



Open Library of Humanities



Part of the Ubiquity  
Partner Network



Open Library of Humanities

---

## The Medieval Brain

**How to Cite:** Smith, J L 2019 Interrogating Green Space in Medieval Monasticism: Position, Powers and Politics. *Open Library of Humanities*, 5(1):41, pp. 1–26, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/olh.283>

**Published:** 13 June 2019

---

### Peer Review:

This article has been peer reviewed through the double-blind process of *Open Library of Humanities*, which is a journal published by the Open Library of Humanities.

### Copyright:

© 2019 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.

### Open Access:

*Open Library of Humanities* is a peer-reviewed open access journal.

### Digital Preservation:

The Open Library of Humanities and all its journals are digitally preserved in the CLOCKSS scholarly archive service.

---

## THE MEDIEVAL BRAIN

# Interrogating Green Space in Medieval Monasticism: Position, Powers and Politics

James L. Smith

Geography, Trinity College Dublin, Dublin, IE  
[jlsmith@tcd.ie](mailto:jlsmith@tcd.ie)

---

This article explores three facets of green space within a medieval monastic context: its origin, its effects and properties and the way it was shaped into an expression of power. We learn a great deal about the history of green space through the nuances of monastic thought and vice versa. The term 'green space' in a medieval context may initially seem anachronistic and an artefact of twenty-first century health policy and neuroscience and yet, as this article argues, the use of medieval knowledge for moral and institutional power as well as medicine and spiritual contemplation tells us as much about monastic thought as its equivalent reveals of our urban and rural landscapes today. The term 'green space' is an insight into the medieval brain, an artefact of monastic self-fashioning and power. Medieval and modern perspectives should share the spotlight. In outlining properties and exploring political ecology, this article deploys a collection of rhetorical landscape descriptions, primarily from the Cistercian literature of the twelfth century, placing them in a wider context. In doing so, we understand another facet of monastic authority established and over landscape and articulated through the power structures of medicine, natural philosophy and other aspects of monastic learned discourse. Knowledge makes green, green promotes health, health valorises monasticism, monasticism shapes knowledge: a green circle of power.

---

## Introduction

The sick man sits on the green turf, and, when the merciless heat of the dog days bakes the fields and dries up the streams, he in his sanctuary, shaded from the day's heat, filters the heavenly fire through a screen of leaves, his discomfort further eased by the drifting scent of grasses. While he feeds his gaze on the pleasing green of grass and trees, fruits, to further his delight, hang swelling before his eyes. . .

(Anonymous, *Description of Clairvaux*, Matarasso, 1993: 278–88)

In this passage from the anonymous twelfth-century *Description of Clairvaux*, the delights of paradise are merged with the medicinal properties of the abbey grounds for those sickly brothers in need of convalescence during a stay in the infirmary. It is an idealised depiction of leisure and healing, strengthening the Cistercian self-imagination of their monastic worlds as remediating landscapes. This article suggests that physical therapies and spiritual states captured within medieval understandings of the abbey and its grounds—such as the above example—mirror what we might now perceive as the benefits of ‘green space’. There is value in the comparison, for it tells us about monastic philosophy, landscapes and medicine in equal measure, and their deployment for the formation and assertion of power, influence and spiritual authority. It also hints at a broader political ecology, using the moral rectitude and healing properties of green space to shape authority. Taken together, these two themes form part of a green chain of power: knowledge makes green, green promotes health, health valorises monasticism, monasticism shapes knowledge. The repetition of monastic activities creates what Cheryl Morse Dunkley (2009) has called a ‘therapeutic taskscape’, shaped from human activity and moulded into a place for healing.

Comparing medieval ideas of greenery and the modern socio-scientific discourse surrounding the topic may initially seem to be simple: medieval monastics knew that green space was good for them, and there is evidence for what we now see as the neurological benefits of engaging with green nature within monastic primary

literature. From these we may learn more about the history of green space, and the nuances of monastic thought. And yet, this kind of insight into the medieval brain is an artefact of monastic self-fashioning and power as much as it is of medicine and was used as such by medieval monastics. The power dimension of monastic greenery must also share the spotlight. In performing both tasks, this article explores a collection of rhetorical landscape descriptions, primarily from the Cistercian literature of the twelfth century, and places them in a wider context. In doing so, we understand another facet of monastic authority established and over landscape and articulated through the power structures of medicine, natural philosophy and other aspects of monastic learned discourse.

By understanding the episode above through a different frame, we see glimpses of power being exercised. As the sick monk 'feeds' on the green, he draws parallels with contemporary neurological frameworks, creating affordances to be used by those in need of healing. By codifying knowledge of these landscapes and their medicinal application, the abbey could become a crucible for power and part of what Bell et al. (2018: 124) have termed a 'palette of place', mixing therapeutic green, hydrophilic blue and a variegated spectrum of other stimuli shaped together into an assemblage. The convalescent monk also reminds us of who is unable to find rest, be they a lay brother toiling in the field or a secular member of society removed by space and status from this scene. When a monk is praying or resting—especially in a Cistercian abbey—someone else is toiling. A great deal of twenty-first social scholarship on green space is united with monastic narratives in its attempts to change the affect and thought-world of an individual through exposure to a specific environment. It, too, is entangled with the practise of authority. A green space is a contested political zone even when it presents itself as an unproblematic idyll. As this argument unfolds, it will explore the interrelation of how a medieval monastic green space was *positioned* with its *powers* within the context of medicinal and humoral theory and how it came into being as *political*.

As the narrator of the *Description of Clairvaux* was aware, places and spaces can change cognition, be they managed or wild (at least in the imagination of

their 'discoverer'). For medieval monastics, the area of the abbey was suitable for prayerful reflection, mapping the topography of paradise onto the quotidian world. The environment was understood to be compatible with the monastic drive to seek spiritual purity and balance—it need only be shaped, physically and intellectually. For others, this vehicle of healing and leisure was absent. In this text written by and for Cistercians, all is peace and healing, underpinned by the powers of nature and shaped by the institutional authority of a wealthy monastic order. The ability to change and augment cognition, to rest and recuperate the body, was given special privilege by the Edenic resonances. The monks *earned* their healing and maintained it through an experience cultivated by what Bille, Bjerregaard and Flohr Sørensen (2015) describe as a 'staged' affective atmosphere of greenery.

This article establishes that green space and its healing effects were understood spiritually and medicinally, were channelled into a discourse that empowered some, yet disenfranchised others and divided medieval communities along the lines of access and knowledge. These faultlines demonstrate a history for a phenomenon familiar to us today and caution us to regard both medieval and twenty-first century discourses on the properties of green space with a certain amount of scepticism. Our positive expectations of interacting with green space and our positive perception of medieval monastic gardens are, in many ways, the centuries-long legacy of an extraordinarily successful public relations campaign.

### **The position of green space**

As Patrick Geary (1994) established, the process of establishing monastic identity was an elaborate history of manipulation—of stories, bloodlines and records. Amy Remensnyder (1995: 289) has revealed the role of monastic foundation legends in this process, arguing that abbeys 'articulated a series of boundaries, inclusive and exclusive, symbolic and concrete' through the legendary narratives of their foundation. When monasteries came into conflict with other medieval polities—cities, nobles, other monasteries—over land, status, relics or other indicators of prestige, they were likely to return to the stories that defined them for authority. In the case of the nature-saturated narratives of monastic saintly life and establishments, the

landscape was an ingredient in the establishment and maintenance of power—thus, interaction with nature could never be apolitical. As De Jong and Theuws (2001: 534) have described the matter, the power relationships established in the early Middle Ages and developed in the high Middle Ages were ‘situated topographical contexts one cannot classify as either political, religious, institutional, social or economic. They were all of this at the same time’. Power and knowledge of environment can never be disentangled, and so the *what* and the *how* always lead to a *why*. Establishing the healing properties of green space allows an interrogation of cause and effect.

The meaning of a medieval ‘green space’ embedded within the structure of monastic life served to cement the rectitude of monastic stewardship. The fundamental story of Cistercianism was a tale of transformation, from negative to positive experience of environment, from detrimental affect to positive emotional experience, from fear to refreshment. The *Exordium Magnum* of Konrad of Eberbach takes great pains to establish the *topos* necessary to endlessly reiterate this claim to an emotional community of monks primed to receive it. Whenever the powers of green space—shaped and curated—were extolled, a hint of political power always emerged:

There was on the property of the monastery [of Cîteaux] a very fresh, cool and pleasant wood, watered by a clear fountain of running water. The murmur of the water was sweet to hear and the surroundings, covered with grass, were refreshing and enchanting to the eyes and hearts of those who came there. During his lifetime the late abbot had often come there to refresh himself, and there, because it was quite private, he could relax more freely from the many cares and fatigues of his abbacy (Konrad of Eberbach, *Exordium magnum*, 21.4, Elder, 2012: 497).

In this passage, the abbot could stroll alone in the wood, enjoying the mature development of monastic space. This was his right, earned through the exercise of power. Within the political life of the monastery and the wider society within which it operated, the abbot was a magnate. As I have discussed elsewhere, energy expended

within monasticism was not only the energy required to build, cultivate, nurture and maintain a garden such as the abbot's retreat above but also the energy channelled and exploited by an intellectual technocracy able to rearticulate intellectual labour as bodily energy (Smith, 2018b: 7–8). Intellectual and devotional labour converted the landscape, acting as a transformative crucible for green space to emerge and to heal. The performed assemblage of factors that shapes a therapeutic landscape 'suggests a material and experiential presence and practice [. . .] wherein individuals can potentially derive physical, mental and spiritual benefits' and that 'occur in therapeutic settings that are externally affected by wider material cultures and economies that shape their production and meaning', as Ronan Foley has framed it (2010: 2).

Monastic therapeutic assemblage was underpinned by centuries of knowledge. In the corpus available to learned monastic thinkers, exposure to nature was thought to be therapeutic, suppressing imbalances in the humours through 'non-naturals' such as changes of air, exercise, rest, sleep and the balance of accidents of the soul (extremes of emotion). As Susan Broomhall (2015: 4) puts it, emotions were understood to be 'both bodily and mental experiences, as well as being connected to the soul in certain ordering systems'. As a result, the regulation of the body could be brought about through the regulation of emotion, and vice versa. Since the advent of Galenic medicine, therapeutics had revolved around the regulation of non-naturals, maintaining balance (Ten Have, 1990: 22).

The treatment was mental, physical and spiritual in equal measure. Clean air strengthened the body, physical activity was beneficial and balancing of the humours purged negative accidents of the soul. These health effects have similarities to a modern description, with the tetrad of the humours (blood, cholera, black bile and phlegm) replaced by the triad of the autonomic nervous system (the sympathetic, the parasympathetic and the enteric). Knight (2014: 39) relates that the classical authority given for nature-walking, as therapy in the medieval and early modern periods, was derived from sources such as Vitruvius and Hippocrates. Being in nature cleansed the spirit as the body absorbed wholesome sights and breathed healthful

airs. Histories such as the *Exordium Magnum* stamp the rectitude of monastic green space onto the landscape. Only the Cistercians, for example, could create such a place. Only Cistercians could use it. Only their order could merge spiritual healing for the community with the localised assemblages that healed the body and mind. Most importantly, only monks could have command of the full breadth of knowledge and intellectual history required to tell the story, shape the place, make the history and take advantage of its benefits. For the Abbot of Cîteaux, secure within his green fortress of knowledge, solitude, authority and power, rest was a privilege won and enjoyed. The monastery as a singular site or as a network deployed the same authority writ large.

Medieval medical authority dovetails with twenty-first century science. Just as monastic medicine sought to restore balance within the body and soul by manipulating the interaction of four interlinking qualities (the elements, the humours, the cardinal points, the qualities of matter), we now understand the human nervous system to be 'adaptive and beneficial to health and well-being, as it reflects a system that is balanced between threat, drive and contentment, with no single system (e.g. threat) dominating' (Richardson et al., 2016: 312). Knowledges overlay each other; two sets of vocabulary describe the same phenomenon. Our understanding of green space is enhanced by studies more focused on transhistorical, Renaissance or early modern subject matter, which nonetheless offer insights into medieval intellectual life (Harrison, 2008; Knight, 2014; Phillips, 2015; Smith, 2009). These studies have convincingly established: a) a pre-modern philosophical tradition of green nature as a therapeutic space; b) the therapeutic effects of green within literary *topoi*; and c) the interactions of the history of the senses, the emotions and medical history.

The intersection between medieval and modern green space helps to explain its medieval power: it was effective both on its own terms and through the lens of our current discourse. For example, the notion of 'soft fascination' has become a prevalent explanation for the stimulating nature of green spaces, a phenomenon with constructive intersections with the world of monastic nature-consciousness and devotional practice. As van den Berg et al. (2010: 1204) describe, 'when nature

captures people's attention, executive systems that regulate directed attention get to rest, pessimistic thoughts are blocked, and negative emotions are replaced by positive ones'. Furthermore, these exposures can 'stimulate reflections on life's larger questions such as one's priorities, goals, and one's place in the larger scheme of things'. The significance given to green space in devotional literature and narrations of idealised landscapes is telling when the notion of soft fascination is considered. Devotional activity is the medieval monastic equivalent of stimulated reflection on the 'larger questions of life', a space in which the mind can dwell on heavenly things, free from the distractions of the world. This example helps us to understand a key facet of medieval green space, by understanding its effects and interrogating its political power. This knowledge is augmented by a contextual understanding of neuro humanities.

### **The powers of green space**

Monastic literature was careful to attribute the therapeutic properties of green space to spiritual, as well as medical, factors. Doing so cemented the moral suitability of monastics as the wielders of this power. Green was a powerful colour, amplifying the therapeutic effects of nature when properly utilised. The descriptions of the colour green range across the full spectrum of medieval moral valence and categories of efficacy, drawing in elemental theory, optics, natural philosophy and exegesis in equal measure. One fourteenth-century sermon claimed that green 'makes men glad and brings comfort to their eyes', just as Christ did (St. John's vision of heaven contained a throne of jasper and sardonyx, green and red, the two combining to bring comfort and inspire men to shed blood for Christ). Wycliffe characterised jasper and its green hue as soothing to the inner eye of man and a symbol of God's grace (Woolgar, 2008: 170). Alexander Neckham recommended the use of green blinds in the scriptorium, since black and green are restful to the eyes, whereas white dazzles and strains them. In *De proprietatibus rerum*, Bartholomeus Anglicus explains this effect as an elemental combination of fire, which pleases the sight, and earth, which comforts the spirit. Green draws and soothes the eyes, and thus animals enjoy dwelling in wooded places (Gage, 1997: 96–97). In *De tribus diebus*, Hugh of Saint-Victor praised

the colour green in paradisaical terms, naming it 'beautiful beyond any colour' and claiming that it 'enraptures the minds of those who behold it' and calls them to new life (VII, 12, as cited in Dronke, 1984: 84). This liturgy of properties accumulated over centuries to create an effect with similar authority to the growing twenty-first century scientific discourse on green space.

The qualities of green as a moral superlative are tied to its perceived medical traits, which in turn are connected to a modern understanding of green space as a regulator of affect and mood. The green spaces of medieval monasticism are inescapable—*loci amoeni* abound, and medievalists have been fascinated by them ever since their treatment by Ernst Robert Curtius in *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*. Gardens burst from the pages of medieval primary sources, permeating saintly *vitae*, exordia and other genres of monastic literature. The language of Eden and Jerusalem justified the monastic project, the idealised garden-city fortified against time and worldly corruption, with 'a garden at one end of time and a city at the other' (McClung, 1983: 1). And yet, failing to explore the nuances of this language beyond a recourse to Scripture or dismissing its mechanisms as a praise of superlatives alone would be a mistake—there was technique and craft in this praise as well as devotional zeal. As Jean Leclercq (1982: 153) put it, monastic literature favoured 'actual happenings and experiences' and was 'addressed to a specific audience, to a public chosen by and known to the author'. It is a description of a real rather than purely allegorical place, calculated to have a particular effect on a particular set of people (in this case, other monastics). The language of superlative nature was a political bending of thought through the control of landscape and came with effects that we can now understand as conducive to good mental health and satisfaction.

Monastics saw their control of the landscape as a vehicle for a corresponding gardening of the soul, which we might also understand today as a cultivation of happiness through self-fashioning. To create a monastery—in a literal and an abstract sense—was to shape landscape, to cultivate it and to make moral meaning from the process. When doing so, monastics were fully aware that they were speaking allegorically of their own self-care and self-edification. In his poem *Hortulus* ('the

little garden'), the ninth-century Benedictine Walahfrid Strabo listed the herbs of a monastic garden and their medical properties in a poem that merged spiritual allegory and practical knowledge:

A quiet life has many rewards: not least of these is the joy that comes to him who devotes himself to the art they knew at Paestum, and learns the ancient skill of obscene Priapus – the joy that comes of devoting himself to a garden. For whatever the land you possess, whether it be where sand and gravel lie barren and dead, or where no fruits grow heavy in rich moist ground: whether high on a steep hillside, easy ground in the plain or rough among sloping valleys – wherever it is, your land cannot fail to produce its native plants (Walahfrid Strabo, *Hortulus* (trans. Payne), Wallis, 2010: 98–99).

Strabo linked the health of the body to that of the soul, a common motif of monastic spirituality that I have discussed elsewhere in detail (Smith, 2015; Smith, 2018a). The garden, like the soul, could be healed by the medicine of contemplation and entanglement with green spaces. The garden grew healing balms for the ailments of the body—rue for poison, wormwood for fever, horehound for pain—and also provided a template for a spiritual care of the self. The allegorical senses of the poem are manifold. 'Should a dry spell rob the plants of the moisture they need', admonishes Strabo, 'my gardening zeal and fear that the slender shoots may die of thirst make me scurry to bring fresh water in brimming buckets'. Strabo, in a long tradition of monastic writers, engages in what I have termed the 'agriculture of community' (Smith, 2018a: 128–39), exploring spiritual nourishment in agricultural terms while simultaneously providing advice about literal gardening and the care of medicinal herbs. As Jessica Rezunyk (2015: 128–63) has argued in the context of *Piers Plowman*, agriculture and spirituality offer a bridge between the realms of 'nature' and 'culture' through the ecological cultivation of the soul. By writing in multiple exegetic layers while simultaneously demonstrating a thoroughgoing knowledge of herblore, Strabo sets a precedent for the assertion of medieval authority as part of a political ecology of green space.

Medicine and spiritual rhetoric mingle and are dependent on each other. Good spiritual and physical health were an echo of a better time for the human soul, understood now as a conditioned response within the nervous system that allows the body to rest and regenerate in periods of leisure. Understanding of the powers of green space allowed guaranteed access to an elite space with the firmly embedded expectation that moral rectitude bought access to physical rest and healing. The moralised leisure of the body and the soul was the soteriological interpretation of a beneficial effect on the medieval brain. Once shaped, the landscape was gifted with the ability to remediate, to activate, as Chris Fitter (1995: 107) puts it:

Monastic penetration, clearance and planting of wilderness on this view may be not merely a propaedeutic to paradise regained, but itself the paradisaic state anticipated. Thus, in some degree, it may be said that nature exists *in potentia*, and that man not only inhabits the universe, but as God's agent co-creates it.

As God's agents, monastic founders were happy to shape and hold a moral monopoly over paradise simulation in the temporal world. Since one of the core properties of Eden was the absence of sickness, the effects of green space could anticipate this paradisaic state by alleviating suffering for the privileged few. Thus, green space power discourse—taken in a Foucauldian sense—exerted systematic authority over medicine, health, institutional power and land ownership in equal measure.

The deserving were not only gifted with health, but were also offered an aid to their extended cognition and an augmentation of their spiritual and intellectual faculties. Gardens were understood not only as healthful spaces for the sick and care-worn or places of retreat, but also as a mechanism for theological stimulation, a balm for the cares of their regulated lives. In fact, the *Description of Clairvaux* begins by suggestion that those who wish to picture the abbey might use this text *pro speculo* (as a mirror). Sara Ritchey (2014) makes a compelling case for the role of the natural landscape as a tool of spiritual speculation, a mirror into which the devotee could gaze and see truth reflected. Using the example of the Carthusians, an order similarly preoccupied

with environment, Ritchey traces the practice of interaction with the monastic 'wilderness'— as a source of an origin myth and focus for 'speculative theology'— from the foundation of the Grande Chartreuse in 1084 and into the late Middle Ages.

Ritchey (2014: 173) argues that as the order grew in the twelfth century and its priories were transplanted from remote wilderness into bustling urban centres, Carthusian theology was deprived of the cultivated sense of isolation that had increasingly become 'the image through which they prayed; in creation they claimed to encounter and indeed to see God' (2014: 179). As a result, Carthusians developed elaborate speculative hermeneutics with which to recreate nature as an object of devotion. Ritchey also suggests that the popularity of individual gardens—a notable feature of the order—was partially the creation of a 'surrogate wilderness' in which to 'see God's presence in the material of the world' (2014: 194). This drive was powerful enough to compel monastics to cultivate their green spaces under less-than-ideal gardening conditions, as recent research has shown in the case of Icelandic monastic sites (Kristjánsdóttir, Larssen and Åsen, 2014). The topic of wilderness, as we will see, was a central rhetorical theme in the exercise of political landscape power.

It is important to consider the power dimension of affective manipulation and control. The ability to contemplate God within a real or simulated wilderness was essential to many monastic orders because it was the heart of their emotional lives. Green space exerted a pre-hermeneutic affective atmosphere (Anderson, 2009) that enveloped the subject during meditative experience and stimulated positive emotions. As a non-cognitive, inter-personal and non-representational force (Pile, 2009: 8), affect was at work in the embodied reactions of monastics to their environments, an invisible thread stimulated by green space and channelled into the valorisation of their spiritual lives. Thus, the healing powers of green space as a medical and spiritual entity were greatly augmented by the presence of an atmosphere in which the appropriate experience of subjectivity, space, place and time were encouraged by greenery.

Positive affect was crucial to spiritual experience. A garden can grow where the ground is prepared, and the art of gardening, so valorised by writers such as Strabo, is a physical manifestation of Christ's inner cultivation. Ever the 'inner teacher',

Christ is also the inner gardener. As Aelred of Rievaulx (Sommerfeldt, 2005: 122–23) put it, '[i]f we should wish, my brothers, to have this [second] Adam [Jesus Christ] dwell in our heart, we must there prepare a paradise for him'. Even in the 'wasteland' (Sommerfeldt, 2005: 122–23) of the temporal world, a garden could grow within the soul. In reality, these 'wastelands' were part of a long story of power: monasteries were often founded near a site of power in the Roman world, a cultic site, for example. These pre-modern narratives of power permeate environmental politics through the centuries and are inherited by modernity (Morgan and Smith, 2013). Other sites were not far from cities or major roads, yet rhetorically separate. It was a place to grow a new garden explored through exegesis and the unfolding of Scripture's four senses, both within the landscape and within the soul. And just as the external garden healed the sick and delighted the eye, so too did Christ's cultivation transplant the soul from the barren desert into the garden of eternal life:

[Christ] is the gardener of the whole world and of heaven, the gardener of the Church he plants and waters here below until, its harvest yielded, he will transplant it into the land of the living by the streams of living water, where it will fear no more the summer heat, where its leaves will be forever green and it will never cease from bearing fruit (Guerric of Igny, *A Sermon for Arousing Devotion at Psalmody* (no. 54), Matarasso, 1993: 136).

Praise of this inner garden was a panegyric of inner bounty, constituting a significant component of the monastic *lectio divina*. By walking through the healing garden of the redeemed soul—the allegorical delights of the post-Origen *Song of Songs* beloved of monastic writers such as Bernard—the colours, sights, smells and sounds described in the *Description of Clairvaux* were echoes within a rhetorical inner landscape. Thus, when the Eden of Cîteaux is described an endless series of flower beds in the *Exordium Magnum*, it takes on a new meaning:

Here is the mystic garden where the Bridegroom summons the bride. Here one breathes in the perfume of sundry virtues. Here new fruits give off the aroma of holy zeal. Thence gleam the roses of patience, the lilies of

chastity shine, The purple of the violets give off a sweet gentleness, And the whole nursery bed of the heavenly Father flourishes, Infused from above, sprouted by this fertile Valley, Which makes men blessed by the merits of their virtues (Konrad of Eberbach, *Exordium magnum*, versified prologue, Elder, 2012: 40–41).

It we refer back to Broomhall's (2015) observation, there is a medieval interconnectedness of the mental/spiritual and the physical. Physical activities and mental therapy with reflective spiritual activities were co-constituted. The overstimulated and agitated state created by an overactive sympathetic nervous system bears a remarkable similarity to the sin of *acedia* or *accidie*, the listlessness, torpor and depression brought on by the sorrow of the world and characterised by the inability to perform one's daily duties such as work or prayer. The 'noonday demon' made the duties of monasticism onerous—time was slow, the rigours of asceticism boring, focus on prayer difficult. The challenges of sloth were as old as Christian monasticism itself, discussed by Evagrius, Cassian, Gregory the Great and Benedict. Peter Damian equated it with drowsiness, Aelred of Rievaulx with restlessness. Novices were particularly prone to it, as Bernard of Clairvaux admonished (Wenzel, 1967: 30–31). By addressing these failings with knowledge, monastics were exercising another kind of power: control over the embodied environment. By sowing affect, growing emotion and cultivating mental health, monastic green space gave the privilege of balance. The politics of this arrangement make the picture considerably more complex.

### **The politics of green space**

As Clarence Glacken (1992 [1967]: 461) put it, '[humans] have long been aware of their ability to change their physical environment, but only a few have regarded these changes as part of a broader philosophical, religious, or scientific attitude concerning [humanity's] place in nature'. Medieval monastics fitted firmly into the category of the self-aware narrator and shaper of identity. In the energetic flurry of twelfth-century Cistercian expansion, the rhetoric of spiritual authority, wedded to mastery of the landscape, continued in narrative expression. In the Cistercian

*Exordium Magnum*, Konrad of Eberbach establishes the moral authority and sacred power of Cîteaux, founding house of his order, by inviting the reader to walk through a quasi-Scriptural landscape of salvation narrative, agriculture, healing and spiritual wealth. The remediating spiritual properties of the landscape give us an insight into the medical powers ascribed to green space by medieval monastics and their regime for taking advantage of them, yet is inextricably enmeshed with the political myth of the Cistercian order. As Brian Patrick McGuire (2009: 61) phrases it, 'the Cistercians were skilled at idealising their own achievements. Apart from their propaganda [. . .] the monks and their lay brothers were eminently successful in transforming the countryside in their image and likeness'. The story of the landscape begins with its redemption, just as the story of Christian religious life begins with Christ's life on earth. Here, as Eden is reborn under the deft hands of the monks, the landscape accepts the bounty of salvation once more:

Just as at the beginning of grace, when Christ our Lord and Savior was born, the world, while it knew him not, received a pledge of new redemption, of ancient reconciliation, of eternal happiness, so too in these last days, when charity is cold and iniquity everywhere abounds, the almighty and merciful Lord planted the seed of that same grace in the wilderness of Cîteaux. Watered by the rain of the Holy Spirit, it gathered an incredibly plentiful harvest of spiritual riches, growing and developing into a great tree, so surpassingly beautiful and fruitful (Konrad of Eberbach, *Exordium magnum*, 1.13, as cited in Elder, 2012: 15).

The delights of the landscape explored above by the *Description of Clairvaux*—the turf, the trees, the gardens, the fruit, the river—are possible due to the redeemed nature of the landscape. It is a *locus sanctissimus* (a most holy place), a precedent set at Cluny in the eleventh century and carried into the twelfth by the Cistercians (see Harris, 2005). Just as the Garden of Eden represents the possibility of a carefree prelapsarian existence without toil or suffering, so too can the landscape heal the human soul after the intervention of the monks.

The stories that the Cistercians tell themselves about their own origins reveal much about their environmental rhetoric. The landscape was a wilderness before they came or worse, polluted by pre-Christian practices: a valley of wormwood filled with robbers and ill deeds (the classic *locus horribilis*). The blooming of the desert was potent propaganda. When discussing the rhetorical power of the desert in monastic thinking, James Goehring (2003: 439) suggests that '[t]he ideological power of the myth is exerted through its close association of ascetic authority with the desert landscape' and that the symbolic trope 'fashion[ed] social and subjective identities that conform to its particular Christian vision'. An existence without access to the cultivated garden of the spirit was exile in the wasteland of Christian ontology, yet it could be a place of spiritual self-sufficiency and the forging of the soul.

Cistercians—ever the consummate self-propagandists—defined themselves in opposition to the cities and courts from which they came, their zeal in opposition to the laxity of previous monastic movements. They defined their legitimacy, moral authority and spiritual wellness in relation to the wasteland that preceded them. Their thinking also stemmed from it. It was they who could make the *locus amoenus* flourish. A sermon by Gueric of Igny designed to arouse devotion at psalmody dwells on the tragedy of a world without God and Garden, an existence devoid of Christ's greenery:

Woe is me! How swiftly my days have passed away, how quickly I have withered like grass; yet while I was in the garden with him, I throve and flourished like his paradise. With him I am a garden of delight, without him I am a howling expanse of wasteland (Gueric of Igny, *A Sermon for Arousing Devotion at Psalmody* (no. 54), Matarasso, 1993: 136).

Goehring (2003) takes John Barrell's (1983) discussion of the 'dark side of landscape' in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century depictions of the rural poor as a *leitmotif*, discussing a mode of expression in which political identities are naturalised and reinforced by repetitive artistic depiction. As Dorn and Laws (1994: 107) describe

it, the social geography of medicine makes the human being a 'surface of inscription' in which subjects create their own embodied identities, self-nominated and also externally imposed. The social model of disability is clear that 'healthy' and 'ill' bodies are always socially constructed and, likewise, health and illness are social constructs. Thus, if putatively sound monastic bodies are shaped by green space, sustained by monastic life and made whole through the expenditure of both spiritual and physical energy, then other subaltern constructions must exist to sustain them. How, then, was this power distributed within a wider monastic world?

Gender is an obvious place to begin. Evidence from the medieval Low Countries discussed by Erin L. Jordan (2018: 188) demonstrates that Cistercian nuns were very much part of the political ecology discussed in this piece, shaping technologically-enabled monastic landscapes, prospering economically and reclaiming land from the waters. Thus, it is important to make the point that although the story of Cistercian religious women and their experience has historically been neglected due to 'reliance on prescriptive sources unilaterally authored by men' such as those cited in this article, both monks and nuns were part of the category of power-wielders deliberately described as 'monastics' here, despite differences in expression of their authority (Jordan, 2018: 188). The picture for the Cistercians was never simple when it came to power relationships and it would be unhelpful to paint a picture consisting only of two distinct camps: powerful monks suppressing a powerless peasantry, and monks as the sole arbitrators of power over nuns.

Social stratification within the monastery is another important theme. The relationship between those who wielded the power over green space and those who worked the land—the lay brothers or *conversi*—was often complex. Rather than indentured rustics, lay brothers were political actors sharing in the monastic life and its prestige. As Brian Noell (2006: 274) describes it, it is important to remember that 'membership in one of Europe's most successful ecclesiastical organizations at the height of its power brought opportunity to members of the rural peasantry, the growing bourgeoisie, and the incipient urban proletariat alike'. Those within the monastic community excluded from the green spaces reserved for the choir monks

were still treated comparatively well. Despite this, as Noell discusses, their disputes with the Order were ongoing and 'exhibit[ed] many of the characteristics of class struggle familiar to historians of modernity'. Like modern struggles between the elite and the disenfranchised, the Cistercian social contract was a site of significant tension, and rebellious action, by lay brothers when their privileges were threatened or revoked. Lay brothers participated in the incipient economic power of their monasteries but were notably excluded from the elite knowledge imbued into the production of green space.

As Alessandro Scafi (2013) proposes in the context of cartography, paradise is always a desirable elsewhere, a nostalgia for innocence. Literature on monastic green spaces tend to characterise them as inward-looking and preoccupied with spiritual affairs and inner life, which can lead to new age romanticism. This is far from the whole truth. Medieval rhetoric intersects with modern desires. For example, Robert Pogue Harrison (2008: 97) introduces monastic gardens by describing them as a place where 'a world-shy spirituality found sanctuary from the tumult of earthly passions and, through prayer and silent contemplation, kept open the prospect of the soul's perpetual holiday in heaven'. This is the rhetoric of monastic green space, endlessly repeated and focused upon as a foundational myth of the monastic life. As we have seen above and as classic studies of monastic memory reveal (Arnold, 2013; Geary, 1994; Remensnyder, 1995), the narrative of a shy and retiring monasticism at one with its natural environment was one of the cherished *topoi* of orders such as the Cistercians and, later, the Carthusians. The fact that Harrison has repeated a sentiment established by the monastics themselves centuries before is testament to the success of their rhetorical campaign.

The reality, as with all myths of origin, is more complex and more political. The Cistercians were disliked by many, and famously accused of all manner of misdeeds by Walter Map in his *De nugis curialium*, from evading tithes to demolishing churches and villages on acquired lands and subjecting their inhabitants to poverty and homelessness (Golding, 1995: 7). There is an element of jealousy and scandal in attacks from antagonists such as Map and his contemporary Gerald of Wales, who

asked 'from the malice of monks, but especially the Cistercians, good Lord, deliver us' (Golding, 1995: 5). Despite this, it is also true that the hard-nosed reality of monasticism differed greatly from idealised imaginings.

## Conclusion

Modernity is haunted by a spectre of paradise, amplified across the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the early modern period in poetry and medical treatise alike, a dreaming of a pastoral idyll. As Helen Dell (2011: 121) has described in the context of medievalism, 'if nostalgia is a fantasy it is one which is constantly shown up as inadequate, constantly in need of improvement, constantly jettisoned, constantly retrieved and renovated'. Part of the cultural explanation for this green affect is part of a long reception history in which it is reinvented and longed for. Monastics understood this well and made it part of their story. When medieval beliefs are supported by scientific research—currently a popular pursuit for multi- and interdisciplinary research—we are satisfied, because it legitimates centuries of wisdom. Yet, as I have revealed in a medieval context, accepting this link without question offers the powerful a tool to shape our environments around us, just as medieval people of diverse backgrounds had their worlds crafted around them by the local abbey or priory. Monastic politics were complex with no simple stories of power, but those who failed to shape were themselves shaped by power over landscape.

The presence of green space within the abbey, and its beauty, medicine and power, hides a significant lacuna. The drive to emulate paradise, and to capture its therapeutic effects on the body and soul, was far from a universal experience. The monastic landscape could restrict as well as liberate, impose a harsh discipline as well as a gentle cure. As Megan Cassidy-Welch (2001) has convincingly argued, monasteries were not always seen as sanctuaries from worldly life, but also as spaces of incarceration. In these cases, the escape from a physical space of confinement into a mental green space of paradise was the only option. In a notable example identified by Cassidy-Welch (2001: 35), from Walter Daniel's *vita* of Aelred of Rievaulx, a fleeing novice is unable to leave the abbey grounds, wandering aimlessly in the woods until

'suddenly he found himself again within the monastic wall'. During another escape attempt, the novice encounters 'empty air at the open doors as though it were a wall of iron'. The monastic landscape, in addition to soothing and healing, served as a harsh enforcer of the often-onerous monastic policing of the body. Monastics suffering from *acedia* due to the rigors of such a lifestyle could find that green space did not carry a positive valence. Only by escaping the trials of worldly life and retreating within the walls of the cloister, by expanding outwards into a spacious inner world, could a monk hope to escape from his prison (see also Cassidy-Welch, 2011). Monastics not only controlled others but were rigorously controlled by the disciplinary apparatus of their environment.

There is a striking and productive correlation between the effects understood to arise from time in nature in the Middle Ages, and the terminology used to describe an emotionally entangled engagement with greenery today. We need look no further than the valorisation of green space by monastic orders for both medical and coercive purposes and the corresponding use of the term in the twenty-first century as a medical intervention, as an exercise in political authority and a use (and abuse) of power over bodies, spaces and economies. Who gets to experience greenery and who is excluded—particularly at the heart of our urban spaces—is a topical issue. There is a strong impetus to compare. Before this comparison can be useful, however, we must have a historicised medieval notion of green space.

The risks of uncritical retrospective diagnosis are considerable. When a theme of neurological research has proven to be particularly germane for medievalists—mirror neurons, for example—then we run the risk of the theory in question failing to bear future scientific scrutiny, and thus undermining our efforts (Passaro, 2012). The inherent drive to find ever greater benefits in green space risks the distortion of research. By being caught up in the *prima facie* narrative presented by medieval sources while looking for retrospective diagnoses, we can become unmoored. Retrospective diagnosis *can* be a valuable historical tool (see Mitchell, 2011) but requires care when dealing with rhetorical presentations of health and illness. Positioning medieval green space between pre-modern and modern knowledge will

always remain a methodological challenge that must be acknowledged. However, we can have a more productive conversation by understanding the powers of green space from a medieval frame and moving forward from there.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge that the revisions for this article were completed during a 2018–20 Irish Research Council Government of Ireland Postdoctoral Fellowship Award. I am grateful to Dr Deborah Thorpe for hosting the Wellcome Trust-funded ‘The Medieval Brain’ conference, which took place in March 2017 at the University of York Humanities Research Centre. I also want to thank Dr Thorpe for editing this volume, as well as Open Library of Humanities Editorial Officer Dr Helen Saunders. I am very grateful to the anonymous peer reviewers for their kind feedback, which has greatly improved this article. Finally, I would like to thank Dr Michael Barbezat for sharing ideas and readings on twelfth-century critiques of the Cistercian Order, which were an important contribution to the article.

### **Competing Interests**

The author is the advocacy coordinator of the Open Library of Humanities and is in a relationship with the volume editor. Two rounds of double-blind review were conducted.

### **References**

- Anderson, B** 2009 Affective Atmospheres’. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 2: 77–81. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2009.08.005>
- Arnold, E** 2013 *Negotiating the Landscape: Environment and Monastic Identity in the Medieval Ardennes*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.9783/9780812207521>
- Barrell, J** 1983 *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730–1840*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Bell, S L, Foley, R, Houghton, F, Maddrell, A and Williams, A M** 2018 From Therapeutic Landscapes to Healthy Spaces, Places and Practices: A Scoping Review. *Social Science & Medicine*, 196: 123–130. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2017.11.035>

- Bille, M, Bjerregaard, P and Flohr Sørensen, T** 2015 Staging Atmospheres: Materiality, Culture, and the Texture of the in-Between. *Emotion, Space and Society*, 15: 31–38. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emospa.2014.11.002>
- Broomhall, S** 2015 Introduction: Hearts and Minds – Ordering Emotions in Europe, 1100–1800. In: Broomhall, S (ed.) *Ordering Emotions in Europe, 1100–1800*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 1–13. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004305106\\_002](https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004305106_002)
- Cassidy-Welch, M** 2001 Incarceration and Liberation: Prisons in the Cistercian Monastery. *Viator*, 32: 23–42. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1484/J.VIATOR.2.300728>
- Cassidy-Welch, M** 2011 *Imprisonment in the Medieval Religious Imagination, c.1150–1400*. London and New York: Palgrave MacMillan. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230306400>
- De Jong, M and Theuws, F** 2001 Topographies of Power: Some Conclusions. In: De Jong et al. (eds.) *Topographies of Power in the Early Middle Ages*. Leiden: Brill. pp. 533–546.
- Dell, H** 2011 Nostalgia and medievalism: Conversations, contradictions, impasses. *postmedieval*, 2: 115–126. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/pmed.2011.6>
- Dorn, M and Laws, G** 1994 Social Theory, Body Politics, and Medical Geography: Extending Kearns's Invitation. *The Professional Geographer* 46(1): 106–110. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-0124.1994.00106.x>
- Dronke, P** 1984 *The Medieval Poet and His World*. Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura.
- Dunkley, C M** 2009 A Therapeutic Taskscape: Theorizing Place-Making, Discipline and Care at a Camp for Troubled Youth. *Health & Place*, 15(1): 88–96. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2008.02.006>
- Elder, E R** (ed.) 2012 *The Great Beginning of Cîteaux: A Narrative of the Beginning of the Cistercian Order—The Exordium Magnum of Conrad of Eberbach*. Translated by Benedicta Ward, S.L.G., and Paul Savage. Collegeville: Cistercian Publications.
- Fitter, C** 1995 *Poetry, Space, Landscape: Toward a New Theory*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Foley, R** 2010 Performing Health in Place: The Holy Well as a Therapeutic Assemblage. *Health & Place*, 17(2): 470–479. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2010.11.014>
- Gage, J** 1997 *Color and Meaning: Art, Science, and Symbolism*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Geary, P** 1994 *Phantoms of Remembrance: Memory and Oblivion at the End of the First Millennium*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Glacken, C J** 1992 [1967] *Traces on the Rhodian Shore: Nature and Culture in Western Thought from Ancient Times to the End of the Eighteenth Century*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Goehring, J E** 2003 The Dark Side of Landscape: Ideology and Power in the Christian Myth of the Desert. *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 33(3): 437–451. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/10829636-33-3-437>
- Golding, B** 1995 Gerald of Wales and the Cistercians. *Reading Medieval Studies*, 21: 5–30
- Harris, J** 2005 Building Heaven on Earth: Cluny as *locus sanctissimus* in the eleventh century. In: Cochelin, I and Boynton, S (eds.) *From Dead of Night to End of Day: The Medieval Customs of Cluny / Du coeur de la nuit à la fin du jour: les coutumes clunisiennes au Moyen Age*. Turnhout: Brepols. pp. 131–151. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1484/M.DM-EB.3.477>
- Harrison, R P** 2008 *Gardens: An Essay on the Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226317861.001.0001>
- Jordan, E L** 2018 Transforming the Landscape: Cistercian Nuns and the Environment in the Medieval Low Countries. *Journal of Medieval History*, 44(2): 187–201. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03044181.2018.1439763>
- Knight, L** 2014 *Reading Green in Early Modern England*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Kristjánisdóttir, S, Larsson, I and Åsen, P A** 2014 The Icelandic medieval monastic garden – did it exist? *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 39(5): 560–579. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03468755.2014.946534>
- Leclercq, J** 1982 *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study in Monastic Culture*. New York: Fordham University Press.

- Matarasso, P** (trans.) 1993 *The Cistercian World: Monastic Writings of the Twelfth Century*. London: Penguin.
- McClung, W A** 1983 *The Architecture of Paradise: Survivals of Eden and Jerusalem*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- McGuire, B P** 2009 Monastic and religious orders, c. 1100–1350. In: Rubin, M and Simons, W (eds.) *The Cambridge History of Christianity: Volume 4—Christianity in Western Europe c. 1100–c. 1500*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 54–72. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/CHOL9780521811064.006>
- Mitchell, P D** 2011 Retrospective diagnosis and the use of historical texts for investigating disease in the past. *International Journal of Palaeopathology*, 1(2): 81–88. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpp.2011.04.002>
- Morgan, R A and Smith, J L** 2013 Premodern Streams of Thought in Twenty-First-Century Water Management. *Radical History Review*, 116: 105–129. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-1965748>
- Noell, B** 2006 Expectation and Unrest among Cistercian Lay Brothers in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries. *Journal of Medieval History*, 32(3): 253–274. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jmedhist.2006.07.003>
- Passaro, A D** 2012 Editor's Response – A cautionary note from a neuroscientist's perspective: Interpreting from mirror neurons and neuroplasticity. *Postmedieval: a journal of medieval cultural studies*, 3: 355–360. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1057/pmed.2012.23>
- Phillips, B** 2015 Locus Amoenus or Locus Violens? Shakespearean Emotions Expressed Through an Ovidian Model. In: White, R et al. (eds.) *Shakespeare and Emotions: Inheritances, Enactments, Legacies*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 29–38. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137464750\\_3](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137464750_3)
- Pile, S** 2009 Emotions and Affect in Recent Human Geography. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 35(1): 5–20. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-5661.2009.00368.x>
- Remensnyder, A G** 1995 *Remembering Kings Past: Monastic Foundation Legends in Medieval Southern France*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press.

- Rezunyk, J** 2015 *Science and Nature in the Medieval Ecological Imagination*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation: Washington University in St. Louis.
- Richardson, M, McEwan, K, Maratos, F and Sheffield, D** 2016 Joy and Calm: How an Evolutionary Functional Model of Affect Regulation Informs Positive Emotions in Nature. *Evolutionary Psychological Science*, 2: 308–320. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40806-016-0065-5>
- Ritchey, S** 2014 *Holy Matter: Changing Perceptions of the Material World in Late Medieval Christianity*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7591/cornell/9780801452536.001.0001>
- Scafi, A** 2013 *Maps of Paradise*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226106083.001.0001>
- Smith, B R** 2009 *The Key of Green: Passion and Perception in Renaissance Culture*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226763811.001.0001>
- Smith, J L** 2015 “So the satiated man hungers, the drunken thirsts”: The Medieval Rhetorical Topos of Spiritual Nutrition. *Limina*, 20(3): 1–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.17613/M6VV28>
- Smith, J L** 2018a *Water in Medieval Intellectual Culture: Case Studies from Twelfth-Century Monasticism*. Turnhout: Brepols. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1484/M.CURSOR-EB.5.112274>
- Smith, J L** 2018b Medieval Water Energies: Philosophical, Hydro-Social, and Intellectual. *Open Library of Humanities*, 4(2): 1–27. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/olh.228>
- Sommerfeldt, J R** (trans.) 2005 *Aelred of Rievaulx: Pursuing Perfect Happiness*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Newman Press.
- Ten Have, H A M J** 1990 Knowledge and Practice in European Medicine: The Case of Infectious Diseases. In: Ten Have, H A M J et al. (eds.) *The Growth of Medical Knowledge*. Dordrecht, Boston and London: Kluwer. pp. 15–40. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-009-2025-5\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-009-2025-5_2)
- Wallis, F** (ed.) 2010 *Medieval Medicine: A Reader*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

- Wenzel, S** 1967 *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Woolgar, C M** 2008 *The Senses in Late Medieval England*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- van den Berg, A E, Maas, J, Verheij, R A and Groenewegen, P P** 2010 Green space as a buffer between stressful life events and health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 70(8): 1203–1210. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2010.01.002>

**How to cite this article:** Smith, J L 2019 Interrogating Green Space in Medieval Monasticism: Position, Powers and Politics. *Open Library of Humanities*, 5(1): 41, pp.1–26, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.16995/olh.283>

**Published:** 13 June 2019

**Copyright:** © 2019 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>.



*Open Library of Humanities* is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by Open Library of Humanities.

**OPEN ACCESS** The Open Access logo, which consists of a stylized 'A' inside a circle.