'sistyr' at line 18, 'spouse' at line 25).[11] While these terms of address are logical in view of the grammatical gender of the Latin word for 'soul' (*anima*), they work to recast the analogous figure of the poem's narrator (initially a disappointed and/or would-be male lover in the tradition of the *chanson d'aventure*) too, as a woman.[12] When speaking in the guise of his soul, Suso's narrator-protagonist also appeared as a woman. In the fourth chapter of the first book of the *Horologium*, for instance, he castigates himself for his past infidelities as follows: *Heu me infelicem. Siquidem sponsus ille caelestis . . . in sponsam elegerat* ('Woe is me, unhappy wretch. Indeed there was a time when that celestial spouse would choose me *as his bride*').[13] Very obviously, too, Suso's representation of Christ as, for the most part, a woman (Sapientia) suggests itself as a model (admittedly one among many) for the poem's relatively short-lived feminization of Christ at lines 106–113. where Christ addresses the soul as a baby at his (or rather, at this point, her) breast.[14]

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[11] On these gender reversals, cf. Thomas D. Hill, 'Androgyny and Conversion in the Middle English Lyric: "In the Vaile of Restles Mynde," ' *ELH*, liii, 3 (1986), 459–70, 460.

[12] This is *pacé* Hill, who draws a very clear distinction between the narrator and Christ's addressee, describing 'Mannis Soule' as 'yet a third figure' (460). But the poem's narrator is the person (and the soul) who actually hears Christ's address.

[13] Emphases mine. For the quotations, see Künzle, 396, Colledge, 90–1. It is interesting that, according to Barbara Newman, 'Henry Suso and the Medieval Devotion to Christ the Goddess', *Spiritus: A Journal of Christian Spirituality*, ii, 1 (2002), 1–14, it is in his predominantly *male* guise rather than his more occasional female guise that Suso's narrator is remarkable: 'Before Suso . . . it was highly unusual for a man to play the male role in a scenario of celestial love' (2).

[14] These lines have attracted considerable glossing. Stouck (7, 8) cites Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, 1982) and Jennifer P. Heimmel, *God is Our Mother: Julian of Norwich and the Medieval Image of Feminine Divinity* (Salsburg, 1982), on the traditions at stake. To my knowledge, however, no commentators have mentioned Suso in connection with these lines, or indeed with any part of 'In a Valley'.

[15] Although Golgotha is in fact a small hill, it is not described as such in the gospels. The hill of the poem may derive from the hillock of the 'Christ in distress' motif, which may in turn derive from the dung-heap of Job as type of Christ. It may, conceivably, derive directly from Job's dung-heap. See note 2, above.

A final point: I have acknowledged that the poet of 'In a Valley' places his Christ figure on a hill rather than (as in Suso's epiphany) among the mountain tops. The hill is, evidently, Golgotha.[15] Suso does not, in the sixth chapter of his first book, represent Sapientia specifically as Christ crucified. His mountain setting evokes, rather, the Transfiguration.[16] At the end of the third chapter, however, Suso's Sapientia does evoke her suffering at the Crucifixion: *Vide nunc manus meas utrasque longas et pulchras clavis acerrime perfossas* ('See now my slender lovely hands both cruelly riven by the nails [etc.])'.[17] We may compare her traditional reproach with its ingeniously-developed version in the speech of Christ in the poem at lines 41–45: 'Loke unto myn hondis, Man:/These gloves were yove me whan Y hir sought—/Thei ben not white, but rede and wan,/Onbroudrid with blood'. Suso's Sapientia does not use the words of the Song of Songs 2:5, *Quia amore langueo* (the words that constitute the refrain of 'In a Valley'[18]). But she does elaborate on *haec omnia amoris vulnera* ('all these wounds of love') as *cum magno sustinui cordis desiderio* ('sustained with a great longing of [her] heart') in order that [*ut meo*] *livore peccatorum vulnera sanarem* 'with [her] bruises [she] might heal the wounds of sinners'.[19]

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[16] Cf. Matt. 17: 1: 'And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John . . . and bringeth them up into an high mountain [Vulgate: *in montem excelsum*] apart'.

[17] Künzle, 394, Colledge, 88.

[18] 'for I am sick of love'.

[19] Künzle, 395, Colledge, 89.

MARCO POLO IN THE *SCOTTISH LEGENDARY* (XXXVI, LL. 755–810)

THE legend of John the Baptist in the *Scottish Legendary* (late fourteenth century) contains the following miracle about a column hovering in mid-air:

Now of a merwale tel wil we, 755
þat tyd beȝond þe gret se,
in þe prowince of the sare,

quhar-to þe cayne is tributare,
quhare men makis drink of spycery—
of betone þare is gret copy.   760
& sum cristine þare wonnyne mais,
þat þar propire kirkis hase.
thre Iorne lang is þat cunctre,
quhare-in [is] smarag þe cyte.
smarag is a faire ton   765
& chefe of þe regione
& haldis of þe caynis cusing.
þare wonnis cristine & saraȝine.
in þat cite, als I herd tel,
of sancte Iohnne a merwal fel.   770
þe caynis bruthire cygaty,
þat aucht þat lordschipe halely,
with cristine wes enducyt sa,
þat he baptysme can haly ta.
thru fauoure of þat gud king þen   775
a kirk biggit þe cristine men
in honoure of sancte Iohnn þe baptist.
& it wes bigit with sic liste,
þat in myddis wes a pillare,
þat þe charge of þe kirk suld bere,   780
& wes na pillare bot þat ane.
þe saraȝanis had a stane,
[*a number of lines are omitted in the manuscript*]
& for þe cristine þai haitit ay;
bot sa gretly þe kink dred þai,
þat þai til þat durst na thing do.   785
his son syne succedit hyme to,
bot nocht in cristine fay. for-þi
þai saraȝanis þare chasit in hy
to distrenȝe þe cristine men ilkane,
to restore þam agane þare stane.   790
þane profferit þai þe price & mare
for, gif it a-way tane ware,
þe pillar of force suld fal,
& sa eftir þe kirk al.
bot nedly wald þai hafe þe stane.   795
quhene cristine saw remed wes nan,
to sancte Iohne baptist can þai pray
deuotly. & quhen þe day
wes cumyne to resafe þe stane,
þe saraȝenis semlit ilkane,   800
treuand to se þe hale kirk fal,
fra þe stane removit ware al.
bot þe pillar rase thre hand brad It fra,
thru goddis grace, til awai þa ta
þe stane fra þe ground away,   805
& hingis sa [on]-to þis day.
men ma se wele be þis ferly
þat þe baptist is ful mychty
with god, þat sic a wondir dide
for hyme, wele knawine & kide.   810
            (XXXVI, ll. 755–810)[1]

The miracle has puzzled its editors since it is
not taken from the sources that have been
identified for the legend so far, and it is not
included in the *Legenda aurea*, which is the

source of the miracles that immediately pre-
cede and follow the episode.[2] However, the
geographical and ethnological details which
provide the framework for the miracle strongly
suggest that a travel account may be the source
of the passage. Indeed, the episode is so closely
modelled on a story from Marco Polo's *Travels*
that the poet in all likelihood translated it dir-
ectly from the Latin text. In the thirty-ninth
chapter of Francesco Pipino's Latin transla-
tion of the supposed travel account of the
Venetian merchant, written in the second half
of the thirteenth century, the episode of the
column in the church of John the Baptist is
told exactly as it is found in the *Scottish
Legendary*:

> *De prouincia Samarchan et miraculo
> columpne, facto in ecclesia beati Johannis
> baptiste, C. xxxix.* Samarchan nobilis
> Ciuitas est et magna in regione illa, que tri-
> butaria est nepoti magni kaam, ubi similiter
> habitant christiani et qui machometum
> adorant, qui se saracenos uocant. Item in
> hac Ciuitate tale his temporibus factum est
> christi uirtute miraculum. Quidam frater
> magni kaam, qui dicebatur Cigatai, qui
> huic preerat regioni, inductus a christianis
> et doctus baptismum suscepit. Tunc cristiani
> principis fauorem habentes edificauerunt
> basilicam magnam in urbe Samarcham in
> honorem beati Johannis baptiste. Tali
> autem ingenio fuit per architectos ecclesia
> fabricata, ut tota testudo basilice super
> columpnam vnicam formaretur, que
> columpna in medio eius erat. Acceperunt
> autem, dum fieret, quendam saracenorum
> lapidem, de quo basim formauerunt sub
> columpna prefata. Saraceni uero, qui chris-
> tianos oderant, de sublato eis lapide doluer-
> unt. Sed Cigatai principem metuentes ausi
> contradicere non fuerunt. Factum eciam
> autem, ut moreretur princeps, cui filius in
> regno, sed non in fide successit. Saraceni
> uero impetraverunt ab eo, ut christiani

[1] Cited from W. M. Metcalfe (ed.), *Legends of the Saints in the Scottish Dialect of the Fourteenth Century*. Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1896), Vol. II.

[2] Apart from Jacob de Voragine's *Legenda aurea*, which is clearly the main source, the author drew on the four Gospels and Vincent of Beauvais's *Speculum historiale* (chs 20 and 22). Cf. C. Horstmann (ed.), *Barbour's, des Schottischen Nationaldichters Legendensammlung, nebst den Fragmenten seines Trojanerkrieges* (Heilbronn, 1882), II, 94, and Metcalfe, *Legends of the Saints*, III, 384.

suum eis lapidem restituere cogerentur. Offerentibus vero christianis illis pecuniam de lapide magnam renuerunt saraceni

[3] Cited from the edition by J. V. Prášek (ed.), *Marka Pavlova z Benátek Milion* (Prague, 1902). Pipino's Latin translation from the original Venetian dialect circulated widely. H. Yule and H. Corbier (eds), *The Book of Ser Marco Polo, The Venetian Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East*, 3rd edn (London, 1903), 530–3 list fourteen manuscripts of Marco Polo's *Travels* in Great Britain, ten of which are copies of (parts of) Pipino's Latin text. I provide the English translation from Yule and Cordier, 183–6:

Samarkand is a great and noble city towards the north-west, inhabited by both Christians and Saracens, who are subject to the Great Khan's nephew, Caidou by name; he is, however, at bitter enmity with the Khan. I will tell you of a great marvel that happened at this city. It is not a great while ago that Sigatay, own brother to the Great Khan, who was Lord of this country and of many an one besides, became a Christian. Christians rejoiced greatly at this, and they built a great church in the city, in honour of John the Baptist; and by his name the church was called. And they took a very fine stone which belonged to the Saracens, and placed it as the pedestal of a column in the middle of the church, supporting the roof. It came to pass, however, that Sigatay died. Now the Saracens were full of rancour about that stone that had been theirs, and which had been set up in the church of the Christians; and when they saw that the Prince was dead, they said one to another that now was the time to get back their stone, by fair means or by foul. And that they might well do, for they were ten times as many as the Christians. So they gat together and went to the church and said that the stone they must and would have. The Christians acknowledged that it was theirs indeed, but offered to pay a large sum of money and so be quit. Howbeit, the others replied that they never would give up the stone for anything in the world. And words ran so high that the Prince heard thereof, and ordered the Christians either to arrange to satisfy the Saracens, if it might be, with money, or to give up the stone. And he allowed them three days to do either the one thing or the other. What shall I tell you? Well, the Saracens would on no account agree to leave the stone where it was, and this out of pure despite to the Christians, for they knew well enough that if the stone were stirred the church would come down by the run. So the Christians were in great trouble and wist not what to do. But they did do the best thing possible; they besought Jesus Christ that he would consider their case, so that the holy church should not come to destruction, nor the name of its Patron Saint, John the Baptist, be tarnished by its ruin. And so when the day fixed by the Prince came round, they went to the church betimes in the morning, and lo, they found the stone removed from under the column; the foot of the column was without support, and yet it bore the load as stoutly as before! Between the foot of the column and the ground there was a space of three palms. So the Saracens had away their stone, and mighty little joy withal. It was a glorious miracle, nay, it is so, for the column still so standeth, and will stand as long as God pleaseth.

pecuniam volentes, ut sublato lapide destrueretur ecclesia cadente columpna. Cumque christianis pro hac re nullum adesset remedium, beatum Joannem baptistam lacrimosis precibus inuocare ceperunt. Adueniente igitur die, quando lapis sub columpna fuerat remouendus et a saracenis per consequens ruina tocius ecclesie sperabatur, nutu diuino columpna adeo a basi subleuata est, ut per palmarum trium spacium eleuata ab ea sustentaretur in aere et sic absque humani adminiculi falcinimento usque hodie perseuerat.[3]

The miracle appears to be rare in hagiography since so far evidence of it in other vernacular legends of John the Baptist from medieval England and France is lacking.[4] A. C. Moule names a Chinese account for the episode, *History of Chên-chiang of the Chih-shun Period* (*c.* 1333), in which the Christians of Samarkand are mentioned, as is the suspended column, although it is not placed in the church of the city but in the region.[5] Although hagiography is known for its borrowing of motifs, the episode does not occur widely in other saints' legends either. C. Grant Loomis mentions a self-righting column in the legend of Germain and a suspended pillar in the legend of Christiana, but the two examples bear no resemblance, other than a pillar that acts against the laws of gravity, to the Marco Polo story.[6]

In any case, the identification of the source of the column miracle allows for expanding on the glosses in Metcalfe's commentary to the passage.[7] *Smarag* (l. 765) denotes the city

[4] Cf., for instance, the articles in CUERMA [Centre universitaire d'études et de recherches médiévales, Centre d'Aix] (ed.), *Jean-Baptiste. Le Précurseur au Moyen Age. Actes du 26e Colloque du CUERMA, 22–23–24 Février 2001* (Université de Provence, 2002) for the French tradition and C. M. Waters (ed.), *Virgins and Scholars. A Fifteenth-Century Compilation of the Lives of John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Jerome, and Katherine of Alexandria* (Turnhout, 2008) for a Middle English prose version of the legend.

[5] *Christians in China before the Year 1550* (New York, 1930), 154–5.

[6] *White Magic. An Introduction to the Folklore of Christian Legend* (Cambridge, 1948), 47–8.

[7] Metcalfe, *Legends of the Saints*, 384–5.

'Samarkand', and *cygaty* (l. 771) is the name of the khan's brother, who is called *Cigatai* in the Latin text. What is more, the omission of a number of lines in the Scottish text after line 782 can now be identified and explained with respect to the source passage. In comparison with the *Scottish Legendary*, the only details lacking in the Scottish version are the following: 'Acceperunt autem, dum fieret, quendam saracenorum lapidem, de quo basim formauerunt sub columpna prefata', that is, the Christians take a certain stone from the Saracens in order to build a foundation for the pillar that supports the roof of the church. One can deduce that the manuscript in all likelihood lacks two lines only; the rhyme scheme requires couplets, and two lines would certainly have sufficed to convey the information.

The *Scottish Legendary*, the only extant hagiographical text in the vernacular from medieval Scotland, still remains a mystery in many respects, and much more work is clearly called for to find more evidence of its sources and to come to terms with the poet's narrative technique. The use of an episode from a secular and entertaining text like Marco Polo's *Travels* further corroborates the poet's interest in writing legends that are not overtly exhortative in tone but appeal to the audience as enjoyable narratives, which continues the programmatic beginning of the compilation with its references to Cato's *Sententiae* and the *Roman de la Rose*.[8]

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[8] Cf. Prologue, ll. 1–5. For more details on the Prologue and its sources, see R. Scheibe, '"Idilnes Giffis Novrysingis to Vicis": The Prologue of the Scottish Legends of the Saints', in L. A. J. R. Houwen (ed.), *Literature and Religion in Late Medieval and Early Modern Scotland*, Essays in Honour of Alasdair A. MacDonald (Leuven, 2012), 1–21.

THE ANCIENTS' SAVAGE OBSCURITY: THE ETYMOLOGY OF *BISCLAVRET*

THE name of the werewolf protagonist of Marie de France's poem *Bisclavret* has occasioned a good deal of scholarly comment.[1] Recently, too, Sharon Kinoshita and Peggy McCracken[2] offer a fascinating discussion of the protagonist of *Bisclavret*'s essential nature: is the poem 'of a werewolf or of Werewolf' (that is, what is the significance of Marie's calling him *le bisclavret*?), and is his nature, at bottom, that of a wolf or a man?

The Breton etymology proposed by William Sayers, **bleiz claffet* (**bleiz klañvet* in today's orthography), is the best so far, and seems appropriate: *bleiz* is 'wolf', and *claffet* is a passive past participle ultimately formed from *claff* (*klañv*), 'ill; rabid', with overtones of the Welsh cognate *claf*, 'ill; leprous; scorbutic', and the Old Irish cognate *clam*, 'leprous, scurfy; of animals, mangy'.[3] As written, **bleiz claffet* would mean 'mad/diseased wolf'; Sayers's rendering 'wolf-sick, afflicted with lycanthropy' shows that he is reading the name as a compound, **bleizclaffet*, which would be **bleizglañvet* in today's orthography: 'wolf-sick (one)', that is, not a diseased wolf, but someone stricken with a wolf disease.[4] (The mutation of *c* to *g* caused by forming the compound would not have been written in either Old or Middle Breton, nor, for

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[1] See, most recently, H. W. Bailey, '*Bisclavret* in Marie de France', *CMCS* [Cambridge Medieval Celtic Studies, now *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*], i (1981), 95–7; Sayers, '*Bisclavret* in Marie de France: A reply', *CMCS*, iv (1982), 77–82; Hans Schwerteck, 'Eine neue Etymologie von *Bisclavret*', *Romanische Forschungen*, civ, 1–2 (1992), 160–3; R. Howard Bloch, *The Anonymous Marie de France* (Chicago, 2003), 82.

[2] Sharon Kinoshita and Peggy McCracken, *Marie de France: A Critical Companion* (Cambridge, 2012), 169–71.

[3] See Albert Deshayes, *Dictionnaire étymologique du breton* (Douarnenez, 2003), s.v. *klañv*; *Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru*, s.v. *claf*; the Royal Irish Academy *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, s.v. *clam*; Ranko Matasović, *Etymological Dictionary of Proto-Celtic* (Leiden, 2009), s.v. **klamo-*. An intermediate French form **blisclavret* could be conjectured; but to understand why the *l* dropped out, one need only say it four times fast. Francis Favereau, *Dictionnaire du breton contemporain* (Morlaix, 2000), s.v. *enragé*, gives *klañv* as the only contemporary word for 'rabid'.

[4] See Deshayes, s.v. *klañv*, for some compounds of *claff*/*klañv* that suggest that this formation is at least theoretically possible.