISM, AND ISLAM (1000-1150)*, at 120-47 (G.R. Edwards trans., 1998).

9. *Id.* at 338-39.

10. *Id.* at 340.

11. Among themes addressed in the Acre Bible's plentiful glosses were monotheism, baptism, and circumcision; the heresy of idolatry; virgin birth; Jesus as a descendant of David; his arrival in the Holy Land on a donkey; his preaching and apostles; his passion and crucifixion; his entombment in the holy sepulchre and resurrection; the Jews' rejection of Jesus as messiah; Jewish usury as a form of economic parasitism; the challenges of Saracens, the Antichrist and its henchmen; the trinity; and Jesus's duality as both divine and human.

12. PETER THE VENERABLE, *THE INVETERATE OBDURACY OF THE JEWS* 211 (Irven M. Resnick trans., Catholic University of America Press, 2013).

13. *Id.* at 32.

14. *Id.*

B. “The Jews’ Disbelief Must Be Reproved, . . . Nevertheless Through Them Our Own Faith Is Truly Proved”

Peter’s identification in Hebrew scripture of sources for his Christology prompted him to moderate his attacks upon Hebrew and Judaism. His moderation reflected a church policy dating from the Carolingian era (circa 380) during which St. Jerome (347-420 AD) prepared the Vulgate; applying church policy, Jerome presumed the authenticity of the Old Testament and its centrality in Christian doctrine.¹⁵ Churchmen discredited Judaism both by questioning rabbinic interpretations of Hebrew texts and by ransacking them for internal contradictions and Christian prophecies. Resonances between the Old Testament and the gospels arose from a clerical assumption that both texts, as divine revelations, constituted a continuous record of God’s engagement with his creation. On this view of the continuity of scripture, miracles recounted in the Old Testament, as suggested in Peter’s admonition to a Jewish interlocutor, alerted believers to their spiritual rewards: “Do not glory in the miracles performed in the era of your Law nor prefer it to the gospel of Christ. . . . The miracles of the Jewish law were many and great, but the deeds of Christian faith are far greater and incomparably more wondrous.”¹⁶

Finding in the Hebrew Bible a compass for Christian paths to salvation rather than an autonomous, self-contained charter for Jewish redemption, Peter’s warning dovetailed with Pope Innocent’s contemporaneous *Constitutio Judaeorum*. The papal constitution enjoined crusaders to temper their persecution of the Jews because their divinely granted law revealed to the Christian faithful the full meaning of Christ’s message of redemption:

Do not wipe out the Jews completely, lest perhaps [Christians] might forget Thy Law, which the former, although not understanding it, present it in their books to those who do understand it. [Christ’s rewards discovered through glossing and interpretation of Hebrew scripture] These men, since they wish to go on in their hardness rather than to know the revelations of the prophets and the mysteries of the Law [law according to Christ] and to come to a knowledge of the Christian faith since they beseech the help of

15. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) declared the Vulgate, a fourth-century Latin translation of the Bible, the Catholic Church’s official version of the Bible. St. Jerome revised the *Vetus Latina* (Old Latin), the collection of Biblical texts then used by the Church. The Vulgate eventually eclipsed the *Vetus Latina* and was known, by the thirteenth century, as the *versio vulgate* [1] (the “version commonly used”) or, more simply in Latin *vulgata* (Greek: βουλγάτα).

16. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 44.

our defense . . . we give them the shield of our protection. Although in many ways the Jews' disbelief *must be reprov'd*, . . . *nevertheless through them our faith is truly prov'd*, [if the Jews are permitted to survive until judgment day, they may be ultimately converted and Christ's saviorship fully vindicated]. The Jews must not be oppressed grievously by the faithful as the prophet says: "Do not slay them, lest these be forgetful of Thy Law." [that Christ offers grace and salvation to those who embrace him]¹⁷

C. *The Jews' "Inveterate Obduracy" as a Scriptural Touchstone*

An archetypal feature of the Christian polemic, the Jews' rejection of Jesus, as suggested in the preceding italicized quotation, crucially challenged Christian convictions. Suffused by medieval Christian arguments, the Acre Bible yoked together Jews and Christians, and subordinated the former to the latter. According to a chapter added to the Acre Bible by the translators, Abraham fathered two faiths with a shared spiritual destiny:

By Judah is understood Jesus Christ for whom he was born of his tribe. . . . From Judah's seed, Jesus Christ was born and sent by his Father to earth . . . two peoples, Jews and pagans [Muslims, Saracens]; an ass [*asnes*] designated the synagogue of the Jews, *le poutrel* [a colt or foal of an ass] designated gentiles without law. They were linked to the Israelites by the apostles' preaching.¹⁸

As a claim for the continuity of Jewish and Christian scripture, the quoted passage sharpened the dimensions of a religious transformation fueled by the rise of Christianity. This transformation constituted a premise for the Christian restatement of the Torah embodied in the Acre Bible. Resonating in both Jewish and Christian traditions, the passage identified Abraham as a founder of monotheism. Churchmen claimed Genesis 49 foretold Judah's role as a herald of the messiah. Yoked to a foal, the image of an ass recurred in the gospel of Matthew.¹⁹ The two animals also figured in a Talmudic prophecy: "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass."²⁰

17. MARGARET O'LEARY, CERF BERR OF MEDELHEIM: EMANCIPATING THE JEWS IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY FRANCE 1726-1793, at 45-46 (revised ed. 2014) (italics added).

18. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 58-59.

19. "[S]jedens super asinam et pullum filium subiugalis." *Matthew* 21:5.

20. Babylonian Talmud 98 b (Sanhedrin) foretold the Messiah's coming:

R. Alexandri said: ". . . behold, one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven whilst [elsewhere] it is written, [behold, thy king cometh unto thee . . .] lowly, and riding upon an ass!—if they are meritorious, [he will come] with the clouds of heaven; if not, lowly and riding upon an ass." King Shapur [I] said to Samuel, "Ye maintain

By seating Jesus upon the paired animals, the Acre Bible translators seemingly claimed Christianity's superiority over its counterpart Abrahamic faiths.²¹ New material added by the translators was likely meant to dispel Jewish skepticism toward Jesus's promise of salvation. Repeatedly depicting Jews and Saracens as foolish animals, Christian polemicists denied them powers of reason required for grasping Christ's message. Peter, for example, transformed the Jews into insects born of the Antichrist. According to him, the Antichrist's lieutenants included sub-human Jews; they "ha[d] broken open the eggs of asps, . . . woven the webs of spiders, [and produced] works of iniquity that are fruits of the antichrist."²²

D. Catechism a Vessel for Jewish Touchstones and Their Christian Analogues

Nesting in the Acre Bible's margins, a catechism²³ consisting of glosses might have been more effectively inculcated in congregants' imaginations than if it were embodied in a separate treatise. Akin to a church-approved user's manual, this Christianized version of the Old Testament was conveniently interleaved within a divine narrative. Growing organically from the translators' project, the glosses revealed a Christian theophany through the prism of Hebrew scripture.

E. Illustrating the Emergence of a Catechism in the Interstices of Torah

To promote the Christian narrative, the Acre Bible's account of Sarah's delivery of Isaac mentioned evocative Old Testament figures and themes. Rapidly oscillating between an early Jewish stratum and a later Christian counterpart, the translators played on the Hebrew meaning of

that the Messiah will come upon an ass: I will rather send him a white horse of mine." He replied, "Have you a hundred-hued steed?"

21. The Acre Bible drums on the theme of Christianity's superiority over Judaism. For example, an illustrative gloss contrasted the publication of Jewish law with that accorded the gospels: "The old law was given in an obscure place [in the wilderness] and the gospels were preached openly with great clarity." ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 93. A companion gloss linked the twelve tribes of Israel with the twelve apostles, and announced that the latter preached throughout the world. *Id.* at 100.

22. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 285.

23. Apparently assuming the illiteracy of most non-clerics, Nobel has argued that the glosses were intended for clerical preaching and exegesis. Pierre Nobel, *Gloses exegetiques dans les manuscrits de la Bible D'Acre: Probleme d'authenticite et de disposition*, in AUTOUR DE LACTANCE, HOMMAGE A PIERRE MONAT 149 (Besancon, Presses universitaires de Franche comte 2004).

Isaac (Yitzhak: he will laugh).²⁴ According to Sarah, “God [by giving me Isaac] made me laugh.”²⁵ A companion gloss illuminated Christian symbols in Sarah’s announcement: “Isaac, that is . . . joy and laughter, signifying the joy that the apostles and the saintly church have expressed because of the resurrection of our lord. . . . Sarah signifies saintly church, and Isaac [signifies] the son of God whom Abraham was commanded by God to sacrifice as God is every day sacrificed.”²⁶ In a companion passage, Isaac bore a wooden board (*busche*)²⁷ across his shoulders, and carried a flame and a knife.²⁸ The *busche* recalled the cross that God himself had shouldered.²⁹

III. GLOSSES, PROPHECIES, AND MIRACLES

To shepherd Christian flocks through the Jews’ scriptural landscape, the Acre Bible’s translators identified prefigurations of Jesus’s life in the Old Testament. As wellsprings of Christianity, prophecies animated the interpretation of the Old Testament, vindicating St. Augustine’s twin claims that the New Testament fulfilled the Old, and that Christians could have considered themselves “true Jews.” Amplifying Augustine’s claim, Junilius (circa 550), an expert in Biblical exegesis, found in scriptural interpretation “the historical prefiguration of the Old Testament and the allegorical completion of the new.”³⁰ As if to confirm Junilius’s argument, the crusader takeover of the Holy Land heralded a restoration of God’s kingdom to his “true Jews.”

Inspired by St. Augustine, Peter the Venerable claimed the symbolic validity (*ad modum significandae vitae*) of Old Testament prescriptions, even though they might have been insufficient for delivering the faithful into grace (*ad modum agenda vitae*).³¹ Peter argued that physical circumcision described in the Old Testament occupied a spiritual plane for Christians; he contrasted the moral validity of an Old Testament prescription (e.g., circumcision) with actual validity of a prescription for

24. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 25.

25. *Genesis* 21:6 (Vulgate) (“dixitque Sarra risum fecit mihi Deus quicumque audierit conridebit mihi.” [“Sarah said God made me laugh, and those who heard me would laugh with me.”]).

26. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 24.

27. *Id.* at 25.

28. *Genesis* 22, 7 (Vulgate) (“vis fili ecce inquit ignis [flame] et ligna [wood] ubi est victima holocausti” [“here is my son; and the fire and wood, where is the sacrificial lamb?”]).

29. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 26.

30. WITH REVERENCE FOR THE WORD: MEDIEVAL SCRIPTURAL EXEGESIS IN JUDAISM, CHRISTIANITY, AND ISLAM 208 (Jane Dammen McAuliffe, Barry D. Walfish, Joseph W. Goering eds., 2010).

31. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 297.

the Christian flock (e.g., baptism). More generally, multiple sacrifices identified in the Old Testament prefigured Christ's unique sacrifice, which sealed the New. The abbot also emphasized the superiority of prophecy over human reason. Contrary to Jews' "foolish" (i.e., unenlightened) view based upon mortal reason alone, argued Peter, Christ was predestined to arrive at a certain moment for the salvation of the world.

[Y]our understanding is far from the prophetic meaning since you are looking for a temporal king You, Jew, [must]confirm that no man can be greater than the Christ and because your prophet forces you to confess that there is one man greater than others, then it is necessary . . . to understand that only Christ can be greater than all others.³²

In this rather obscure passage, there is no mistaking the speaker's animus toward his Jewish interlocutor. If a Jewish reader in the crusader kingdom anticipated a faithful Norman rendition of the Hebrew verses, he would have been jarred by the theme of prophecy that unfolded in the Christian translators' prologue to Genesis. Here the prologue stressed Christ's advent and John's baptism.

Divine scripture teaches us that prophecy is understood in three ways; first, things that are to come, as when God taught Isaiah [Isaiah 7:14] the prophet that "the virgin [would] conceive and give birth to a son who [would] be called Emanuel." [S]econd; the knowledge of present things as when God appeared to St John Baptist when he came to baptize him, and the saint, never having seen him, knew him and declared "see the lamb of God, the one who removes the sins of the world."³³

The Acre Bible's evocation of Isaiah's prophecy echoed Peter's argument in *Against the Inveterate Obduracy of the Jews*: "no virgin had conceived or will conceive, has given birth or will give birth to a son, except the super-celestial and ever virgin Mary to Jesus Christ our Lord A star will arise out of Jacob, and a man will come forth from Israel."³⁴

Readers steeped in the Hebrew text of Genesis likely recognized the synopsis of creation in the translators' prologue: "The third kind of prophecy is a demonstration of things that are said and done, as when

32. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 119.

33. *Isaiah* 7, 14. Peter the Venerable quoted Isaiah's prophecy as a proof text of Jesus's advent. Peter also condemned the Jews for having falsified the meaning of Isaiah's prophecy out of envy. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 37.

34. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 100.

God explained to Moses the making of the heavens and the earth, how all creatures were . . . ordered and the beginning of the world.”³⁵

A. *Old Testament Symbols Embedded in Christian Polemic*

Suffusing the Acre Bible’s glosses, the Christian polemic linked a pageant of Old Testament figures and places with Christian talismans. For example, a constellation of glosses recalled Babylon, a sorrowful symbol of the temple’s destruction and the Jews’ forced exile from Zion. The Roman persecution of Christians prompted churchmen to characterize Rome as the whore of Babylon.³⁶ Recalling Christian polemics, the Acre Bible grouped Saracen strongholds of Babylon and Egypt³⁷ and argued that they had been poisoned by heresies and paganism. These strongholds betokened an obscurity (*tenebres*) and spiritual desolation that God had visited upon mankind for Adam’s disobedience. Featured in chiaroscuro techniques, the word *tenebres*, an emblem of spiritual disorientation, figured throughout the Acre Bible. A gloss described Egypt as “*tenebres* [dark, murky] and signified hell [enfer]. Pharaoh signified falling [descheans]; he fell [che] from the sky and was the prince of Egypt, that is hell. And the first sign he made was a serpent because the devil took the form of a serpent to deceive man.”³⁸

In the Vulgate’s opening verses of Genesis, the word *tenebres* suggested that creation was enshrouded in an obscurity that prevented man from distinguishing one thing from another.³⁹ God, to dispel the obscurity, separated light from darkness, day from night, and good angels from evil ones.⁴⁰ The Acre Bible depicted Babylon as both a place for internecine feuding and a den of iniquity for an anti-Christ. According to Genesis 11:5,⁴¹ mankind’s primordial common language (likely antique Aramaic or Hebrew) promoted social solidarity. To punish men for pride symbolized in the tower of Babel, God multiplied their customs, and intensified their alienation from one another. A babble of languages isolated (departies)⁴² Babylon’s inhabitants from one another. This theme

35. The Christology of Peter the Venerable’s *Adversus Iudeos* was foretold in terms of the Jews’ reversals of fortune. For having rejected Jesus, the Jews were humiliated and denied the advantage of the great transformation of Christianity. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 318.

36. *Revelations* 17:1-6.

37. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 33.

38. *Id.* at 71.

39. *Id.* at 5.

40. *Id.*

41. *Genesis* 11:5 (And God said: “Here is a united people, all with a single language; hence they could all begin their project and all that they accomplished they would do together.”).

42. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 13.

echoed the view of Rashi (circa 1100), the celebrated medieval Jewish scholar, that Babylon's multiple languages promoted social dysfunction.⁴³

B. *The Holy Sepulchre in Babylon's Grip*

Into Genesis, the translators incorporated a chapter that presented Christian transformation in terms of Jesus's entombment and resurrection from the Holy Sepulchre. According to Peter the Venerable,⁴⁴ these events in Jesus's narrative fulfilled Christ's prophecy that he would lie in the heart of the earth for three days and three nights.⁴⁵ "The place of Christ's death, the crowning achievement of his work, is worthy of even greater glory [than Bethlehem]. At the sepulchre, victory was won over death, . . . corruption yielded to incorruption, whence a man, disempowered, killed and entombed, rose as almighty God."⁴⁶

The Sepulchre loomed in crusader imaginations as the most palpable emblem of Jesus's passion. When Jerusalem fell to the conquerors, nearly all the warriors beat a path to the Sepulchre where they openly wept and prayed. Small wonder that churchmen accused both Jews and Saracens of having connived with the "prince of Babylon" to sack the Sepulchre.⁴⁷ The polemic identified the prince of Babylon as a Saracen, and Babylon as Egypt. This apocryphal episode was thought to have intensified the invading crusaders' ardor in rescuing the Sepulchre. According to Christian tradition, pilgrims at the Holy Sepulchre continued to witness miracles in the crusaders' epoch; for

43. *Genesis* 11:7 ("We shall confuse their languages, and no one will understand his neighbor."). According to Rashi, a celebrated Jewish scholar, human arrogance prompted men to build the tower of Babel. By confounding languages, God frustrated human collaboration. Rabbi David Silverberg, *Rashi on the Tower of Babel: Limits of Human Capabilities*, <http://www.hatanakh.com/en/content/rashi-tower-babel-limits-human-capabilities> (last visited Mar. 30, 2018). George Steiner characterized a primordial scriptural language as an Ur-Sprache in which words and objects corresponded perfectly. Each name, each proposition was an equation with perfectly defined roots between human perception and the facts of the case.

The tongue of Eden was like a flawless glass; a light of total understanding streamed through it. . . . Babel was a Second Fall, . . . as desolate as the first. Adam had been driven from the garden, now men were harried like yelping dogs, out of the single family of man. . . . They were denied an ability to grasp and communicate reality. . . . Theologians . . . strove to attenuate this second banishment. Had there not been a partial redemption at Pentecost when the gift of tongues had descended upon the apostles?

GEORGE STEINER, *AFTER BABEL: ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATION* 42 (2d ed. 1992).

44. PETER THE VENERABLE, *SERMO IN LAUDE DOMINICI SEPULCHRI*, *quoted in* IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 165-166.

45. *Matthew* 12:40.

46. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 166.

47. *See supra* note 44.

example, Christ was believed annually to light candles on Easter eve at the Sepulchre. In Peter's view, the illumination rite was the savior's divine and public act, recognized by heathens and Saracens as well as Christians.⁴⁸ But unlike these two groups, Jews maintained a hostility toward Christ that was said to have extinguished their belief in Christ's miracles.

Peter's *Sermo in laude dominici sepulchri* (Sermon in Praise of Lord of the Sepulchre) extolled Christianity's miraculous radiation from Jerusalem, the earth's spiritual center. To sanctify the crusaders' governance of the Holy Land, Peter associated Old Testament figures with prominent sites in the Latin Kingdom's geography. The Acre Bible's litany of sites in the Holy Land recalls a pattern of associations evoked by Peter the Venerable. On a practical level, the Bible's references likely reassured crusaders of their entitlement to unfamiliar terrain.⁴⁹ On a spiritual level, recurring references to Old Testament figures could have convinced readers of the unity of God's plan starting with Genesis and leading to the rescue of the Holy Land and the founding of the Latin Kingdom. The unity is suggested, for example, in a gloss placing Isaac in Hebron near the site of Jesus's passion at the Mount of Calvary.⁵⁰ Locating Horeb near the Mount, other glosses claimed that "Adam was turned out of paradise; he was formed in [H]ebron near Nablus."⁵¹ In two accompanying glosses, a scriptural passage identified Luza (also referred to in glosses as Jerusalem and the Temple of God) as the place where Jacob's ladder descended from heaven and Christ was later crucified.⁵²

The Acre Bible's translators shared Jerome's fascination for place names in the Holy Land, as seen in his *Liber de situ et nominibus locorum Hebraicorum* (*Book of Places and Names of Hebrew Locations*).⁵³ Continuities of Old Testament topography in the Latin Kingdom rendered palpable the reality of biblical events. For example, a gloss identified Ermenie (Armenia) as the place where Noah's ark came to rest after the flood.⁵⁴ Canaan was equated with Syria, Eufraten with Bethlehem, and Seyr with Damascus. The land of Caldeus was linked with Haman, Malbec, and la Chamelle.⁵⁵ Nobel identified these sites in

48. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at Adversus 44.

49. Nobel, *supra* note 23, at 160.

50. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 37.

51. *Id.* at 9.

52. *Id.* at 31-32.

53. *Id.* at 255.

54. *Id.* at 12.

55. *Id.* at 157.

the Chronicle of William of Tyre,⁵⁶ a celebrated crusader and a historian of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.

C. Circumcision and Baptism: Christian Rite Relaxes the Rigor of a Jewish Commandment

A halachic badge, circumcision memorialized the Jews' covenant with God. According to the Acre Bible,

This is the commandment between me, you, and your seed after you; all males will be circumcised . . . as a sign of an alliance between me and you. [The name of] an uncircumcised male will be erased from the nation . . . whether servants or slaves, all will be circumcised in your generations; at the eighth day the child will be circumcised and so on throughout all of your descendants.⁵⁷

The Acre Bible's glosses declared circumcision a sign of Jewish loyalty and obedience. Abraham's obedience redeemed Adam's disobedience. For non-circumcision of a boy at the appointed time, the Torah threatened erasure of his name from God's record of the living and the dead; the threat resonated in the Acre Bible's glosses: "Our Lord replied to Moses: Know, Moses, whoever sins against me I shall erase him from my book . . . my angels will pass before you and me on the day of vengeance will visit on them and present them their misdeed [lor mesfait devant]."⁵⁸

The prospect of circumcision might have perplexed early Christians; as a vulnerable sect in the Roman Empire before Constantine's conversion and the Christianization of the Roman empire, Christians likely feared that their physical sign would betray them to Roman persecutors. Tertullian's *Adversus Iudaeos*, a third century reconstruction of a debate between a Christian and a Jewish proselyte, rejected strict compliance with the Old Testament obligation of circumcision. To justify the rejection, Tertullian identified a number of Old Testament figures who, though uncircumcised, were found pleasing to God. According to Greek patristic writers, even Abraham did not need to be circumcised to please God.⁵⁹

In a characteristic Christian restatement, Peter noted Christianity's symbolic fulfillment of Old Testament commands; according to Peter,

56. *Id.*

57. *Id.* at 19.

58. *Id.* at 105-06.

59. The purpose of circumcision was to keep Abraham and his seed pure until the advent of Christ; the law was to serve as a party wall to separate Jews from other nations. A. LUKYN WILLIAMS, *ADVERSUS JUDAEOS: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF CHRISTIAN APOLOGIAE UNTIL THE RENAISSANCE* 128 (2012).

circumcision prefigured Christ's sacrifice and signaled Christianity's relaxation of strict Jewish laws:

[T]he Holy Spirit relaxed burdens upon you, when he substituted baptism for circumcision, substituted rest from sin for Sabbath leisure, when he substituted the pure . . . lamb for countless sacrifices of bread, flour, wine . . . he determined thereby that he be offered to God almighty for salvation of all.⁶⁰

As key rituals in Peter's prediction, baptism, circumcision, and sacrifices echoed Tertullian's rhetoric. The Christian legislator, argued Tertullian, ought perforce to suppress the old law. Peter transformed the suppression of the old law into the Holy Spirit's "relaxation of burdens." He argued that Old Testament prescriptions, though symbolically meaningful for the flock, were dispensable in a Christian's life.

D. Polemics and Superstitions

Christian polemicists linked the Antichrist's heresies with circumcision, a rite that churchmen had replaced with baptism. Baptism was said to endow a child with grace and transform his nature. In contrast, an unbaptized child was dehumanized as a mere piece of flesh, a piglet, a little Jew, or a Moor (i.e., Saracen).⁶¹ In a confusing gloss, the Acre Bible dismissed circumcision in favor of baptism: "Such a virtue was circumcision then [i.e., pre-Christian times] that now it is replaced by baptism, without which one cannot achieve glory."⁶² Illustrating Christianity's symbolic fulfillment of Old Testament commands, circumcision, according to Peter, guided the flock toward baptism. Prefiguring Christ's sacrifice, the sacrifices of the Old Covenant sealed the new covenant.⁶³

E. The Trinity and Jesus's Dual Nature, Originating in Anthropomorphic God

According to the Acre Bible translators' prologue to Genesis, the trinity suffused the soul. A central paradox of the faith, the trinity was said to constitute an indivisible unity, on one hand, and, on the other, a divine triad that the polemicist, Petrus Alfonsi, identified as an inspiration for creation of the universe.⁶⁴ The conception of the trinity

60. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 181.

61. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 363 (quoting C. FABRE VASSAS, *THE SINGULAR BEAST: JEWS, CHRISTIANS AND THE PIG* 274 (1997)).

62. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 19.

63. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 297.

64. *Id.* at 137.

likely originated in a Greek triad that consisted of memory (the father); understanding (the son); and will (the holy spirit). Frequently ridiculed by Muslim skeptics, the trinity was defended by medieval theologians such as the theologian Alain de Lille (1128-11202), who endorsed the Greek-inspired triad.⁶⁵ Peter Abelard, the scholastic philosopher, slightly modified the trinity's three elements into *potentia* (power), *sapientia* (knowledge), and *voluntas* (will).⁶⁶

A recurrent anthropomorphism in the Old Testament, the finger of God invited the translators to demystify the trinity and condemn Jewish, Muslim, and pagan heretics who scorned it:

[T]he virtue of God and . . . the Holy Spirit is called in the law [the Old Testament] and the Gospels the finger of God . . . the law was written by him on two stone tablets that Moses showed the people when he gave the law. The finger . . . the hand and the arm are of one substance in . . . man . . . likewise [autressi est] the holy spirit and the father and the son are of one nature and devised by men. Great force and power . . . prompted the [Hebrews'] flight from Egypt. "By the precious death of Jesus Christ are we redeemed from the penalties of hell."⁶⁷

To complement the translators' conception of the trinity, a cascade of glosses addressed the duality of Jesus's nature, evoked in the scriptural maxim, "the word was made flesh."⁶⁸ Peter the Venerable elaborated this maxim in terms of Christ's dual nature: "God was plainly seen by men, who conversed among men, not a foreign God but his own, the God of all the Jews."⁶⁹ This argument resonated in a gloss that elaborated Jesus's duality: "the lord had neither mother nor father, in the sense of mortal human beings."⁷⁰ The theme of Christ's humanity also resonated in a gloss upon Jacob's deception of Isaac by wearing Esau's skins and clothing; this clothing, according to the translators, signified that "God's incarnation would defeat the Enemy [the Antichrist]."⁷¹

F. *Jews' Hardened Hearts*

The Jews' steadfast rejection of Jesus's saviorship intensified the translators' scorn of Jews:

65. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 105.

66. T E BURMAN, RELIGIOUS POLEMIC AND THE INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF THE MOZARABS: 1050-1200, at 181 (Brill, 1994; Leiden).

67. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 71.

68. *Proverbs* 8:31.

69. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 79.

70. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 21.

71. *Id.* at 36-37.

[T]he Jews have a hard and covered heart that prevents them from seeing or understanding anything in the New Testament more than they understood [when] in Moses' presence. During the times of Titus and Vespasian [Roman emperors who oppressed the Jews] our Lord was avenged against the Jews as these two emperors sold thirty Jews for a denier though they sold Jesus Christ for thirty deniers.⁷²

Recalling Pharaoh's obdurate heart when Moses asked him to free the Israelites, the quoted passages paralleled Peter's justification of Roman devastation of the Jewish kingdom as punishment for steadfastly rejecting Jesus.⁷³ "Did not the Roman people, coming with their leader Vespasian and his son Titus, destroy the Jewish kingdom? . . . [D]id it not lay waste to Jerusalem itself, the capital of your kingdom?"⁷⁴

IV. MALIGN ORIGINS OF THE ANTI-CHRIST AND THE SARACENS

Until this point our study has explored ways in which the Acre Bible translators, as if to fulfill the ambitions of the Christian polemic, seized upon Old Testament themes as premonitions of a Christian narrative. But the translators also investigated Christian polemics for themes absent from the Hebrew Bible. Below we examine two themes that the translators incorporated into the fabric of the Acre Bible.

A. *The Antichrist*

The term "Antichrist," though absent from Jerome's Vulgate translation of the Pentateuch, likely originated in Jewish eschatology.⁷⁵ As a false messiah, God's chief antagonist, and the epitome of all conceivable evil, the Antichrist figured in the Johannine epistles of the New Testament.⁷⁶ Thessalonians prophesied that apostasy would precede the second coming; at that moment, the Antichrist, the "man of lawlessness and perdition, arrogantly [sat] in the Temple of God, claiming to be God"⁷⁷ until the "breath of the Messiah's mouth" destroyed it.⁷⁸ Consistently with Christian polemics, the translators'

72. *Id.* at 105 (according to the accompanying gloss, "ce senefie que les Judes ont le cuer dur et covert qu'il ne poent veir ne entendre en l'evangile neent plus quil ne faisoient en la face de Moysen . . . au tens que Titus et Vaspassiens regnerent, se venja Nostre Sire des Judes car ces II empereors vendirent XXX Judes por un denier por ce que il vendirent Jhesus Crist por xxx deniers.").

73. PETER THE VENERABLE, *supra* note 12, at 155-56.

74. *Id.*

75. *Isaiah* 11:4.

76. I *John* 2:18, 2:22, 4:3; II *John* 7.

77. II *Thessalonians* 2:2-4.

78. *Isaiah* 11:4.

epilogue for Genesis described the Antichrist as a horned serpent born of the lineage of Dan; this creature was said to wait like a snake in the path and bite men, sending into perdition the elite whose righteous paths led to God.⁷⁹

B. *Saracens*

Archetypal avatars of the Other, Saracen (Sarrazin) marauders sent by the Antichrist struck fear in the hearts of the Christian flock. Before Islam's rise (circa 610 AD), the catchall term "Saracen" identified Arabs, heretics, idolators, pagans, and practitioners of human sacrifice. Their sinister reputation was traced to Ishmael, Abraham's offspring from the slave Hagar. Prompted by Sarah, Abraham cast Ishmael out of his household for idolatry. Standing outside God's covenant with the Jews, Ishmael was denied divine dispensation and a privileged place among nations. Rabbinical scholars stigmatized Saracens for Ishmael's immorality. Relying on the figure of Ishmael as a springboard for their claims, Jewish and Christian commentators alike fueled anti-Saracen animus among their flocks. According to the Talmud,⁸⁰ for example, Sarah had witnessed Ishmael as he erected altars and offered locusts for idol worship. Centering upon the Latin term *ludentem* (playful), the Vulgate translation of the root word for Yitzhak (laugh, rejoice) rendered the Hebrew adjective "metzahek."⁸¹

The term *ludentem*, though not pejorative when applied to Isaac, came to be understood as "making sport in an immoral way" when the term was applied to Ishmael's character. Consistently with St. Jerome's interpretation, the Jewish scholar Rashi's commentaries suggested that the verb (metzahek) connoted idolatry, sexual debauchery, and dangerous games leading to bloodshed.⁸² A gloss⁸³ summarized pagan aspects of Ishmael's narrative for Christian readers. To explain the term "Saracen,"

79. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 59-60.

80. *Tosefta Sotah* 5:12, 6:6.

81. *Genesis* 21:9 characterized Ishmael's activities as "metsahek" (Hebrew root; Tz-hk, as in Yitzhak (rejoice)). But making sport in an immoral way suggests the term's irony.

82. As the ideal type of a marauding outcast, Ishmael has endured to the present day in Hebrew scholarship. See, e.g., AVIVA ZORNBERG, *GENESIS: THE BEGINNING OF DESIRE: REFLECTIONS ON GENESIS 135* (2011). "Here the issue of Abraham's body—Ishmael—is rejected by God. Ishmael is the rapacious hunter . . . in the midrash a highwayman lurking at the crossroads, plundering, demonically connected to others by hunger." According to Zornberg, Rashi cites a midrash that presents the game between Isaac and Ishmael as a sinister kind of William Tell, with Ishmael shooting arrows at Isaac, then claiming he was only playing. *Id.* at 135.

83. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 18.

the passage anachronistically located Christians at the center of the old testament narrative.

From this one [Ishmael] have come pagans, now called Saracens. This name [Saracens] is wrongly given because they have come from the slave [Hagar]. We are rightly called Saracens and are now Christians [having converted from Judaism].

The gloss, hinging on Ishmael's scriptural genealogy and the meaning of "Saracen," seems to have been calculated to frustrate Saracens' quest for parity with Jews and Christians.

In the aftermath of the first crusades to the Holy Land, Latin Kingdom rulers accommodated the Saracens in their midst, despite church hostilities stemming from their marauding reputation.⁸⁴ Social realities reinforced the policy of accommodation; indigenous populations—Syrians, Turks, Jews, and Greeks—significantly exceeded those of crusaders and Christian pilgrims. Latin Kingdom merchants dominated commerce in products moving between the Orient and western and northern Europe. In continuous negotiations, merchants from various ethnic groups depended upon each other for their livelihoods, and this dependence promoted mutual acceptance. As a non-Christian, a Saracen could have been excluded from transactions that customarily required his oath upon a Christian Bible.⁸⁵ In principle, the Assises of Jerusalem denied Saracens access to the Latin Kingdom's *cour des bourgeois*. For pragmatic reasons, however, the kingdom's magistrates frequently entertained legal actions involving Saracens.

V. CRUSADER KINGDOM'S SEIGNEURIAL HIERARCHY MIRRORED IN ACRE BIBLE

To consolidate power over the Crusader Kingdom, the crusaders instituted a seigneurial order that promoted, in Gianfranco Foleno's description, "a miniature *outremer* Romania with small French feudal states." A feudal ethos also suffused the Jews' legal and social status. Like Jews in medieval France, those in the Christian Levant were designated "our Jews" (*iudei nostril*) and chattels of the nobility.⁸⁶ In the Crusader Kingdom, the Assises of Jerusalem, a compilation of feudal

84. According to William of Tyr, Saracens caused insecurity on roads by lying in wait for Christians, and in Christian homes where occupants were frequently attacked and robbed. *Id.* at ix (quoting GUILLAUME DE TYR, *CHRONIQUE*, reprinted in 63 *CORPUS CHRISTIANORUM: CONTINUATIO MEDIEVALIS* 9, 19 (R.B. Huygens & Turnholt eds., 1986).

85. Gianfranco Foleno, *La Romania d'Oltremare*, in XIV CONGRESSO INTERNAZIONALE DI LINGUISTICA ET FILOLOGIA ROMANZA 399-406 (Naples, 1974).

86. IOGNA-PRAT, *supra* note 8, at 283.

and religious regulations, regulated social and commercial relationships. The Assises largely mirrored Norman customary laws that were enshrined in the *Ancienne Coutume de Normandie*. That *Coutume*, in turn, informed the Latin Kingdom's institutions.⁸⁷

A. *Crusaders as Exemplars of Scriptural Nobles*

In restating the Vulgate version of the Old Testament, the translators drew inspiration from both the gospels and the Latin Kingdom's political organization. To identify leading crusaders as avatars of ancient biblical nobility, for example, the translators assigned to illustrious knights landed estates that linked French sites with the toponymy of the Holy Land.⁸⁸ By evoking biblical heroes in a seigneurial framework, the translators also sharpened the knights' self-definition as both clerics and warriors (*militi Christi*). According to the hagiographic introduction to the *Lignages d'Outremer*, for example, the burial stone of Godefroi de Bouillon, the first Christian ruler of the Holy Land, memorialized him as "*alter Judas Machabeus, spes patriae, tutor ecclesiae*"⁸⁹ (a second Judah Maccabeus, hope of the fatherland, guardian of the church). Crusading nobles, believing themselves divinely chosen to replace the Jews as guardians of the Holy Land, could have found inspiration for their dual role in God's command to Moses at Mount Sinai: "you shall be to me a kingdom of priests [*regnum sacerdotale*] and a holy nation."⁹⁰

A lay-clerical duality resonated in the Acre Bible's social nomenclature. Figuring in the Assises of Jerusalem, the duality, besides resonating in a separation of spiritual and temporal courts, was mirrored in the Latin Kingdom's governance. Churchmen combined spiritual service with adjudication of temporal controversies among the kingdom's inhabitants. This shared jurisdiction was also mirrored in the Acre Bible's designation *Prestres de la loy* (priests of the law).⁹¹ "Prince" and "lord"⁹² designated Jethro, Moses's father-in-law, the priest of Madian.⁹³

87. LES ASSISES DE JERUSALEM, *reprinted in* 2 RECUEIL DES HISTORIENS DES CROISADES: LOIS 22 (M LeComte Beugnot ed., 1843) ("The crusaders, having organized their conquests according to the ideas of a primitive feudalism, then established them as Syrian vicounties, . . . they also did this in the principal cities of that country [Syria] from the time of their arrival. Later they were to follow the example of France by designating as *baillis* officers who represented the king and the great barons in less important localities.").

88. *See supra* note 7.

89. *Les Lignages d'Outremer*, *supra* note 7, at 441.

90. *Exodus* 19:6.

91. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 65.

92. *Id.* at 91.

93. *Exodus* 18:1 (Vulgate) (*sacerdos*).

A companion gloss evoked Jethro's political role in a feudal hierarchy: "princes ruled . . . cities and chieftains villages."⁹⁴

B. Feudal Nomenclature Illuminated Torah's Political Organization

To suggest parallels between the crusader kingdom's political organization and that of Hebrew scripture, the Acre Bible translators substituted a feudal nomenclature for an Old Testament counterpart. Following Genesis 25:16 (Vulgate), the Acre Bible depicted Ishmael's sons as princes of their own tribes⁹⁵ (*principes tribuum suarum*) who, according to prophecy, would become great men.⁹⁶ The Acre Bible typically rendered "kingdom" as a feudal region, *seignorie*,⁹⁷ realm as "reynne",⁹⁸ and principality "princete" (*principaute*).⁹⁹ Pervasive in the Assises of Jerusalem and les Lignages d'Outremer as a designation of an extended family or clan, *lignage*¹⁰⁰ in the Acre Bible corresponded to a tribe (Vulgate: *tribu*) of Israel.¹⁰¹

C. Old Testament's Social Hierarchy Illuminated by Feudal Nomenclature

To project a feudal hierarchy upon the Pentateuch's social relations, the Acre Bible translated "slave" as *serf* (Latin: *servus*)¹⁰² and freeman as *Franc*.¹⁰³ Genesis 24, 2 translated a senior servant or elder as *bailli*,¹⁰⁴ a common feudal term for a custodian or trustee.¹⁰⁵ A "lord over territory"

94. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 91 ("qui estoient plus avant as viles et as cites aussi com prince et chevetaynes.").

95. *Id.* at 58.

96. *Id.* at 19.

97. *Id.* at 43; *Exodus* 3:16 (Vulgate) (Latin: *senior civitatis*).

98. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 58; *Genesis* 19:6 (Vulgate) (Latin: "*regnum sacerdotale*").

99. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 58.

100. *Id.* at 61.

101. *Exodus* 31:2 (Vulgate) (Latin: *tribu*).

102. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 95; *Genesis* 44:17 (Vulgate) (Latin: *servus*).

103. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 79.

104. *Id.* at 26.

105. *Genesis* 24:2. Hebrew: *avdo zaqen beito*; *servum seniore[m] domus suae qui praeerat omnibus quae habebat pone manum tuam subter femur meum* (Vulgate) ["his servant the elder of his household who had custody of all that was his"] is translated in ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 26:16: "qu'il avoit fait bailli de tot son hostel" ["whom he made steward of his entire household"]. For the use of *bailli* as a verb, see ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 46 ("Baillies le moy et de moy le requires"; ["entrust the lad to me, and request him from me"]); *Genesis* 42:34 (Vulgate) ("*fratremque vestrum minimum adducite ad me . . . quae vultis habeatis licentiam*").

was rendered in a classical feudal term, *seneschal*,¹⁰⁶ a steward or intendant of a fief.¹⁰⁷

Like the Acre Bible, the Assises of Jerusalem rendered “steward” as “baron,”¹⁰⁸ chevaliers or cavalry¹⁰⁹ as *chevaucheurs*,¹¹⁰ and chieftains as *chevetaynes*.¹¹¹ Pharaoh’s chamberlain was designated *conestable*¹¹² (Assises: *connetable*,¹¹³ Vulgate: *stabularios*). *Sergent*, a recurrent figure in the Assises, designated a senior servant of a household.¹¹⁴ In Egypt, a supervisor of Jewish slaves was designated *Prevos* (prevosts), also a common designation for a medieval administrator or a judge.¹¹⁵

VI. LEGAL CONTINUITIES BETWEEN THE OLD TESTAMENT AND THE ACRE BIBLE

Lexicons of both the Assises and the Acre Bible resonated in the Latin Kingdom’s discourse. Because Norman French institutions and customs inspired the discourse of contemporary English lawyers, the latter would also have recognized much of the Acre Bible’s legal terminology. The translators substantially restated the Torah by incorporating into the Acre Bible a legal lexicon heavily dependent upon that of the Assises of Jerusalem.

A. *Procedural and Substantive Institutions*

1. Procedure

Evocative of *Assise* procedures implemented by both the crusading orders and commoners, the Acre Bible¹¹⁶ depicted Moses as a judge of Israelites’ disputes. Moses explained: “When there is among them a dispute [querelle], they come before me to conduct a hearing [*esgart*].” This passage characteristically designated a legal proceeding *esgart*,¹¹⁷

106. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 48.

107. *Genesis* 43:16 (Vulgate) (*dispensatori domus*).

108. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 43; Assises, *supra* note 59, p. 481.

109. Assises at 497.

110. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 84.

111. *Id.* at 91; Assises at 497.

112. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 39.

113. Assises at 411.

114. *Id.* at 459.

115. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 63; Assises at 54.

116. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 70.

117. *Id.* at 92. According to the Vulgate version (*Exodus* 18:16) of Moses’ explanation of his role as judge, “*cumque acciderit eis aliqua disceptatio veniunt ad me ut iudicem inter eos et ostendam praecepta Dei et leges eius.*” Translation: “When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and inform them of God’s statutes and laws.” “Esgarder,” the term for hearing and adjudicating a dispute among ordinary inhabitants, also

conducting a legal proceeding *esgarder*,¹¹⁸ a legal controversy *querelle* (quarrel; legal dispute).¹¹⁹ Elsewhere the Acre Bible designated a dispute *brigue*,¹²⁰ a legal judgment *jugement*,¹²¹ an order of compulsory performance *destraint*,¹²² lodging a legal accusation *blasmer*,¹²³ tort or damage *grievance*,¹²⁴ and taking someone prisoner *ataint*.¹²⁵

The Acre Bible frequently cast Old Testament dialogues in procedural terms and spiritual leaders as avatars of political leaders in an ancient Jewish kingdom. For example, the Acre Bible version of Exodus¹²⁶ reported a dialogue between Moses and his father-in-law: “Moses heard the complaints of the people and set judgments among them. Jethro said; ‘how do you, [acting] by yourself, render judgments [Acre Bible: jugemens] and have your people stand [faites ester] in your presence from morning until evening?’”¹²⁷

2. Regulations of Substantive Law

The Acre Bible rendered primogeniture with its French cognate “premieres engendreures,”¹²⁸ earnest money as *erres* (*garantie*),¹²⁹ grievance (tort, damage),¹³⁰ guage (surety, bond),¹³¹ and Doaire (dowry).¹³²

identified a complaint against a brother of a military order. THE CATALAN RULE OF THE TEMPLARS 2 (J.M. Upton Ward ed. & trans., critical ed. 2003).

118. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 97 (“If a man injures a pregnant woman and causes her to abort, but she does not die of the injury, then he will pay according to the husband’s demand [li maris esgardera], and the judges will decide [li juge estable esgarderont].”).

119. *Id.* at 92.

120. *Id.* at 50. “Ou ne die chose pour coy la cour *esgarde* ou conoisse qu’il ne doit responder . . . il pert sa *querelle*.” [“why the court rules or recognizes that he need not reply . . . he loses his suit.”] LES ASSISES DE JERUSALEM, *supra* note 87, at 583.

121. “Moses heard the facts from the people and rendered judgments [jugemens] upon them.” Exodus 18:13 (Vulgate) (“*altero autem die sedit Moses ut iudicaret populum qui adsistebat Mosi de mane usque ad vesperam.*” [“Moses sat to judge the people: and the people abided with Moses from . . . morning until . . . evening.”]).

122. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 78. “Destreindra d’issir fors de sa terre.” [“And a plague will force you to leave the land.”] *Id.*

123. Compare *id.* at 97, 17-18 (“[T]he beast will be stoned, nor will anyone eat its flesh, nor will its lord be [blamed].”), with LES ASSISES DE JERUSALEM, *supra* note 87, at 565 (“Il doit desloier [debarrasser de liens qui entravent quelqu’un] et *blasmer* priveement et plusiours feis le tort.” [“He must remove the bonds that hinder someone and complain privately about the damage.”]).

124. Then God appeared to Laban in dreams and prohibited him from committing damage. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 34.

125. “Se le signor en ataint son home.” LES ASSISES DE JERUSALEM, *supra* note 87, at 331 (“If the lord accuse his vassal.”).

126. *Jethro* 18:14-17.

127. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 91.

128. *Id.* at 28. “[Jacob] li dist: ‘Ven moy tes premieres engendreures.’” [“Jacob said to Esau: ‘Sell me your birthright.’”] Genesis 25:33 (Vulgate) (*ait Iacob iura ergo mihi iuravit Esau et vendidit primogenita*).

VII. CODA

The Acre Bible is metaphorically evocative of multiple births from a single woman's polyzygotic pregnancy, i.e., three fetuses born of three eggs. The offspring, though not precisely alike, are unquestionably kindred creatures. By analogy, the Acre Bible's alloy of kindred themes and influences descended from a Judeo-Christian heritage. The text originated in a welter of influences that flowed from Europe's western reaches and the Levant. Circulating along both the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, the influences inspired pilgrims and crusaders to the Levant in response to Pope Urban's calls to redeem the Holy Land. Perhaps traveling merchants alone could have produced the alloy, but the crusaders' military organization likely intensified and organized the Judeo-Christian influences. Spoken on both shores of the English channel, the Acre Bible's ancient French discourse built bridges to medieval and modern English and French.

Transplanted to the Latin Kingdom, a French feudal hierarchy mirrored an English organization that took shape soon after the Norman Conquest. Used on both sides of the English Channel, legal terminology suggested a reciprocal debt between English law and its French counterpart. Embedded in landholding nomenclature, Norman feudal patterns were transmitted to the Latin Kingdom and England. To extend the polyzygotic metaphor, Hebrew, Greek, and Latin sources pre-figured the three Abrahamic monotheisms' identities and jealousies. To this day, the Abrahamic monotheisms' respective congregants have continued both to attack and praise each other. Small wonder that when the crusaders expropriated God's scriptural land grant to the Jews, they celebrated their conquest by appropriating Hebrew scripture to glorify

129. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 40. "Et elle [Thamar] dist [a Judah]: 'Dones moi erres.' Et il li dona erres" ["Thamar said to Judah: 'give me earnest,' and he gave her earnest." *Exodus* 38:17 (Vulgate). *dederis mihi arrabonem*. Earnest, a commonplace in modern commercial transactions, derived from an ancient Greek institution, *arrabon*, akin to a pledge or guarantee that migrated into Roman law and thence into modern legal systems.

130. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 34. "et li desfendi que nule grevance ne li feist." ["God appeared in a dream to Laban and forbade him to damage or harm Jacob."] "viditque in somnis dicentem sibi Dominum cave ne quicquam aspere loquaris contra Iacob" [And God came to Laban the Syrian in a dream by night, and said unto him, Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad 'grevance.'" [torment, oppression].

131. *Id.* at 99. "Si tu prens en guage le vestement de ton visin, tu li rendras ainz le souleill cochant." *Id.* at 99, 11. *Exodus* 22:26 (Vulgate) ("si pignus a proximo tuo acceperis vestimentum ante solis occasum redde ei" ["If you take in pledge your neighbor's coat, you must return it to him before sundown."]).

132. ACRE BIBLE, *supra* note 3, at 90. "Celui li donra monoye selonc le pris dou doaire . . . doera." ["He will give payment according to the price of the dowry."] *Exodus* 22, 17:17.

Christ and promote the church's imperial designs. Small wonder also that Christianity scorned Jews for having rejected one of their kin as messiah; or that Jews and Christians ostracized Abraham's son, Ishmael, for having laid foundations of Islam. A rich but neglected cultural artifact, the Acre Bible invites us to explore our cultural DNA with a goal of identifying phenomena that have brought humankind together and kept its members apart.