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**MODES OF RELIGIOUS SELF-REPRESENTATION
ON THE EXAMPLE OF GOTTSCHALK OF ORBAIS:
IN THE QUEST FOR GOTTSCHALK’S MODELS****

Abstract: Gottschalk of Orbais (ca. 804–868) was condemned for heresy by the Synods of Mainz and Quirzey (in 848 and 849) due to his doctrine of double predestination, and spent the last twenty years of his life in confinement in Hautvillers. Throughout Gottschalk’s last years, and perhaps due to the severe punishment he had suffered, another *facette* of this *monachus gyrovagus* surfaced. The image of a rebellious figure, somewhat subversive in his heretical self-defence, resorting to subterfuge, and endowed with protruding features, announcing the penchant to *martyrium*, prophecy and some uncommon strategies of religious self-representation for the Carolingian era, came to light.

Keywords: Gottschalk of Orbais, heresy, paganism, mystical theology, metaphorical language.

The accounts of Gottschalk’s life, journeys and work, hide a picturesque and vivid side of this wandering monk keen on peregrinations. Most likely, he came in contact with Byzantine culture during his travels. Being an original

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thinker, Gottschalk probably drew on some Byzantine models he might have encountered during his Dalmatian and Balkan trips. He was apparently inspired by models other than those experienced by the majority of his Latin interlocutors: apparently, he derived his inspiration from some pagan elements as well.

In this paper, my objective would firstly be to highlight the different *facettes* and modes of Gottschalk's religious self-representation, as well as the strategies he employed, and secondly, to attempt, in a deductive manner, to give a more thorough specification of what might represent Gottschalk's models.

Therefore, the aim of this paper is to present a chronological account of some of the sequences of Gottschalk's (direct or indirect) religious self-representation¹. Or, placed in a wider axis, this brief study might represent a sketch, an outline of Gottschalk's resort to metaphorical language in its various aspects, as well as in the context of his self-portrayal. Therefore, the emphasis will be placed on the presentation of relevant and selected textual passages, in order to point to some less obvious subtones of Gottschalk's discourse.

The examples illustrating Gottschalk's religious self-representation, put forward not seldom in the scope of the defence of his doctrine, will be centered upon the Predestination controversy which reached its peak in 849–851, the Synod of Mainz which accused him of heresy², the Trinitarian controversy (c. 853), and Gottschalk's resort to metaphorical language in his religious self-representation. The excerpts will include selected passages from his prose, as well as poetic texts.

The aim of this work is to trace a “road map” towards a larger picture. Namely, it would be interesting and instructive to detect which Gottschalk's models emerge, judging by the patterns and strategies he employed.

1. Gottschalk's encounter with the East

In the 840s, during his Balkan journey, Gottschalk recounted a curious equestrian divination ritual, while expounding on his concept of divine predestination. Additionally, speaking of the “spirit of truth”, Gottschalk

¹ Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais: A Study of Power and Spirituality in a Ninth-Century Life*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Charlottesville, VA 2009, 213–279.

² Cf. *Synod of Mainz*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica (MGH), Concilia III, No. 14 [Mainz], ed. W. Hartmann, Hannover 1984, 179–184.

stated his opinion that even pagans might have been inspired by it³. This was, nevertheless, not the only episode from Gottschalk's life and texts which might suggest that he had some encounters with nonexclusively Western Christian influences, in addition to being inspired by early Christian Latin authors, such as Augustine, Gregory the Great, Isidore of Seville and others. More than a decade later, at the peak of the Predestinarian debate, Gottschalk proposed to undergo an ordeal in his *Confessio Prolixior* (the Longer Confession), in order to prove the validity and veracity of his stance on the concept of double predestination. In the 850s and 860s, Gottschalk wrote his polemical texts against Hinemar, the archbishop of Reims (845–882), in which he exposed his self-defence and religious self-representation primarily by resorting to metaphorical and poetical language. The employment of metaphorical language of heresy in heresiological debates represented, in fact, a common place in the 9th-century Greek and Latin textual treatments of heresy.

Gottschalk in the Balkans
(between 845 and the Synod of Mainz in 848)

The new perspective on Gottschalk's non-Christian models includes the example of the equestrian divination ritual he mentioned during his Balkan trip. This account of Gottschalk, which will be presented here, falls into the wider field of Gottschalk's deliberation on predestination and precognition. Nevertheless, the following passage presents only an indirect form of Gottschalk's religious self-representation, and more overtly, a hint of what his models might represent. Furthermore, this hypothesis is based on the assumption that he may have resorted not only to pagan Germanic heritage in this respect, as it has already been proposed by numerous authors who studied Gottschalk's texts, but also to the religious heritage of the Steppe peoples, which he may have come in touch with during his Balkan journey.⁴

Hence, speaking of the echoes of the pagan modes, it would be interesting to propose a short insight into a passage from Gottschalk's prose writings, in which he elaborates on the ability of animals to predict future

³ K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, Bonner historische Forschungen 5 (Bonn 1956) 41–42.

⁴ Cf. *Annales Bertiniani*, ed. G. H. Pertz, MGH, *Scriptores in Folio* (SS) I, Hannover 1826, 443–444; M. McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy: Communications and Commerce, A.D. 300–900*, Cambridge 2002, 559; W. Pezè, *Le virus de l'erreur. Essai d'histoire sociale sur la controverse prédestinatienne à l'époque carolingienne*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Paris 2014, 83–85, 213–217.

events (*praescientia*). Besides, Gottschalk also mentioned that even pagan prophets could predict the truth, as briefly mentioned above.⁵

During his sojourn at the court of Croatian lord Trpimir⁶, Gottschalk left an account of the equestrian divination practice, inherent to the pagan realm. In this ritual, one observes movements of a horse in order to predict the outcome of a battle – more precisely, to foretell which side would be victorious in the combat. He wrote about other animals which could also predict the future (birds in particular).⁷

Nec mirum cum etiam corvi milvi vultures et aquilae temporibus belli plus illam partem sequantur hominum quos praesentium vulnerandos et trucidandos atque iugulandos. Sic nihilominus et equi sunt in acie laeti ex ea parte quam deo dante debet victoria sequi. Quod prorsus ego ipse per Gottesscalcum filiolum meum de equo nostro probavi. Cum enim Tripemirus rex Sclavorum iret contra gentem Graecorum et patricium eorum et esset in ipso confinio futuri belli villa nostra, dixi illi ut iret et quicquid regi et eius exercitui necessarium esset sicut omnino deberet impenderet. Adiuravi tamen terribiliter eum per dominum deum ut nec arma sumeret nec cum exercitu pergeret, sed tamen studiose post eos equitans attenderet quemnam gestum equis ille noster ageret atque gereret. Ex olim siquidem certissime sciebam illi parti hominum venturam et futuram esse victoriam quorum equi incederent laeti monstrarentque gestu triumphando laetitiam. Sicque mox contigit ut equi gestientis gestus elicit atque protinus patefecit.

(It is no wonder when even crows, kites, buzzards and eagles in times of war follow more the side of men whom they know beforehand will be wounded, slaughtered and butchered. And no less so are horses in a battle happy to be on the side which victory follows according to the giving God. Which straightaway I myself learned through my little son, Gottschalk, from

⁵ K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 82; cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *Responsa de diversis*, ed. C. Lambot, *Œuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais*, *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* 20 (1945) 130–179, 131, 162, 179; cf. A. S. Walpole, *Early Latin Hymns, with Introduction and Notes*, Cambridge 1922, 101; E. De Bruyne, *Études d'esthétique médiévale*, 3 vols. I, *De Boèce a Jean Scot Erigène*, Paris 1998, 229–230; P. Klopsch, *Einführung in die Dichtungslehren des lateinischen Mittelalters*, Darmstadt 1980, 5, 35.

⁶ Cf. B. Radovanović, *Sur certains aspects de la fonction de cheval chez les Anciens Slaves dans la période de Haut Moyen Âge et de Moyen Âge inférieur (VIe – XIe siècle) à travers les exemples relatifs au domaine militaire et divinatoire*, *Историјски часопис* 57 (2008) 445–458, 445–458.

⁷ Cf. L. Katić, *Saksonac Gottschalk na dvoru kneza Trpimira*, *Bogoslovska smotra* 20, 4 (1932) 403–432, 10.

our horse. For when Trpimir, the king of the Slavs, went against the people of the Greeks and their commanders and our villa was in the area of the coming battle, I said to [Gottschalk] that he should go and warn the king and his army as was altogether appropriate. I nonetheless abjured him terribly through the lord God that he should neither take up arms nor advance with the army, but riding steadily after them he should direct his attention to whatever posture that horse of ours made and performed. For I knew most certainly that victory would come and would be to that side of men whose horses advanced happily and showed joy with their conquering posture. And so it soon happened as the bearing of the excited horse showed and made clear).⁸

The accounts contained in medieval Latin chronicles, even though they often originated at a later date (11th–12th centuries), abound with information relevant to the equestrian divination ritual. For example, this practice was attested in the Germanic population, but also in the Slavonic one: Adam of Bremen corroborates the existence of the horse sacrifice among the Germanic peoples.⁹ Besides, according to him, the inhabitants of Germania observed birds, but also the movements and neighing of horses and thence detected future events.¹⁰ Tacitus's *Germania* contains information on the practice of the avian and equestrian divination, based on the examination of cries and flight patterns of birds and the warnings furnished by horses such as snorting and neighing. Nevertheless, according to the same author, the Slavs also practiced this divinatory rite for a long time.¹¹ Another similar divination rite was common among the inhabitants of the isle of Rughen.¹² Moreover, other peoples apart from the Germanic ones were also familiar with this ancient Indo-European religious practice, notwithstanding that the copy of Tacitus's *Germania* was kept in Fulda, where Gottschalk spent his early years¹³. It is highly probable that this information may well have been in the background

⁸ Gottschalk of Orbais, *Responsa de diversis*, 169; translation M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 169.

⁹ Adam of Bremen, *M. Adami Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum usque ad a. 1072*, MGH, SS VII, ed. M. Lappenberg, Hannover 1846, 267–389, 380, l. 13–4.

¹⁰ ... *Auspicia et sortes quam maxime observabant. Avium voces et volatus interrogare proprium erat illius gentis. Equorum quoque presagia ac motus experiri, hinnitusque ac fremitus observare. Nec ulli auspicio maior fides, non solum apud plebem, sed etiam apud proceres habebatur*, cf. Adam of Bremen, *Adami Gesta*, 286, l. 33–5.

¹¹ Adam of Bremen, *Adami Gesta*, 287, l. 1–2.

¹² Saxo Grammaticus, *Ex Saxonis gestis danorum*, MGH, *Scriptores in Folio XXIX*, ed. G. Waitz, Hannover 1892, 37–161, 123, l. 23–36.

¹³ Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 170–171; K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 47, 50.

of Gottschalk's awareness of it.¹⁴ Nonetheless, divination by the horse was practiced in the land of the (then still unbaptized) Bulgars. More precisely, by the time when the missionaries reached this area, some of the pagan rites which involved the horse with the aim of predicting the outcome of a battle still existed; furthermore, the Bulgars used to carry a horse's tail in a battle and as a military banner, believing it brought them luck and success on the battlefield. Before entering the battlefield, they performed their pagan divinatory rites, and *auspicia* which predicted the outcome of the battle; they also took oaths before a sword¹⁵. All of these pagan practices were forbidden by Greek missionaries.¹⁶ Bearing in mind the Thracian pagan heritage, resonating with the religious practices of the Steppe peoples, Gottschalk could have also heard of it during his Balkan journey. Nevertheless, this episode would demand a more thorough analysis, the re-opening of the sources, and a whole new study.

Judicial ordeal

At the peak of the Predestination debate, and during his confrontation with Hincmar of Reims, Gottschalk showed himself inclined to undertake a judicial ordeal, according to the most relevant text he composed in defence of his doctrine, the *Confesio Prolixior*.¹⁷ More precisely, Gottschalk thus got endowed with traits of a martyr and included the appeal to martyrism in his arsenal of religious self-representation. Hence, he proposed to undergo an

¹⁴ Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 47, 50; on Saxon heritage, and evidence of the Germanic influence on Gottschalk's thought: I. Schröbler, *Glossen eines Germanisten zu Gottschalk von Orbais*, Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur 77 (1955) 89–111, 98–99; *Indiculis superstitionum et paganiarum*, ed. A. Boretius, MGH, Capitularia regum Francorum I, No. 108, 13, Hannover 1883, 222–223, 223.

¹⁵ Cf. П. Коматина, *Црквена политика Византије од краја иконоборства до смрти цара Василија I*, Београд 2014, 211. The symbolic of the horse was widely attested in the Indo-European tradition; apart from the beliefs which attributed the role of a psychopomp to this emblematic animal, it was strongly related to war symbolism as well: Ц. Степанов, *Религии в езическа България*, София 2017, 141–142, on the important features of heathen Bulgarian religion and the elements pertaining to the cult of the Thracian Horseman.

¹⁶ Cf. Pope Nicholas's letter 99, bearing testimony of the year 866 (*Ad Bulgarorum consulta*): Nicholas I, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Perels, MGH, Epistolae in Quart VI, Berlin 1925, 257–690, 580–581.

¹⁷ Cf. W. Pezè, *Le virus de l'erreur*, 519–523; M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 268, note 124.

ordeal before a multitude of people, as well as in the presence of the king and bishops, and to enter four barrels filled with boiling water, oil, pitch and animal fat, in order to prove the validity of his doctrine, should he finish the trial unharmed:

Atque utinam placeret tibi cunctipotentissime pariter ac clementissime domine ut sicut in te credo et spero, dato mihi gratis posse prout iam dudum dare dignatus es et dare quotidie dignaris etiam velle, coram undique collecta populorum te timentium multitudine, praesente etiam istius regni principe [simul] cum pontificum et sacerdotum monachorumque seu canonicorum venerabili simul agmine, concederetur mihi, si secus hanc catholicae fidei de praedestinatione tua veritate nollent recipere, ut isto quod dicturus sum favente tua gratia id adprobarem cernentibus cunctis examine, ut videlicet quatuor doliis uno post unum positis atque ferventi singillatim repletis aqua oleo pingui et pice et ad ultimum accenso copiosissimo igne liceret mihi, invocato gloriosissimo nomine tuo, ad adprobendam hanc fidem meam immo fidem catholicam, in singula introire et ita per singula transire donec, te praeveniente comitante ac subsequente dexteramque praebente ac clementer educante, valerem sospes exire quatenus in ecclesia tua tandem aliquando cahtolicae hinc fidei claritas claresceret et falsitas evanesceret fidesque firmaretur et pervidia vitaretur.¹⁸

(And would it be pleasing to you, all-powerful and equally merciful Lord that, just as I believe and hope in you, with the ability having been gratuitously given to me, as you have for a long time deigned and daily deign also to give me the will, this would be granted to me, namely, that before a multitude of people who fear you gathered from everywhere, also in the presence of the prince of this kingdom together with the venerable host of bishops, priests, monks, and canons – if they otherwise refuse to receive this truth of the catholic faith about your predestination by that which I am going to say with your help – I might prove it in the sight of all by means of an ordeal. That is, with four barrels placed one after another, individually filled with boiling water, oil, pitch, and animal fat, and finally heated by most ample fire, may it be permitted me, having invoked your most glorious name, to enter each of them to prove this faith of mine, or rather the catholic faith, and thus to pass through each of them. With you going before me, accompanying me, and following me, and

¹⁸ Gottschalk of Orbais, *Confessio Prolixior*, ed. C. Lambot, *Œuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais, Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* 20 (1945) 55–78, 74–75; *Ibid.*, ed. J.-P. Migne, *Patrologiae Cursus Completus, Series Latina* (PL) 121, Paris 1844–1855, 349–366A, here 362C–D; Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, *MGH, Epistolae in Quart V*, Berlin 1898–1899, 379–516, 498–499.

offering your right hand and mercifully leading me, may I be able to come out unharmed, in order that the brightness of the catholic faith may at long last shine forth from this in your church and that falsity may disappear and that faith may be strengthened and disbelief avoided.)¹⁹

Judicial ordeals did not represent a rarity in the 9th century²⁰. Gottschalk saw himself persecuted due to the truthfulness of his genuine Christian doctrine²¹, which may well have propelled him to opt for this defensive strategy and clothe himself in a martyrism-style attire, typical for Eastern ascetic models²² – for the purpose of his self-defence and self-portrayal – in order to advance his case.

Additionally, Gottschalk prophesized that Hincmar would be removed from the See of Reims²³, that Hincmar would die and that he himself would become the archbishop of Reims, afterwards be poisoned, and thus win the glory of martyrs. Could it be hypothesized that he was also prophesizing during his sojourn at Trpimir's court, by observing horses' movements, which would have made him inclined to a prophetic discourse, pointing to yet another strategy he resorted to in the context of his religious self-representation?

Hierarchia caelestis

Roughly three decades upon the dispatchment of the *Corpus Areopagiticum* from Byzantium to Francia²⁴, Gottschalk's interest in the concept of *hierarchia caelestis*, as demonstrated in his tract on the Trinity²⁵, can be observed as an indirect defence of his doctrine, since it was inserted into his arguments in support of his trinitarian teaching.

¹⁹ V. Genke – F. X. Gumerlock, *Gottschalk and a Medieval Predestination Controversy. Texts Translated from the Latin*, Milwaukee, WI 2010, 93; for the translation of the Gottschalk's entire *Confessio Prolixior*, see op. cit. 74–96.

²⁰ Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 256–260.

²¹ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *Confessio Prolixior*, ed. J.-P. Migne, 364 B–C; cf. V. Genke – F. X. Gumerlock, *Gottschalk and a Medieval Predestination Controversy*, 94.

²² Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 223–228.

²³ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 125, Paris 1844–1855, 473–618, here 613–614.

²⁴ For more information and the relevant literature on this topic, see: B. Radovanović, (forthcoming), *In between the Eastern and Western Christian empires: the role of mediators*, Proceedings of the Fifth International Scientific Symposium “Days of Justinian I”, ed. M. B. Panov, Skopje 2019.

²⁵ *De Trina Deitate*, composed after 853.

Namely, Gottschalk expounded on *hierarchia caelestis* in a fragmentary manner only. The *Stichwort* stemming from Gottschalk's understanding of *hierarchia caelestis* in relation to his Trinitarian teaching is the following: each particular angelic order is referred to in plural ("virtues", "powers", "principalities", "dominations"), in spite of the fact that each and every one of them represents virtue, power, principality, and dominion – in singular. That exactly was the principal argument Gottschalk employed in underlining the correctness of his Trinitarian doctrine, according to which God is at the same time one and triune, representing simultaneously one and triune deity.²⁶

The disposition of different angelic orders Gottschalk implied corresponds to the disposition used by Gregory the Great (which correlates greatly with the one given in Colossians).²⁷ Namely, it would be important to mention that huge interest in the concept of *hierarchia caelestis* was not present in that epoch; only seldom or sporadically did Carolingian authors delve in this question.

Furthermore, it is significant to specify that Gottschalk did not mention *hierarchia caelestis* in a particular chapter: he rather wrote about it in a passage of *De Trina Deitate* (composed in the 850s), defending his stand on this theological issue. Additionally, Gottschalk commented on *hierarchia caelestis* as on something already given, in this particular context and with the aim of defending his doctrine. He must have been inspired by the authors who represented his authorities.²⁸

²⁶ Gottschalk of Orbais, *De trina deitate*, III, <http://gottschalk.inrebus.com/lat030.html>, retrieved on 1 September 2018, III; the summary of Gottschalk's usage of grammar in supporting his view of the correctness of the idiom *trina Deitas* (specifically, the usage of singular for plural), cf. Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina deitate*, 542 A–B, 581 B–C.

²⁷ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *De Trina Deitate*, III, *op. cit.*; The Bible: *quoniam in ipso condita sunt universa in caelis, et in terra, visibilia, et invisibilia, sive throni, sive dominationes, sive principatus, sive potestates: omnia per ipsum et in ipso creata sunt*. Col. 1:16. Cf. Th. C. O'Brien ed., *St. Thomas Aquinas "Summa theologiae"*, 61 vols., Cambridge 2006, vol. 14 – Divine Government, 121–158.

²⁸ Just like Gregory the Great, Gottschalk might have taken his *Caelestis Hierarchia* directly from the Bible (Col. 1:16 corresponds perfectly to that of Gregory the Great, and to Gottschalk partly, with the only exception that the latter does not mention *Throni*). Gottschalk could have also appropriated it from Gregory the Great, and especially judging by the position of the *virtutes*, as the third on the list, identical with that of Gregory (together with *dominationes, principatus, potestates*) – who was himself inspired by Pseudo-Dionysius, albeit indirectly. The question thus remains open, regarding the sources Gottschalk used in the composition of his *Caelestis Hierarchia*.

If one attempts to observe the mentioned examples stemming from Gottschalk's texts from a larger perspective, and to find a common denominator, it would certainly be his resort to metaphorical language (and, in this case, to the elements of mystical theology, to be more precise). Gottschalk might, as Gregory the Great, have taken his *hierarchia caelestis* directly from the Bible, but he could have also been inspired by Gregory the Great, who himself had recourse to Dionysius the Areopagite, albeit indirectly. The question thus remains open, regarding the sources that Gottschalk used in the composition of his *hierarchia caelestis*.

Additionally, Gottschalk's interest in *hierarchia caelestis* pertains to some possible traits of mystical theology in his opus, thus revealing his rich arsenal of strategies employed in his religious self-representation, indicating another conceptual wellspring of this author *à part* which has not thoroughly been studied yet. These include his lost writings on the origin of the soul²⁹, and two other aspects which have been analysed above – Gottschalk's attempt to portray himself as a martyr, and to survive a judicial ordeal³⁰, as well as his penchant for soothsaying, unveiled upon the conflict with Hincmar when Gottschalk prophesied Hincmar's deposition from the See of Reims³¹, but also maybe during his Croatian trip – if we interpret the equestrian divination ritual he mentions as a fragment of the same spectrum.

2. Gottschalk's resort to metaphorical language in his religious self-representation

During the culmination point of the Predestination controversy, Gottschalk underlined his defence by insisting upon the metaphorical language of heresy. The resort to metaphorical language of heresy was a common place in the 9th-century Greek and Latin textual treatments of heresy. The metaphorical vocabulary and terminology was significantly employed by early Christian and Early Medieval Greek and Latin authors in their accounts of heresies and heretics (Irenaeus of Lyon, Hippolytus, Augustine of Hippo, Isidore of Seville, Joseph, Epiphanius of Salamis, Justin the Martyr; Gottschalk of Orbais,

²⁹ Cf. K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 79–82.

³⁰ The connection to the holy man and *Jourodivy* would fall in this segment of Gottschalk's personality, as already suggested by Victor Genke and Francis Gumerlock, cf. V. Genke – F. X. Gumerlock, *Gottschalk and a Medieval Predestination Controversy*, 43, note 227.

³¹ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *Responsa de diversis*, 162–171; M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 176.

Hincmar of Reims, Hrabanus Maurus, archbishop of Mainz (845–856), Amolo, archbishop of Lyon (841–852), to mention only some). Namely, heresy was thus defined by means of metaphorical linguistic tools. Heretics and pagans were frequently related to the semantic fields of insanity/madness, contagious illness, and venom (to mention only the most striking ones), as it has been observed on numerous occasions in the history of heresiologies.³²

Furthermore, the resort to the metaphorical “adultery” towards the word of God was also present in these authors.³³

Consequently, Gottschalk, a pseudo-monk, and an overt-heretic in Hincmar’s view, is designated as *fidei sinceræ adulterator et apertus haereticus*.³⁴

On the other hand, Gottschalk, speaking of Hincmar in ca. 856–857, alludes to him as a heretic, but also as an adulterer: *moechus...haereticus*.³⁵ Curiously, Gottschalk employs the Greek word for adulterer – *moechus* – which has not been so frequently used in the Carolingian sources.³⁶ Similarly, Eriugena (c. 815 – c. 877) accused Gottschalk of being a lying adulterer – *mendosus adulterator*.³⁷ In this sense, “adulterer” refers to a forger of the word of God.

Additionally, the *Leitmotiv* of the bodily symbolic including the metaphor of limbs – representing members of the Church, has been largely employed by Gottschalk’s opponents, but also by Gottschalk himself.

In an analogous approach to that of Hincmar, who used the metaphor of a putrid body part for a heretic, Amolo of Lyon accused Gottschalk in one

³² This topic has been dealt with in more detail in my doctoral thesis: cf. B. Radovanović, *The Language of Religious Dissent: Comparative Perspective (9th-century Frankish and Byzantine Authors)*, unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Vienna 2018.

³³ The most striking scriptural examples dealing with the metaphorical meaning of adultery include Ezekiel 23, and Jeremiah 3, 5, 13.

³⁴ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 615 BC.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 613–614.

³⁶ A more common noun would be *adulterator* or *adulter*. In the Early Medieval Latin sources analyzed here, the term *moechus* is attested with much lesser frequency than the term *adulterator* – and most frequently in the texts of Gottschalk and Pope Nicholas.

³⁷ Cf. John Scottus Eriugena, *Iohannis Scotti de divina praedestinatione liber*, ed. G. Madec, *Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevalis (CCCM) 50*, Turnhout 1978; G. Mathon, *L’utilisation des textes de Saint Augustin par Jean Scot Érigène dans son De Praedestinatione*, Augustinus Magister, Actes du Congrès international augustinien, Paris, 21–24 Septembre 1954, Paris 1955, 419–428, here 519–528; M. Goulven, *Jean Scot Érigène et l’histoire de la philosophie*, Colloques internationaux du CNRS, 561 (Laon, 7–12 juillet 1975), ed. R. Roques, Paris 1977, 183–190, here 183–190.

of his letters of having been cut off from the body of the church.³⁸ Gottschalk, reciprocally, referred to the damned as *membra Antichristi*.³⁹

Namely, Hincmar argued that Gottschalk had misinterpreted the Scriptures, according to the ways of the heretics, that he did not understand the sense well, and that he altered the meaning of words in accordance with his own erroneous sense.⁴⁰ The erroneous interpretation, furthermore, lay in the core of heresy, judging by Hincmar, with the devil designated as a wicked interpreter: ... *perversus interpres diabolus*.⁴¹

On the other hand, Gottschalk employed the identical arsenal of heretical accusations as his opponents did, by equating those who did not share his point of view with heretics.⁴² Nonetheless, Gottschalk wrote of Hincmar as of a heretic, the enemy of truth and friend of falsehood: ... *haereticus veritatis inimicus falsitatis amicus*.⁴³

Consequently, one can conclude that the identical phraseological means were applied in textual confrontations, only in different settings and situations, depending on the given contexts. The aim was to prevent those judged to be the enemies of truth from interpolating certain parts, introducing novelties, and interpreting according to their own liking⁴⁴ – instead of aligning with the interpretations of the fathers, and thus interfering with ancient dogmatic precepts and altering tradition. Likewise, in his letter addressed to Pope Nicholas I (858–867), Hincmar accused Gottschalk of vehemently twisting the meaning of the Scriptures, and of lacerating the words of the Fathers.⁴⁵

³⁸ Cf. Amolo of Lyon, *Epistolae*, ed. E. Dümmler, MGH *Epistolae* (in Quart) [Epp.] V, Berlin 1899, 361–378, here 370–371: ... *a corpore ecclesiae iustae severitatis dampnatione precisus atque omni bonorum contubernio ac solatio defraudatus remansisti velus stirps inutilis et palmes aridus igni destinatus*; cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 238–239.

³⁹ Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 304; Gottschalk of Orbais, *De Praedestinatione*, ed. C. Lambot, *Œuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d’Orbais*, *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* 20 (1945) 180–258, here 189, 203, 226.

⁴⁰ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 565BC.

⁴¹ Hincmar of Reims, *Hincmari archiepiscopi Remensis epistolae*, ed. E. Perels, MGH *Epp.* VIII, Berlin 1939, 113, l. 7–8; Amolo of Lyon, *Epistolae*, Ep. 2, 377, l. 3–4.

⁴² Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 613–614; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Confessio Prolixior*, ed. C. Lambot, 66.

⁴³ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 613–614; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Confessio Prolixior*, ed. C. Lambot, 66; cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *De Praedestinatione*, 214, 227.

⁴⁴ Cf. Hincmar of Reims, *De Una et non trina Deitate*, 565B–D

⁴⁵ Hincmar of Reims, *Epistolae*, Ep. 169, 162.

Amolo's observation on Gottschalk's insanity, as well as on the instability of his mind and body, falls into the aggrupation of classical *topoi* encompassing heretical insanity and madness in the Carolingian times as well.⁴⁶ The analogous conceptual points between heresy and madness have been frequently put forward by mediation of the semantic field encompassing poisoning, venom, and illness. In his letter to Hincmar, Hrabanus designated Gottschalk as a noxious person, who had inebriated many with his venomous potion, and directed their minds towards the insanity of error: ... *istum noxium virum, hoc est Gotescalcum... sui veneni poculo non paucos inebriavit, et in erroris insaniam vertit.*⁴⁷ Similarly, Hincmar alluded to Gottschalk's heresy as to a deadly virus of idolatry, *mortiferum virus idololatriae.*⁴⁸ Moreover, Gottschalk resorted to a language laden with highly stylistic means and figures as well, and frequently resorted to similar metaphors while describing his opponents. Besides, Gottschalk relied upon poetical language on many occasions, and employed various figures of style with the aim of accentuating the message he wished to convey.⁴⁹ Gottschalk referred to him, who refuted his doctrine, as to a rapacious wolf or a shameless goat – *rapax lupus vel procax hircus*, preparing traps for Christ's sheep.⁵⁰ Therefore, the enemies of God's sheep were identified with shameless, implacable, stubborn and rapacious wolves. Simultaneously, Gottschalk employed the equivalent adjectives in describing Hincmar as a 'blind, shameless, obstinate, stubborn heretic': *caecus procax pertinax pervicax haereticus.*⁵¹

Hence, the above passages point to the fact that the analogous literary procedures were employed by Gottschalk's opponents, accusing him of heresy,

⁴⁶ Among numerous examples, I shall hereby name only some authors: Aurelius Augustine, *De baptismo contra Donatistas libri septem*, ed. J.-P. Migne, PL 43, 107–244, here II, 3, 128; Jerome, *Commentariorum in Hiezechielem*, ed. F. Glorie, Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina (CCSL) 75, Turnhout 1964, 306–307; Ambrose, *Explanatio psalms xii*, ed. M. Petschenig, Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum (CSEL) 64, Vienna 1919, 216.

⁴⁷ Hrabanus Maurus, *Epistolae*, Ep. 44, 496.

⁴⁸ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 479.

⁴⁹ For more information on Gottschalk's poetry, see: B. Radovanović, *L'entremêlement des motifs préchrétiens et chrétiens dans les textes de Gottschalk: à la recherche de son répertoire*, La controverse carolingienne sur la prédestination. Histoire, textes, manuscrits. Actes du colloque international de Paris des 11 et 12 octobre 2013, ed. W. Pezè, P. Chambert-Protat, J. Thompson, and J. Delmulle, "Haut Moyen Âge" (HAMA 32), Paris 2018, 129–145; For more general information on the heretical stereotypes in Carolingian period, see: W. Pezè, *Le virus de l'erreur*, 590–597.

⁵⁰ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *De Praedestinatione*, 244.

⁵¹ Hincmar of Reims, *De una et non trina Deitate*, 613–614.

and *en revanche*, by Gottschalk himself, thus presenting his self-defence and self-portrayal by means of metaphorical language and relaunching the attack on his accusers.

3. Gottschalk's religious self-representation in his poetry

Simultaneously, Gottschalk's religious self-representation was reflected in his poetry. Curiously, he employed the same literary means in his prose works, as in his poetry – with the aim of underpinning the validity of his doctrine – more specifically, alliteration and assonance.⁵²

The importance of poetic expression can be seen in the examples from Gottschalk's poetry in general, as well as in the scope of Gottschalk's self-portrayal.

Judging by the convincing tone, and the variety of the stylistic means Gottschalk employed, the image of an author very much inclined to poetical expression emerges.⁵³ More specifically, poetical language is revealed as more appropriate for conveying the symbolic message: a more subtle tool at the poet's disposition, it mirrors his creativity and literary capacities, offering more freedom of expression than prose. Therefore, the poetical field can offer a better comprehension and grasp of the under-current elements, sometimes hidden under the rigid appearance of the words⁵⁴, different to the prose terminology.⁵⁵ Stylistic devices Gottschalk frequently availed himself of were not seldom used, for the sake of achieving imitative harmony.⁵⁶

⁵² V. Genke – F. X. Gumerlock, *Gottschalk and a Medieval Predestination Controversy*, 120.

⁵³ Cf. *Poetic images can sometimes show what is beyond the power of prose statements to express*, in: P. Dronke, *Verses with Prose from Petronius to Dante*, Cambridge, MA/London 1994, 43; P. Godman, ed., *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, London 1985, 39–43; for a more detailed analysis of Gottschalk's poetical language, see: B. Radovanović, *L'entremêlement des motifs préchrétiens et chrétiens dans les textes de Gottschalk*.

⁵⁴ Cf. P. Dronke, *Die Lyrik des Mittelalters. Eine Einführung*, trans. P. Hasler, München 1977, 23; K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 47.

⁵⁵ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *Carmina minora Godescalci*, ed. K. Strecker, MGH Poetae Latini medii aevi IV, Berlin 1914, 934–936, *Quo ne tu missus*, 934, v. 54–55.

⁵⁶ Cf. K. Halm, ed., *Bedae Venerabilis liber de schematibus et tropis*, Rhetores Latini Minores: ex codicibus maximam partem primum adhibitis, Leipzig 1863, 607–618; on the employment of alliteration in prose, cf. E. De Bruyne, *De Boèce a Jean Scot Erigène*, 143.

Gottschalk's poetry is to be understood as an indispensable tool, employed, among other, in order to better understand the author's arguments and to detect which objective and effects he wished to realise by the specific usage of particular stylistic devices in his poetry.⁵⁷

A poetical tone is also present in Gottschalk's religious self-representation. Additionally, it would be interesting to scrutinize the motif of allegorical exile in some particular cases of Gottschalk's self-portrayal, embedded in the exilic literary tradition⁵⁸.

Carolingian poets often wrote about the sea. *Exul...in mare sum* – Gottschalk of Orbais would write in 851, already in the confinement of Hautvillers.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ M.-L. Weber, *Die Gedichte des Gottschalk von Orbais*. Lateinische Sprache und Literatur des Mittelalters 27, Frankfurt a. Mein/New York 1992; C. Lambot, *Lettre inédite de Godescalc d'Orbais*, *Revue bénédictine* 68 (1958) 40–51; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Carmina*, ed. N. Fickermann, MGH Poetae Latini aevi Carolini VI, Weimar 1951, 86–106; N. Fickermann, *Wiedererkannte Dichtungen Gottschalks*, *Revue bénédictine* 44 (1932) 314–321; M.-L. Weber, *Die Gedichte des Gottschalk von Orbais*; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Quo ne tu missus*, 934–936; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Godescalci Carmina*, ed. L. Traube, MGH Poetae Latini aevi Carolini III, Berlin 1896, 707–737; see also: P. Bourgain, *Poésie lyrique latine du moyen âge*, Paris 1989, 68–73; P. Godman ed., *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 228–246; P. von Moos, *Gottschalks Gedicht O mi custos — eine confessio*, *Frühmittelalterliche Studien* 4 (1970) 201–230, and 5 (1971) 317–358; B. Bischoff, *Gottschalks Lied für den reichenauer Freund*, *Mittelalterliche Studien: Ausgewählte Aufsätze zur Schriftkunde und Literaturgeschichte* II (1967) 26–34; O. Herding, *Über die Dichtungen Gottschalks von Fulda*, *Festschrift Paul Kluckhohn und Hermann Schneider gewidmet zu ihrem 60. Geburtstag*, ed. F. Genzmer et al., Tübingen 1948, 46–72; F. Rädle, *Gottschalks Gedicht an seinen letzten Freund*, *Scire litteras: Forschungen zum mittelalterlichen Geistesleben*, ed. S. Krämer and M. Bernhard, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-historische Klasse Abhandlungen, Neue Folge 99, München 1988, 315–325, here 316–319; M.-L. Weber, *Die Gedichte des Gottschalk von Orbais*, 135–188.

⁵⁸ Cf. P. Godman, *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance*, 40–42.

⁵⁹ Cf. Gottschalk of Orbais, *Ut quid iubes*, ed. L. Traube, 731–732; *Ibid.*, 732, v. 9–10; M.-L. Weber, *Die Gedichte des Gottschalk von Orbais*, 150; for the translation, see M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 275; N. Staubach, *Zwischen Mythenallegorese und Idolatriekritik. Bischof Theodulf von Orléans und die heidnischen Götter*, *Menschen – Heros – Gott: Weltentwürfe und Lebensmodelle im Mythos der Vormoderne*, ed. C. Schmitz and A. Bettenworth, Stuttgart 2009, 149–166; cf. A. Freeman, *Theodulf d'Orleans and Libri Carolini*, *Speculum* 32/4 (1957) 663–705; M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 273–275.

The themes pertaining to the semantic field of exile are to be found among his verses and reflect mainly the metaphorical exile, as observed in these examples from Gottschalk's poetry, written around 850, at the time when he was already in confinement, which also reflects a factual exile.⁶⁰ In this case, Gottschalk's strategy was shaped by his attempt to present himself as cast-out and exiled, in the aftermath of his condemnation. More precisely, Gottschalk clothed his factual exile in the poetical garment, aligning to the exilic literary tradition.

Hence, Gottschalk could be counted in the 'exiled poets's circle'—writing on the exilic topics – together with Théodulf of Orléans, Walahfridus Strabo, or Ermold the Black. Additionally, Carolingian poets often placed themselves at the center of the exilic tradition, with models which included Ovid, Virgil, or Boethius.⁶¹

According to the above-presented, the metaphorical language was highly important in the depiction and self-portrayal of dissenters.

If one compares Gottschalk's prose to his poetry⁶², one can unveil a classical *repertoire*, more resonating in his poetry than in his prose texts – which was quite frequent for the epoch⁶³. Furthermore, Gottschalk employed assonances and alliterations in his prose texts too, for example, while insisting upon a given topic or purely incited by the impulse to give more conviction to his words, which he wished more intensely pronounced in the scope of his religious self-representation. Therefore, Gottschalk's artistic sensibility should be framed as more poetical than pertaining to prose.

⁶⁰ Cf. M. Gillis, *Gottschalk of Orbais*, 274; the topic of allegorical exile has been dealt with in the last chapter of my thesis, cf. B. Radovanović, *The Language of Religious Dissent*, 208–216.

⁶¹ Cf. R. J. Hexter, *Ovid and Medieval Schooling*, München 1986, 91; P. Dronke, *Integumenta Virgilii*, Lectures médiévales. Actes du colloque de Rome (25–28 octobre 1982), Collection de l'École française de Rome, 80, ed. J.-Y. Tilliette, Rome 1985, 313–328; L. Holtz, *La redécouverte de Virgile aux VIIIème et IXème siècles d'après les manuscrits conservés*, Lectures médiévales. Actes du colloque de Rome (25–28 octobre 1982), Collection de l'École française de Rome, 80, ed. J.-Y. Tilliette, Rome 1985, 9–29; P. C. Jacobsen, *Il secolo nono*, Letteratura Latina medievale (Secoli VI–XV), un manuale, ed. C. Leonardi, Firenze 2012, 75–158, here 93; P. Dronke, *Lyrik des Mittelalters*, 24.

⁶² Cf. P. C. Jacobsen, *Il secolo nono*, 98, 100–102.

⁶³ For more information on the referral to classical authors by Carolingian writers, cf. F. Brunhölzl, *Geschichte der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters*, 4 vols., I, *Von Cassiodor bis zum Ausklang der karolingischen Erneuerung*, München 1975, 301, 362–363, 378–379; on the echoes of earlier tendencies (e.g. Asianism) in the poetry of Gottschalk and the Carolingians, see: E. De Bruyne, *De Boèce a Jean Scot Erigène*, 142.

Concluding remarks

In the above extracts from Gottschalk's texts, the importance of metaphorical language within the stylistic means he employed with the aim of accentuating his religious self-expression – in his prose texts, as well as in his poetry referring to allegorical exile – has been highlighted. Generally, transposed to the wider plane, the key to heretical representations lies in the carefully chosen language, terminology, and expressions. Hence, the self-portrayal and self-defence of heretics, on the here-presented passages from Gottschalk's texts, represent the prominent features in the discourse knitted around religious dissent and heresy.

Gottschalk's models in the scope of his religious self-representation

The above passages and analyses shed light on the modes and features of Gottschalk's self-portrayal, which is useful in uncovering the strategies he employed therein, his models and *repertoire*; namely, that is why the scrutiny of particular features of his self-representation is needed: as an indication, a pointing arrow indicating the direction whence Gottschalk's models may have originated.

To summarize, Gottschalk undoubtedly drew his inspiration from his encounter with the East as well: during his Balkan journey, but also, probably, from Byzantine authors.⁶⁴ Additionally, Gottschalk may well have been imbued with Byzantine literary and theological tradition. Judging by the aforementioned, one could regroup and ascribe Gottschalk's models as follows:

Byzantine models⁶⁵

Being an original thinker, poet, perhaps endowed with some traits of an ascetic, martyr and even miracle-worker, referring to himself as to *divinitus afflatus*, Gottschalk could have been influenced by *Vita Antonii*⁶⁶, but also by

⁶⁴ According to Viellhaber, Gottschalk's knowledge of Eastern authors may have come from his Balkan trip, cf. K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 80; Gottschalk of Orbais, *Questiones de anima*, ed. C. Lambot, *Œuvres théologiques et grammaticales de Godescalc d'Orbais*, *Spicilegium Sacrum Lovaniense* 20 (1945) 283–294, here 293.

⁶⁵ Cf. K. Vielhaber, *Gottschalk der Sachse*, 40.

⁶⁶ The *Vita Antonii* has been kept in Fulda, St. Galen and Lorsch; it has been referred to by Alcuin of York, Theodulf of Orléans, Smaragdus of St. Michael, Sedulius Scottus, and Paschasius Radbertus: cf. P. Bertrand, *Die Evagriusübersetzung der Vita Antonii*.

some other (Byzantine?) models which he could have encountered during his Dalmatian and Balkan trips in the 840s. The possible traits of mystical theology in his opus, including his interest in the *Corpus Areopagiticum*, might strongly corroborate this hypothesis.

Potentially pagan models

Differently from the predominant opinion – it may not be the Germanic/Saxon pagan heritage which influenced Gottschalk's account of the equestrian divination ritual only, but also the one attested by wider Indo-European tradition, and namely, the sway of the traditions of the Steppe peoples whose heritage Gottschalk may have come in touch with during his trip to Bulgaria.

Poetic models

The language of Gottschalk's self-portrayal was undoubtedly poetic in its tone, abounding with stylistic figures. Apart from having frequently resorted to metaphorical language, the literary figures he used were highly poetic in nature. His poetic models include classical authors writing on exilic topics (Ovid, Virgil), but possibly Boethius as well⁶⁷.

Based on what has been proposed, it can be suggested that Gottschalk's self-portrayal was to some extent nuanced by the echoes of the Byzantine and pre-Christian models, as well as that it showed metaphorical and poetical features. Furthermore, judging by the above examples, it can be assumed that in the context of his religious self-representation, Gottschalk employed linguistic means, tools and rhetorical strategies similar to those of his opponents.

Rezeption – Überlieferung – Edition. Unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Vita Patrum – Tradition, Utrecht 2005, 61.

⁶⁷ This hypothesis would merit a more thorough analysis; cf. the last chapter of my doctoral thesis, B. Radovanović, *The Language of Religious Dissent*, 213–214.

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**НАЧИНИ РЕЛИГИЈСКОГ АУТОПОРТРЕТИСАЊА
НА ПРИМЕРУ ГОТШАЛКА ИЗ ОРБЕА:
У ПОТРАЗИ ЗА ГОТШАЛКОВИМ МОДЕЛИМА**

Резиме

Готшалк из Орбеа (око 804–868) беше осуђен за јерес на синодима у Мајнцу и Квирзију (848. и 849. године) и изгнан у манастир Отвиле, где проводи последњих двадесет година живота. Аспекти Готшалковог религијског аутопортретисања могу бити сагледани из нове перспективе. Наиме, неки мање уобичајени обриси лика овог монаха неукротивог духа израћају: приказивање себе као бунтовника, мученика, пророка, што открива нове и необичне стратегије аутопортретисања за каролиншко време, које упућају на разнолик спектар Готшалковог религијског израза. Осим тога, на основу концептуалне, литерарне и стилске анализе Готшалковог дела било би важно потцртати његово место у интелектуалним круговима каролиншког доба, али и покушати открити Готшалкове могуће узоре, присуство елемената мистичке теологије у његовом опусу, прибегавање метафоричком језику у циљу одбране своје јеретичке доктрине о двострукој предестинацији и Тројству, као и утицаје нехришћанских и нелатинских узора на стваралаштво овог надахнутог и посве оригиналног деветовековног мислиоца.

Кључне речи: Готшалк из Орбеа, јерес, паганство, мистичка теологија, метафорички језик.

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