Distance and Intimacy in Baudri of Bourgueil's Libellus

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Accessibility
Distance and Intimacy in Baudri of Bourgueil’s *Libellus*

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Abstract

Baudri of Bourgueil, c. 1046-1150, collected his personal poems in a single manuscript, copied and decorated under his supervision, which he circulated only to close friends. He was a well-regarded and effective abbot, a humanist, and a classicist, in a period of reforms with which he did not fully agree, and he expressed fears about harsh criticism and the possibilities of being shamed. Many of the poems in Baudri’s collections are in the form of letters, some of which seem to express erotic attractions, particularly homoerotic attractions, which may have been one source of his anxieties and the reason he did not circulate the manuscript.

Remarkably, the manuscript survived, though it seems to have gone unrecognized until the mid-seventeenth century, when scholars began writing about it. Because it existed in only the one copy, until relatively recently scholarship tended to focus on individual poems, rather than the work as a whole, which led to possibly erotic poems being read out of context. This thesis focuses on the section of the manuscript considered by editors of recent scholarly editions to have been prepared under Baudri’s direct supervision, designated here as the *libellus* (little book). The thesis carries out close readings in the context of the *libellus* as a deliberate work.

Chapter I, “Introduction,” provides a brief biography of Baudri, a survey of scholarship about his manuscript with a focus on discussions about sexuality in his work, and explains the thesis’s application of queer theory to discover new approaches to the *libellus*, particularly through exploring the ways Baudri experiences temporalities.
Chapter II, “The Libellus Structure and Poem Arrangement,” presents evidence that the *libellus* is arranged as a chiastic ring structure, in which the end connects to the beginning and, considered from the center of the work, the sections have a mirror-image symmetry. Through close readings of the first three poems of the collection, Chapter II discusses ways these poems reveal concerns about sexuality indirectly, both within individual poems and through adjacent poems’ implied mutual commentaries.

Chapter III, “Funerary Poems as a Graveyard,” considers a section of funerary poems which Baudri wrote and collected as forming an imaginary graveyard, a heterotopia, or other-world, in which Baudri could express intense personal feelings and kinds of mourning that he could not express in public. Much of this expression is conveyed through the arrangement of the poems.

Chapter IV, “Ars Poetica and Appeals to Current and Future Readers,” focuses on the center of the *libellus*, which consists mainly of poems to other writers and poems about Baudri’s writing. Through close readings of four poems, the chapter compiles Baudri’s reflections on the relationship of the writer to the poem and the writer to readers and his contradictory claims that nothing he writes is true.

Chapter V, “‘Adelae Comitissae’ as Heterotopia,” is a close reading of Baudri’s long ekphrastic poem to Countess Adela of Blois. The chapter focuses on Baudri’s relationship to Adela, as portrayed in the poem, made possible by the heterotopia he creates for Adela. The heterotopia is a detailed description of an imaginary private room for reading and reflection, containing artworks that represent multiple temporalities.

Chapter VI, “Conclusion,” returns to the ring structure of the *libellus* and discusses how the end connects to the beginning.
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I began the process of learning about Baudri in 2007, and over time he became a surprising but reliable companion. I send thanks to him.
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Chapter I

Introduction

Baudri of Bourgueil (1046-1107 CE) served as an abbot and later as a bishop, was an historian, hagiographer, and a private poet. He bequeathed to the future a manuscript comprising 256 poems, extraordinary in its extent and variety. Few authors of medieval Latin verse came close to creating a collection as numerous and diverse (Tilliette, *Carmina* 1 xvii). Though over the centuries the manuscript became disordered, Karlheinz Hilbert and Jean-Yves Tilliette, editors of the two most recent scholarly editions of Baudri’s manuscript, were able to conclude that a gathering of 153 poems, on leaves that were originally the first in the manuscript, was almost certainly prepared under Baudri’s direction (Hilbert, *Studien* 306-311; Tilliette, “Note” 242-243). The design and construction of the manuscript, as well as poems Baudri wrote describing the manuscript, make evident the care with which he supervised the transcription and arranged the order of these poems (Tilliette, *Carmina* 1 xliii). This thesis will focus on these first 153 poems as a distinct work. Several times Baudri uses the term *libellus* (“little book”) in relation to this section, and I will use the same term to distinguish this group from the manuscript as a whole. Though Baudri’s poetry has received considerable twentieth- and twenty-first century attention, little has been written about the *libellus* as a work with a deliberate

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1 The complete manuscript of Baudri’s poetry is in the Vatican Library, Reginensis Latinus 1351. The library has made digitized images available at the website https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Reg.lat.1351. In this thesis, I refer to a poem by the abbreviation c. (for *carmen*, poem), the number under which it appears in Hilbert 1979 and Tilliette 1998/2002, and the title, including line numbers for quotations.

Translations of the Latin, unless noted otherwise, are my own.
structure, or how that structure might influence interpretations of individual poems. My thesis focuses on the structure of the *libellus* and the ways placement of poems within the *libellus* complicates and enriches their readings, drawing on queer literary theory to suggest new perspectives on Baudri’s coded communications, varied forms of silence, apparent intimacies, and shifting sense of temporalities.

The *libellus* includes examples of the many genres practiced by classical and Carolingian poets: including letter-poems, didactic poems, satires, epigrams, and a lament, as well as forms more specific to medieval Latin verse, including a dream vision, puzzles and riddles, and many epitaphs and short poems memorializing other clerics.\(^2\) With the exception of some rhyming poems, the *libellus* poems are written in dactylic hexameters and elegiac couplets, the meters frequently used by classical Latin poets such as Virgil and Ovid, for epic poetry and love poetry. Almost all the poems include allusions to, paraphrases of, and quotations from the work of those canonical poets, creating a textual intermingling of past and present, and a multiplicity of voices. Baudri’s subjects are also diverse, including poems about his writing process and tools, and, among the letter-poems, poems addressed to adolescents (primarily boys), to men, and, a smaller number, to women. Many of these letter-poems express intense and loving friendships, across a spectrum of possible spiritual to erotic connections, and these poems have fostered speculations about Baudri’s sexuality. In a number of such poems, Baudri describes himself as did Ovid, the classical Latin poet who most strongly influenced him,

\(^2\) Such poems were typically written for mortuary rolls, long and narrow pieces of parchment wound on rods, for recording the names of those who had died and, often, memorializing them in verse. The rolls circulated among monasteries (Kahn 7-14.)
as a chaste person with a playful muse. Baudri’s love poems, and his poems about writing love poems, demonstrate his mastery of Ovidian techniques for creating ambiguities and making declarations that imply something different from what they state. Writing within the boundaries of classical Latin vocabulary and meters, Baudri draws attention to the possibilities of undefined, indeterminate situations and emotions, though only readers who share Baudri’s familiarity with classical literature and who respond to his invitation to “sermones nostros intellige pectore fido” (“to see into my discourse with a faithful heart,” c. 89, 7) may recognize those possibilities.

Baudri of Bourgueil: A Very Brief Biography

Baudri of Bourgueil was born c. 1046, probably at Meung-sur-Loire, near Orleans, and died on January 30, 1130/1. Synthesizing the work of previous researchers, Stephen Biddlecombe conjectures that Baudri’s family was poor and without any significant connections (xiii). Baudri’s written works demonstrate his depth of knowledge and devotion to literature, but there is no specific evidence regarding where and how he was educated. Biddlecombe concludes that probably Baudri studied with the teacher Hubertus, whom he eloquently memorializes in “De magistro suo planctus” (“Lament for his teacher,” c. 74), and thereafter taught himself (xv). At some point between 1060 and 1070 Baudri joined the Benedictine abbey at Bourgueil, in the Loire Valley, where he became a prior (c. 1077) and then an abbot (c. 1089). At that time the Loire Valley was home to other poets who shared Baudri’s reverence for classical poetry and his interest in Ovid, including two to whom Baudri later addressed poems, Marbod of Rennes, and

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3 Baudri makes this declaration in various ways. See, for example, c. 99, 197, “Musa iocosa fuit moresque fuere pudici” (“My muse was playful and my habits were chaste”).
Hildebert of Lavardin (“Marbodo poetarum optimo” [“To Marbod best of poets,” c. 86] and “Audeberto Cenomannensi archidiacono” [“To Hildebert, archdeacon of Mans,” c. 87]).

Baudri wrote most of his poetry during his time at Bourgueil, which he often praises as an ideal location for reading and study: “ipse locum novi qui floridus ocia gignit/libros et cartas et cuncta studentibus apta” (“I know the very place which in bloom begets/ leisure and books and writing and everything fit for study,” c.77, 158-59). He complains, however, that his abbatial responsibilities take up most of his time. In 1107 he was named Archbishop of Dol, in Brittany, a disputed position he neither sought nor wanted, in a place and among people he found uncultured and uncongenial (Tilliette, Carmina 1 ix.) He traveled frequently and eventually settled at a distance from Dol, teaching and writing in various prose forms but not in poetry.

Baudri lived during a time of profound transition in ecclesiastical and cultural spheres. During the late eleventh and early twelfth centuries, women’s economic, social, and legal rights reached what Gerald Bond identifies as a “medieval high point” (Loving 129). Some convent schools, such as the one at Ronceray d’Angers, near Bourgueil, offered opportunities for women to learn to read and write in Latin, which made written exchanges between men and women newly possible (Bond, Loving 136). At the same period, Gregorian reforms increased the power of the papacy and led to more rigorous enforcement of rules of clerical conduct, such as compulsory celibacy and the prohibition of simony. The reform movement also led to heightened condemnation of sexual acts considered unnatural. Sodomy, which had been a “catch-all category for all that is evil and unclassifiable” (Burgwinkle 1) took on more specific associations with
homosexuality and particularly, as in Peter Damian’s *Liber Gomorrhianus* (1049), with sexual acts between clergy or monks and their “spiritual children” (Jordan 49). It became common for schools to be accused of allowing sodomy and pederasty (Bond, “locus” 166). This period was also a time of renewed interest in Ovid. Though Ovid held a place among the classical authors considered *auctores* (authorities worthy of imitation), and though his works were taught in schools, those works were also considered subversive because they acknowledged erotic feelings with varying degrees of openness (Hexter, “Ovid’s Body” 138; Bond, “Composing” 85). Perhaps as a result of such complications, Baudri was able to write poetry influenced by Ovid, but not to share it widely. During his lifetime, Baudri was considered a skilled and elegant writer of Latin prose and several of his prose works were written at the request of other clerics (Tilliette, *Carmina* 1 xxx-xv). His most widely read work is a history of the First Crusade, *Historia Ierosolimitana*, based on a version of the *Gesta Francorum*, and composed c. 1105-1108 (Biddlecombe xxiv-xxv). Baudri’s poetry, however, survives in only a single manuscript (Vatican Reg. Lat. 1351). Baudri chose not to show his poetry beyond the small circle of poets who shared his interests. His letter poems are a likely cause for that restraint (Bond, “locus” 152, 166-168; Jaeger, *Ennobling* 71-81, 100-101). In a period when attacks against sodomy were increasing, Baudri may have feared the accusations of zealous reformers, or he may have feared that others outside his circle of classicist humanists would misunderstand his work. Interpreting the tone of Baudri’s poems is a compelling puzzle: the voice seems to be confiding, but also coded; intimate, but also distant.

The Scholarly Debate on Sexuality in Baudri’s Poetry
Though the speaker in several of Baudri’s poems expresses fears he will be
censured for sexual improprieties in his poetry, no evidence of such criticism during his
lifetime has so far been discovered.4 There were few opportunities for written criticism,
since his poetry did not circulate widely during his lifetime, or for more than half a
millennium thereafter. Though the manuscript survived, there is no remaining record of
its existence until the early fifteenth century, when there was a report of a small twelfth-
century volume on parchment among the manuscripts of the Alexandre Petau collection,
a volume of fifty-two leaves which consisted entirely of poems by Baudri de Bourgueil—
the manuscript now in the Vatican Library (Delisle, “Note” 23). The manuscript returned
to oblivion until the mid-seventeenth century, when historian André Duchesne made
copies of the poems he considered most important, primarily epitaphs and letters, or
extracts of letters, addressed to others better known than Baudri (Tilliette, Carmina 1
xlvii-xlviii). Most of these transcriptions were included in the fourth volume of the
Historiae Francorum scriptores coetanei (251-79) and were later reprinted in the
Patrologia Latina (vol. 166, col. 1881-1208). In 1650, Petau sold his manuscript
collection to Queen Christina of Sweden, who deposited it in the Ottobonian Library at
the Vatican, where it was reviewed by the Benedictine scholar and founder of modern
palaeography, Jean Mabillon (Delisle, “Note” 23-24). Mabillon included several of the
poems in Annals of the Benedictine Order (as reported by Tilliette, Carmina 1 xlvii). In
1843, another of Baudri’s poems, the lament for his teacher Hubertus mentioned above,

4 For Baudri’s fears, see c. 1 “Contra obtrectatores consolatur librum suum” (“Against detractors he
consoles his book”); c. 8 “Qua intentione scripsert” (“With what intention did he write”); and c. 99 “Ad
Godefredum Remensem” (“To Godfrey of Reims”). These poems are discussed in Chapters I and III.
appeared in a collection issued by Edélstand du Méril, titled *Poésies Populaires Latines du Moyen Age*, 292-93 (Carmina 1, xlviiiin129).

To summarize, over the six centuries from the manuscript’s completion to the mid-nineteenth century, no extant written record exists commenting on Baudri’s entire manuscript, or about the 153 poems which comprise the *libellus*. No observation survived on the sexual or erotic characteristics of any of the poems, or what the presence of those poems might indicate about the rest of the manuscript or the nature of its author.

Then, in 1850, André Salmon, a Chartist historian specializing in the history of Touraine, made copies of those poems in the manuscript that had not already been published (Tilliette, *Carmina* 1 xlix). Salmon died in 1857, and Leopold Delisle took up the task of making Baudri’s work accessible, first publishing one of Baudri’s mortuary roll poems (c. 22) and then, using Salmon’s copy, Baudri’s longest poem, “Adelae Comitissae” (“To Countess Adela,” c. 134), an ekphrastic poem addressed to Adela of Blois (Delisle, *Poème*). Most significant in the long process of making Baudri’s manuscript known, in 1872, Delisle published an article listing the contents of the manuscript in detail, “Note sur les Poésies de Baudri, abbé de Bourgueil” (described in Tilliette, *Carmina* 1, xlix). After Delisle’s “Note” became available, articles about Baudri, about individual poems, and about the manuscript as a whole began to appear more frequently. In 1878 Henri Pasquier’s doctoral thesis, *Un Poète Latin Du XIe Siècle: Baudri, Abbé De Bourgueil, Archevêque De Dol, 1046-1130: D'après Des Documents Inédits* (1046-1130), was published.

Though most scholarship about Baudri’s work focused on a description of a textile depicting the Battle of Hastings in “Adelae Comitissae,” as possible evidence for
dating the Bayeux Tapestry, at least one early scholar discovered erotic content in Baudri’s poems. In an 1876 review of historians of the First Crusade, Ch. Thurot notes, “Quelque pièces du recueil sont des poésies erotiques, dont les unes rapellent la seconde églogue de Virgile, et dont l’autres sont une imitation des héroïdes d’Ovide.” (“Some items in the collection are erotic poems, of which a few recall Virgil’s second eclogue, and others are an imitations of Ovid’s heroides,” 373). Thurot also describes what will be an enduring puzzle, how Baudri reconciles “la passion qu’il exprime en son nom avec le convenances de sa profession monastique” (“the passion he expresses in his name with the requirements of monasticism,” 373).

The next major step after Delisle’s detailed account was the 1926 publication of the scholarly edition of Baudri’s complete manuscript, Les oeuvres poétiques de Baudri de Bourgueil (1046-1130). Edition critique publiée d’après le manuscript du Vatican (Abrahams 1926). Phyllis Abrahams, the editor, faced the difficulty of working from photographs of the manuscript, resorting to Salmon’s copy when the photographs did not serve. Though noting the foliation of the manuscript suggested it was out of order, Abrahams did not restore the original order of the poems. She limited herself to brief summaries of each poem, without conjecture or great detail. The reviews immediately following the book’s appearance focused either on faults in Abrahams’ work or reassurances that she had done the best possible under the circumstances, but, again, at least one alluded to erotic references in the poems (Jacob 154).

The availability of a complete edition created opportunities for wider reading and critical responses to the work as a whole. Commenting on possibly erotic passages, F. J.

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5 Thurot is referring to “Ad iuvenem nimiris elatum” (c. 3) and poems in the form of Ovid’s Heroïdes (c. 7 and c. 8, c. 97 and c.98, and c. 200 and c. 201).
R. Raby and Ernst Curtius demonstrate the poles of defense and nonchalance. Raby observes, in his *A History of Christian-Latin Poetry from the Beginnings to the Close of the Middle Ages* (1953) that Baudri’s “love for the religious life was probably quite sincere” (283), and

Nature had not formed him to be a ruler or an administrator; he had none of that spiritual and intellectual conviction which guided an Anselm or a Hildebert through the dangers and difficulties of high office. Yet he remains an attractive figure, a lover of learning, of order, and of decency in a time when the graces of civilization were being painfully restored (285).

In his *History of Secular Latin Poetry in the Middle Ages* Raby goes into more detail (1934). In reference to Baudri’s “Qua intentione scripserit” (c. 85), one of the poems in which Baudri draws distinctions between the playfulness of his written work and the chastity of his private life, Raby comments that “the light verses to which he refers are, indeed, harmless enough. . . probably school-compositions furbished up in later years” (2:342). On Paris’s condemnation of the Trojans for effeminacy and homosexuality in Baudri’s c. 7, Raby also declares Baudri innocent of impropriety: “Although Baudri makes Paris employ the plainest language, this would cause no scandal to his critics” (2:343). Curtius addresses the question of Baudri’s sexuality in a brief sub-section on sodomy in his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, commenting “…when poets of the Middle Ages chose male homosexuality as material, it is often difficult to know whether we have to do with the imitation (imitatio) of literary models . . or whether actual feeling is speaking” (115). In relation to these lines from Baudri’s letter-poem to Godfrey of Reims,

Objiciunt etiam juvenum cur more loquutus
virginibus scripsi nec minus et pueris.
Nam scripsi quaedam quae complectuntur amorem
carminibusque meis sexus uterque placet (c. 99, 183-186).
And they reproach me by asking why in a youthful tone
I wrote to girls no less than to boys.
Yes, I wrote some things with love in them,
And there is pleasure in my poems for either sex.

Curtius comments that “the Ovidian ‘either. . .or’ usually meant ‘both. . . and’” (115), implying that Baudri meant his sexual interests were not exclusively male.

In the 1980s, a profound shift in writing about Baudri’s Carmina began, made possible by Hilbert’s dissertation (1967) and new scholarly edition of the poems (1979), in which he presented a corrected order based on an examination of the manuscript in the Vatican Library. Additionally, the wider applications of structuralist, deconstructionist, and feminist studies, and the rise of cultural and gender studies brought new perspectives to thinking about medieval history and literature. The publication of John Boswell’s Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe From the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century in 1980 was a major factor in changing perspectives on Baudri’s work, though Boswell, like earlier critics, focused on particular poems by Baudri, taken out of the context of the work as a whole. In Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, Boswell, a philologist and medieval historian, presented the revolutionary thesis that homosexuality had been accepted for a substantial period of the Middle Ages. Paul Robinson, a Stanford University historian, reviewing the book for the New York Times Book Review, wrote “I would not hesitate to call his book revolutionary, for it tells of things heretofore unimagined and sets a standard of excellence that one would have thought impossible in the treatment of an issue so large, uncharted and vexed” (qtd. in Dunlap 44). The book’s combination of vast scope and specific detail is indeed astonishing, and Boswell gives Baudri a small but significant role in the vast panorama. Boswell’s study of Baudri begins with a sentence
often subsequently quoted and debated: “Baudri of Bourgueil. . . epitomizes the transition from the ascetic passions of the monastic love tradition. . . to the baldly erotic poetry more characteristic of the eleventh and twelfth centuries” (244). He places Baudri within a “reappearance for the first time since the decline of Rome . . . [of] what might be called a gay subculture” (245), or, in other words, within a group who experienced, without any related social exclusion, “romantic interest in persons of the same gender” (246). Though mentioning some of Baudri’s poems of spiritual connection, such as that to Godfrey of Reims (c. 99), Boswell focuses on love poems in which he sees Baudri expressing physical attraction and romantic emotional connections.

Boswell’s writing about Baudri illustrates the challenges faced by all those who attempt to define his sexuality. These poems can be read in many ways. For example, Boswell deems Baudri’s gift of a comb in “Petro Nobilissimo” (“To the Most Noble Petrus,” c. 145) as a token of erotic love, and Tilliette, explicitly countering Boswell, describes the comb as a necessity for a monk (Carmina 2 227-8 n. 4). In addition, the manuscript is full of apparent contradictions that raise unanswerable questions: such as, why does Baudri have his Paris in c. 7 speak a diatribe against Greek homosexuality? What specific accusations does Baudri defend himself against? And what does he mean by explaining he wrote for girls no less than for boys? Like others writing about Baudri, Boswell weaves a narrative that explains him: Baudri experienced spiritual friendships with men and romantic attractions to young men and perhaps women, stirred by their

6 Tilliette’s note reads: “pecten: J. Boswell . . . fait de ce peigne un symbole erotique, de meme qu’il debusque sous le ludus du v. 16 des connotations sexuelles. Plus prudemment, rappelons que le peigne etait une piece indispensable de l’equipement du moine et constituait de ce fait un cadeau apprecie.” (“J. Boswell makes the comb an erotic symbol just as he finds sexual connotations in the ludus of l. 16. More prudently, let us remember that the comb was an indispensable part of a monk’s equipment and a valued gift.”)
physical beauty; his career was affected by “mysterious scandals” not related to his sexuality (246), but he felt that it was necessary for him to be discreet about his personal life, and for that reason he “tried to disclaim” (246) his love poetry. Boswell concludes that it is obvious Baudri was more concerned about any perceived impropriety of a bishop writing love poetry than about the gender of those to whom he wrote, and he “clearly accepted love as good in and of itself and he had no trouble expressing love to a person of the same gender” (247). Boswell draws this last conclusion from lines in one of Baudri’s *Heroides*-influenced poems, an exchange between Ovid and Florus (a close friend of Ovid’s, invented by Baudri for the poem). The lines Boswell quotes are addressed by Florus to Ovid, declaring his belief that Ovid has done nothing wrong and does not deserve exile. Boswell quotes Abraham’ edition, and the translation is his own. Lines Boswell omitted appear below in italics, and the translation of those lines is mine.

```
Non tu secula doces, sed secula te docuerunt
Argus decipitur versibus absque tuis
Versibus absque tuis delentur moenia Troiae
Novit amare Venus versibus absque tuis
Naturam nostrum plenam deus egit amoris
Nos natura docet, quod deus hanc docuit.
Si cupatur amor, actor culpetur amoris:
Actor amoris enim criminis actor erit.
Quod sumus, est crimen, si crimen sit, quo amamus
Qui dedit esse, deus prestare amare michi (47, 50-52, 55-56).
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It is not you who teach the age but the age which instructs you
*Argus is deceived without your verses,*

*Without your verses the walls of Troy are destroyed.*

*Venus knew how to love without your verses.*

*God made our natures full of love*

*Nature teaches us what God taught her*

*If love is condemned, let the one who set the love in motion be condemned.*

*For the agent of the love will be the agent of the crime.*

*What we are is a crime if it is a crime to love*

*For the God who made me live made me love (247).*
Boswell is more concerned with the significance of this claim to the sanctity of desire than with the context in which it appears. He treats the lines as a direct expression of Baudri’s thoughts and feelings. Later critics will take more complex positions.

Thomas Stehling, like Boswell, wrote with the goal of bringing medieval homosexual poetry to light. Stehling cites Boswell frequently in his article, “To Love a Medieval Boy” (1983) and in his anthology *Medieval Latin Poems of Male Love and Friendship* (1984). In the article, Stehling argues that much medieval homosexual poetry has gone unrecognized by modern readers, who expect to see a more blatant emphasis on sexual preference than medieval authors expressed. Stehling asserts that homosexual poetry was likely to have developed in male monastic communities and that the emphasis on classical literature in such poems may reflect efforts to provide respectable contexts. He points out differences he perceives in poems to boys and girls and presents a detailed argument that “Baudri’s poems show that he clearly delighted more in boys than in girls” (“To Love” 154). Stehling describes his anthology as comprising poems that, until his publication, had gone “mostly unacknowledged and untranslated” (xxxii). He follows Boswell’s lead, creating through the anthology a cross-temporal community of male poets who experienced intense emotional feelings for other men: feelings of friendship, affection, and, to different degrees, sexual attraction.

Scholars writing in the later 1980s and the 1990s read Baudri’s poetry more broadly and devoted more attention to Baudri’s allusions to classical authors. Gerald A. Bond and Jean-Yves Tilliette both contributed significantly to scholarship on Baudri during this period. Both see Baudri primarily as a humanist, a writer, and a cleric, but, after Boswell’s inclusion of Baudri among homosexual authors, the issue of Baudri’s
sexuality could not be ignored. Bond and Tilliette each addressed the question differently, which their comments on Baudri’s “Ad iuvenem nimirum elatum” (“To a youth too proud,” c. 3), one of the poems mentioned by Boswell and included in Stehling’s anthology, illustrate. For Bond, the significant accomplishments of Baudri’s poetic oeuvre were “his plea for unrestrained reading, his decriminalization of desire, his mastery of Ovid, his radical treatment of friendship, his allegorization of myth, his sense of the individual, his defense of poetry” (“Iocus” 144): all concepts Bond developed in detail in two articles and a book (“Iocus,” “Composing,” and Loving). Bond’s Baudri was a master of the ambiguity he learned from Ovid, and his cultivated ambiguities frequently blurred distinctions between amicitia (profound friendship) and amor (love that includes desire). Bond offers no opinion on Baudri’s sexual feelings or experiences but notes:

No matter how cautiously one proceeds one cannot escape the conclusion that Baudri intentionally evoked a homosexual relationship in many of his poems by discussing amor with men in a context from which explicitly Christian values have been removed . . .

The force of Baudri’s letter-poems, like that of the troubadour lyric, lies precisely in their hazardous play with the taboo, their display of the dialectic between the public language of restraint and the private thought of release, embedded in a generic framework whose inherent duplicity reinforces the reader’s inability to resolve the ambiguities” (“Iocus” 166-67).

I agree with Bond that Baudri offers his readers ambiguities to resolve, but I speculate Baudri considered some of his readers—perhaps his future readers—could formulate resolutions. I discuss Baudri’s relationship with his readers in more detail in Chapter IV.

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8 I discuss this poem in detail in Chapter II.
9 The quotations above are from Bond’s first article about Baudri Iocus Amoris : The Poetry of Baudri of Bourgueil and the Formation of the Ovidian Subculture, where he cites Boswell as a source for general history on views of homosexuality within the Christian church, but adds the caveat, whose bias however at times distorts the evidence.” The caveat is missing from a Boswell citation in Bond’s reworking of the article in his 1996 The Loving Subject: Desire, Eloquence, and Power in Romanesque France.
Jean-Yves Tilliette has written more about Baudri and in more detail than any other scholar, beginning with his dissertation from the Sorbonne, Rhétorique et poétique chez les poètes latins médiévaux: recherches sur Baudri de Bourgueil (1991). He has published an ongoing series of articles on Baudri’s poetry and related topics in medieval Latin rhetoric and poetry, and he edited a new scholarly edition of Baudri’s poetry, with extensive notes that are invaluable (1998 and 2002). Tilliette’s view of the degree to which Baudri’s poems express his own sexuality is different from Bond’s, as is clear in his notes to “Ad iuvenem nimis elatum”:

Le même theme est développé par Marbode, dans son c. 2, 4 . . . en des termes très voisins et selon exactement le même plan (1. Beauté du jeune homme; 2. Sa froideur à l’égard de ses amoureux; 3. Qu’il prenne garde à la fuite du temps qui lui ôtera ses charmes). Le theme développé ici, comme dans mainte autre epistula ad iuvenem e.g., cc. 4, 5, 93, 94, 113, 145, 197), est donc sans équivoque un theme moral, ainsi que l’a bien vu C. S. Jaeger, qui commente le présente poème aux pages 315-316 de son ouvrage The Envy of Angels. Cathedral Schools and Social Ideas in Medieval Europe, 950-1200, Philadelphie, 1994. Le réduire à la description pueri des vers 7-19 (une convention littéraire avec laquelle joue notre auteur) pour en faire un témoignage de la “culture gay” (!) à laquelle J. Boswell annexe Baudri . . . coduit donc inévitablement au contresens. Le point de vue de notre auteur sur l’homosexualité s’exprime, en termes non “culturels”, mais brutallement physiologiques, dans les cc. 7-119-146 et 77, 94-124 (Carmina 1 150 n1).

The same theme is developed by Marbode, in his c. 2, 4 . . . in very similar terms and according to exactly the same plan (1. Beauty of the young man; 2. His coldness towards his lovers; 3. Let him beware the flight of time will steal away his charms). The theme developed here, as in many other epistula ad iuvenem e.g., cc. 4, 5, 93, 94, 113, 145, 197), is therefore without equivocation a moral theme, as C. Steven Jaeger has clearly seen and expressed in his comments on this poem on pages 315-316 of his book The Envy of Angels. Cathedral Schools and Social Ideas in Medieval Europe, 950-1200. . . To reduce it to the descriptio pueri of verses 7-19 (a literary convention with which our author plays) to make it proof of the "gay culture" (!) to which J. Boswell attaches Baudri . . . inevitably leads to misinterpretation. Our author's point of view on homosexuality is expressed, not in “cultural” terms, but brutally physiological, in poems 7, 119-146, and 77, 94-24.
Tilliette asserts that given the impossibility of interpreting the poet’s intentions, to make inferences about his sexuality rather than relying on his direct statements will inevitably lead to unwarranted conclusions. As he wrote in a 2004 essay, “Nous n’avons plus que les textes la vérité des êtres, quant à elle, nous échappe” (“We have nothing more than the texts: the truth of beings, on the other hand, escapes us,” “Vie” 84).

Boswell, Bond, and Tilliette represent three attitudes scholars have taken toward the expression of sexuality in Baudri’s poems. In Boswell’s view, these poems clearly express homosocial friendships and homosexual attractions. In Tilliette’s view, the author’s sexuality is impossible to know at this great distance in time, and making such inferences distorts what is expressed by the texts; although, Tilliette may be unconsciously inferring that Baudri was heterosexual. In Bond’s view, homoeroticism and homosexuality are present in the texts and their presence can, reasonably, be inferred in the author.

Perspectives from Queer Theory

Other scholars, influenced by feminist and queer theories, have approached issues of sexuality in Baudri’s work in terms of the “queerness” of the text, rather than the sexuality of the author. Tison Pugh, in Queering Medieval Genres (2004), explores medieval writers’ disrupting of genre expectations as a form of resistance to heteronormativity. He interprets the work of Baudri, and other poets of the Loire Valley circle, as exploring “the vibrant tension between a resistant queerness and an enthusiastic Christianity” (15). Susannah Brower, in her dissertation “Gender, Power, and Persona in the Poetry of Baudri of Bourgueil” (2010), applies feminist theory in identifying ways Baudri, through a persona modelled on Ovid’s preceptor in the Ars Amatoria and
Amores, exerts his greater power in sexualized discourse addressed to boys and nuns. Brower suggests that Baudri was drawn to depict those dynamics by a sense of disenfranchisement caused by Gregorian reforms (3). Katherine Kong, in Lettering the Self in Medieval and Early Modern France (2010), devotes a chapter to a letter-exchange between Baudri and Constantia, identified by some scholars as a nun or postulant at Le Ronceray and by others as a persona created by Baudri. Kong seeks to demonstrate that the exchange enacts varied relationships through manipulating “established letter-writing traditions and conventions” (17). Kong agrees with Bond and Boswell that the vocabularies of friendship and love can be difficult to distinguish in medieval literature, but she argues that making the distinction is not necessary for her reading of Baudri.  

The queer theorists who have most influenced my reading of Baudri’s libellus have not addressed Baudri’s work specifically, but have applied non-normative perspectives to experiences of and literature about gender, sexuality, and temporality, in ways that I find applicable to Baudri’s work. Queer theory views homosexuality and heterosexuality as mutually defining each other, recognizes that gender and sexual identities are fluid and unstable, and affirms the existence of deviant ways of experiencing and representing temporalities (Marcus 196-7). Resistance to norms is consistent in queer theory, but, since neither the normative nor the queer are consistent, from place to place or from time to time, as Carolyn Dinshaw explains, queerness “is not a hard and fast quality. . . but is a relation to a norm, and both the norm and the particular queer lack of fit will vary according to specific instances” (Getting Medieval 39). Queer theory is particularly useful in relation to the medieval period because of its attention to

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10 Kong references Bond (Loving 60), and Boswell (47). This Heroides-like pairing is in the latter part of the manuscript, after the libellus, and I do not discuss it in this thesis.
specific instances and its practice of exploring both alterities and identities. Glenn Burger and Steven F. Kruger address this point in their introduction to *Queering the Middle Ages*, asserting that “scholars have begun, despite their recognition of the at least partial incommensurability of contemporary queer formulations to medieval subjectivities and sexualities, to consider how the Middle Ages might be queer and how we might queer the Middle Ages” (xiv). One approach to this project is seeking “to find counterparts in the past,” a phrase from Louise Fradenburg and Carla Freccero’s *Premodern Sexualities* (viii). By “counterparts,” Fradenburg and Freccero point toward, not those who duplicate contemporary sexualities, but others whose lives and sexualities were experienced in resistance to norms of their times, as I argue in this thesis that Baudri’s were. Carolyn Dinshaw also discusses the urge to find counterparts, which she calls, memorably, “a queer historical impulse, an impulse toward making connections across time, between, on the one hand, lives, texts, and other cultural phenomena left out of sexual categories back then and, on the other, those left out of current sexual categories now” (*Getting Medieval* 1). In Baudri’s situation, I will argue, that impulse toward making connections was dual, as he sought to forge connections both with classical authors of the past and with future readers of his poetry.

The desire to connect with Baudri’s *libellus* led me to read queer theorists, and reading queer theorists suggested to me new ways to investigate and analyze Baudri’s work. The influences of works by Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Carolyn Dinshaw, and Elizabeth Freeman run throughout this thesis, though the thesis does not directly relate their work to Baudri’s *libellus*. Citations to others who write about queer theory and queer medievalism appear in the text.
In Chapter II, “The Libellus Structure and Poem Arrangement,” I discuss Baudri’s writing process and the arrangement of the libellus as a ring structure. I carry out a close reading of the first poem, “Contra obtrectatores consolatur librum suum” (“Against detractors he consoles his book”) as an introduction to the libellus as a whole and to Baudri’s use of ambiguities, silences, seccrecies, and disclosures to protect yet reveal himself. This reading of “Contra” is influenced by Segwick’s analyses of the degrees of secrecy and disclosure that binary cultures require of homosexuals. In this chapter I also read closely “Somnium et expositio somnii” (“A dream and the dream’s exposition,” c. 2), as dream-vision expressing the same anxieties Baudri alludes to in “Contra.” Chapter II concludes with a detailed discussion of Baudri’s persona in “Ad iuvenem nimis elatum” (“To a youth too proud,” c. 3) and his relationship to the boy he addresses. My reading is influenced by Elizabeth Freeman’s concept of “temporal drag,” which she defines as “the power of anachronism to unsituate viewers from the present tense they think they know” (61). I consider Baudri’s allusions to classical Latin poetry, particularly in poems such as “Ad iuvenem nimis elatum” (c. 3), as a form of deliberate asynchrony.

Chapter III, “Funerary Poems as a Graveyard Heterotopia,” focuses on a group of mortuary roll and epitaphic poems through which, I argue, Baudri creates an imaginary graveyard, in which graves and epitaphs are arranged in ways that reflect his relationships to the dead. I also consider the graveyard poems as forming a heterotopia, in which multiple locations and times come into conjunction. These interpretations are influenced by Dinshaw’s How Soon Is Now: Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time, which addresses “forms of desirous, embodied being that are out of sync with
the ordinarily linear measurements of everyday life” (4). *How Soon is Now* opened my eyes to the many kinds of temporality inherent in Baudri’s *libellus*.

Chapter IV, “*Ars Poetica* and Appeals to Current and Future Readers,” focuses on the group of poems at the center of the *libellus*, which primarily address other writers and potential readers. In these poems, Baudri writes about his writing processes and presents his ideas about relationships among writer, text, and readers. As in Chapter II, he creates ambiguities around the possibilities of erotic content in his writing and the degree to which his poems reflect his own life, asserting that his life is chaste. My readings of these poems also draw on my awareness of Baudri’s various degrees of reticence, influenced by Sedgwick’s *Epistemology*.

Chapter V, “‘Adelae Comitissae’ as Heterotopia,” is about the longest poem in the *libellus*, addressed to Countess Adela of Blois. In this poem, Baudri describes his imaginary creation of an astonishingly wonderful reading chamber for the Countess, containing artworks representing a summary of the knowledge of his time. Though Baudri probably never met Countess Adela, I speculate that, through creating the chamber, Baudri is able to imagine himself in relationship to an Adela he imagines, and possibly as the Adela he imagines. This reading is influenced by the possibilities of gender fluidities suggested by Sedgwick, Dinshaw, Freeman, and others.

Though I have approached this thesis as a scholar, I was led to studying Baudri by a sense of connection that seemed, until I read Dinshaw, disproportionate. I felt that, despite the vast differences in the conditions of my life and the life I could imagine as his, despite the uncountable unknowns I faced when trying to imagine his life—how old was he when he entered the monastery? did he speak Latin at meals with other monks? was
he truly confident his manuscript would survive?—that I could sense an essence of a
person present in, or through, the poems. I felt that the poems were extending an
invitation, not to me, in particular, but to whomever could understand some part of what
he could neither express directly nor omit entirely, and that he had written in part in
hopes that the future would offer that understanding. There is an example of such an
invitation, at the end of “De graphio fracto gravis dolor” (“Heavy grief for his broken
stylus,” c. 92).

Et, si quid possunt mea carmina posteritatis
Te commendo meis carminibus titulis.
Vos, o praesentes successurique poetae,
Hos legitote meos de graphio modulos.
Conqueror, o vates, quoniam qui carmina mecum
Mille stilus cecinit, discidit et periit (49-54).

If my songs carry anything into the future,
I entrust you [my stylus] to my poems.
You, poets now and to come, read these measures
Of mine about my stylus.
Poets, I weep for the stylus that sang a thousand poems
With me, broken and gone.

The poem is parodic and comedic; yet the invitation feels real.
Chapter II

The Libellus Structure and Poem Arrangement

This chapter presents evidence that the libellus is arranged as a chiastic ring structure. It describes the function of the first poem as an overture that introduces recurring themes, such as Baudri’s desires for time to write, to be with friends of his own choosing, and his fears of censure. Through close readings of the next two poems, the chapter explores ways these poems affect interpretations of those adjacent to them, expressing related concerns in different forms. The chapter also addresses Baudri’s relationship with classical Latin poetry, particularly the work of Ovid.

Baudri’s Writing Process and the Arrangement of the Libellus

Baudri’s poems provide so much detailed information about the actual process of writing—that is, recording words, rather than composing—that his works are the major source of information about writing during his period (Chartier 1-12). Based on information given in his manuscript, Baudri first wrote his poems on wooden frames filled with wax, called tablets, and used a metal stylus to mark letters into the wax. Writing in wax tablets was the standard method for keeping track of information that did not require long-term preservation. The libellus includes poems about writing on, caring for, and giving and receiving tablets, as well as poems addressed to his tablets and a lament for a favorite stylus that broke. One of these poems, “Ludendo de tabluis suis” (“At play with his tablets,” c. 12) describes a set of eight small tablets bound together, on which he could fit a total of 112 hexameters, a limitation that I conjecture influenced the
number of short poems Baudri wrote. In order to preserve his work, Baudri passed the tablets on to scribes, who transcribed the text onto parchment. Meanwhile, Baudri waited eagerly for the return of his tablets that would allow him to compose new work, as indicated by two poems to scribes urging them to speed up their transcription (c. 9 and c. 84). His poetry includes no clues about his process of ordering the poems in the *libellus*. Based on the *libellus* itself, it is unlikely that the poems were arranged simply in the order of their composition or transcription, since there is no clear chronology and some of the poems are in thematic groupings. Yet, reading the poems in the order in which they appear in the *libellus* conveys a sense of an organizing presence. I conjecture that Baudri’s process may have been similar to that which poets who are my contemporaries describe, when they arrange the manuscript of a poetry collection. There is an interaction between the work they have accumulated over time and the ways those poems resemble and resonate with each other, what feels like a beginning, and what feels like an ending, regardless of when those poems were written, and, for some, what provides a strong center. For Baudri, I imagine, this process would have been complicated by the occasional unavailability of tablets and by lags in the transcription process, and these complications would account for some looseness in his arrangement.

Since there is no similar collection of poems selected and arranged by their author from Baudri’s time period, I searched for examples of other collections from the turn of the twelfth century. The closest model I found was a collection of letters by Hildebert of Lavardin, as described by Wim Verbaal (2017). Verbaal notes modern editors' puzzlement about the arrangement of premodern letter collections, since the letters that can be dated are not arranged in chronological order, and letters on related themes are not
always placed together. Such an arrangement is viewed as incoherent, or not really an
arrangement at all. For an alternative perspective, he turns to Roy Gibson’s views on the
arrangement of ancient letter collections, as grouped either by the person addressed, or by
general topic, or both; or, arranged to offer variety (56-78). Applying that concept to the
first fifty-seven letters of the Hildebert collection, which may have been collected and
edited by Hildebert himself, Verbaal makes observations similar to those I will present
about Baudri’s *libellus*. He concludes that the collection is framed by thematically linked
poems at beginning and end, that letters on similar themes are sometimes interwoven
among other letters and sometimes follow one on another, and “almost every letter
continues a topic from the preceding one while it opens up a new topic, that will be taken
up again in the next one” (113).

Tilliette’s brief discussion of the structure of Baudri’s *libellus* is quite similar to
Verbaal’s description of Hildebert’s letter collection. Tilliette, too, points out that though
the portion of the manuscript which I call the *libellus* at first may appear disorganized,
“des cc. 1 à 153 suffit à prouver qu’une telle volonté de mise en ordre structurelle existe,
que le projet de Baudri est bien de réaliser un livre...et non une simple collection de
poèmes” (“poems 1 to 153 are enough to prove that Baudri had a desire for structural
order, that his project was to make a book, and not a simple collection of poems,”
*Carmina* 1 xliii). Of particular interest for my approach, Tilliette locates the center of the
work, in pagination and in gravity, as three long poems “consacré par Baudri...à la
defense et à l’illustration de son inspiration” (“devoted by Baudri to the defense and

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11 There is no evidence that Hildebert wrote letters to Baudri, or that Baudri was influenced by Hildebert’s
letter collection, but it is possible that Baudri applied rhetorical principles from the *De ornamentis
verborum* of Marbod of Rennes, which Verbaal suggests Hildebert may have done.
illustration of his inspiration,” *Carmina* 1 xlv). These poems, all of which are love poems, though the kind of love differs, are a *Heroides*-like letter-exchange between Florus and Ovid, in which Baudri plays both parts; and a letter-poem to Godfrey of Reims, in which Baudri describes his reverence for Godfrey and his need to write, which I discuss in Chapter IV. Tilliette sees poem-to-poem connections and a center to the *libellus*. \(^ {12} \) I will argue that the *libellus* also comes close to a chiastic ring structure, as defined by Mary Douglas: that is, the beginning and the end are linked, forming an enclosing frame, and the series of poems from the beginning to the center is (roughly) symmetrical to the series of poems from the center to the ending (1-2). I discuss poem-to-poem linkages in this chapter and the next, and I will discuss ring structure and symmetry in Chapter IV and the Conclusion.

“Contra obtrectatores consolatur librum suum” (“Against detractors he consoles his book”)

*Contra Obtructatores*” functions as an overture, introducing themes that will be significant throughout the work. Those themes include Baudri’s assumption of Ovid’s voice and muse, his using and subverting classical genres, his presenting his poetry as his own yet separate from him, his depicting himself as an outsider possibly guilty of an unnamable crime, and his experience of time as shifting and malleable. The poem is composed of 65 couplets in elegiac meter, presented as the author’s speech to his *libellus* as it is about to leave him and go into the world, delivered in the moment of separation.
Baudri introduces the farewell with a trope from classical literature, echoing lines from Ovid’s *Tristia* I: 13

\[
\text{Vade, manus multas subiturus et atria multa,}
\]
\[
\text{Vade, liber trepidus, discidium metuens (c. 1, 1-2)}
\]

Go, to pass through many hands and many halls,
Go, trembling book, fearful of separation

By opening with this allusion, Baudri claims a place for himself and his *libellus* in the textual world of Latin literature and announces his assumption of an Ovidian persona. The allusion also initiates a particular relationship with readers: it acts as an invitation to those who recognize the trope to participate in, not exactly the Latinate world, but in Baudri’s staging of a Latinate world, while, presumably, the invitation presents mere words to those who do not recognize it.

The next section of the poem also extends an invitation to those who recognize it, this time to play with the genre of *accessus*, an introduction with some commentary. In Baudri’s period, it was customary for an *accessus* to appear at the beginning of a manuscript, written either by a commentator or by the author. The *accessus* generally provided information such as the title of the work, the author’s name and accomplishments, and notes on the structure of the manuscript and on the author’s intention (Minnis et al., 12-13). What Baudri provides, however, is an account of what his *libellus* lacks, first in the form of advice to the *libellus*, using the Latin terms often employed in an *accessus* for purpose, beginning, and ending.

\[
\text{Vade meus sine me, carmen sine nomine, vade,}
\]
\[
\text{Causa, principio, console, fine carens.}
\]
\[
\text{Sique tuum nomen vult fratrum}^{14}\text{ sollicitudo,}
\]

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13 Similar lines also appear Horace’s Epistle I, 20, but allusions to Horace do not recur throughout this poem, as references to Ovid do.

14 Tilliette’s note explains that Baudri uses the word *frater* (brother) to refer to monks (*Loving* 143n5).
“Nomen, quod petitis,” dic sibi, “non habeo. Si tamen et dignum vigilantia vestra coaptet, Annuo, non renuo, dicite quod deceat. Dicite qui deceat et vos et Burgulianum Vestro perpetuum filiolo titulum (3-10).

Go mine without me, poem without a name, go Lacking purpose, beginning, advice, an ending. And if the brothers’ anxiety demands your name, Say, “I don’t have what you ask, a name. But if you hunt up one worthy that fits I will nod, not deny, tell me what’s right. Tell one that suits both you and the man from Bourgueil To your little son, an immortal title.

As seen above, not only does the libellus lack a name, the author cannot be named directly, though “the man from Bourgueil” in line 9 is a clue that members of Baudri’s circle would immediately understand (Tilliette, “Anonymat” 12). It is noteworthy that Baudri assigns the task of delivering this puzzle to the libellus, rather than to himself, teaching the libellus how to speak ambiguously and how ambiguity can be a defense. His tone toward the libellus seems mentoring and tender, as, in line 10, he directs the libellus to describe itself, when speaking to critics, as a filiolo, little son.

The poem continues a description of the libellus, directed to the libellus:

Cur sis collectus, non est occasio multa:
Implevit pellem scriptor ebes sterilem.
Incipis in multis, in multis desinis atque
In multis pendes nec loca certa tenes:
Tantundem valeas, si quis praeposterat odas;
Est locus incertus quo magis incipias (c.1, 11-16).

There is no great reason why you were gathered:
A dull writer filled empty parchment.
You begin and you end, over and over, you hang In mid-air, there is no certainty in you.
You’d be worth the same, if your poems were reversed;
The place is uncertain, where better to begin.
When I first attempted to translate this poem, I thought of the description as a heightened version of the common medieval author’s modesty topos, but the specificity of the verb praepostero (line 11) puzzled me: why did Baudri specify reverse, rather than change, or shuffle? Burger and Kruger offer a possible answer, via Edelman. They point to a close reading by Edelman of Cleland’s Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure, in which Edelman writes that “sodomy . . . gets figured as the literalization of the ‘preposterous’ precisely insofar as it is interpreted as the practice of giving precedence to the posterior” (xi). Burger and Kruger make a wide range of associations to the queering effects of the “preposterous,” of reversing what seems to be the natural order. They include queer sex disturbing “the normative logic of a missionary position” and queer theory destabilizing sequences of cause and effect, for example by arguing that the cultural construction of heterosexuality causes the view of heterosexuality as natural, rather than the other way round (xii). I am not arguing that Baudri chose the verb praeposterat with such implications in mind but that he may have intended to suggest that rather than having an expectable forward progression, his libellus moved in a different way, which was impossible for him to describe. He may have intended to suggest also that he was experimenting with a kind of personal writing which as yet had no name and could only be described apophatically, by what it was not. Seemingly condemning the formlessness of his work, Baudri simultaneously suggests alternate understandings of it, as a work created by a writer’s desire to fill an emptiness, as a work composed of fragments, reflecting fragmented experience, and as a work in which the movement from poem to poem, forward and backward, is more significant than a linear progression from beginning to end. The alternate description is hiding in plain sight. Though in the lines
above Baudri may seem to belittle his *libellus*, in fact he is describing the new kind of work that he is creating.

In the first half of the poem, Baudri relates and responds to—or directs the *libellus* to respond to—accusations against him. Baudri tells the *libellus* it suffers from his lack of talent (21-26), but even more from his *musa iocosa*, though he insists the *musa iocosa* has not brought any harm to him (29-30). Readers can surmise what accusations have been or might be made against Baudri by his denials: his playful words have never done harm, his integrity always protects him (33-34), nothing unwholesome dirties him (40), frivolous talkers mark him with suspicion without any basis for it (41-42). Baudri is more direct in defending writing that his detractors would call *nugis* (trifles, 55) and he instructs the *libellus* to make counter-arguments, rather than denials: he fulfilled his responsibilities, he carried out his duties, but he wrote these poems because “nolebat vivere tempus iners” (“he did not want to spend time doing nothing,” 56), “haec ut vitaret ocia composit” (“he composed these poems to escape idleness,” 62), and “talia dictabat noctibus aut equitans” (“he composed such things at nights or on horseback,” 64). All of these issues recur in poems later in the *libellus*: the mutual dangers associated with close relationships, the dangers of suspicion that Baudri’s personal writing is morally wrong, and his need to live his time fully.

Approximately halfway in the poem, at line 70, Baudri’s tone changes from defense to attack, and he makes accusations of his own. He asserts that even bishops and

15 The phrase *crede mihi* (“believe me,” 33) which Baudri employs here and in several other poems is a signature of Ovid’s, which Ovid undermines by following it with the information that much of his work is untrustworthy (Ingleheart 49 nn 353, 354). Baudri’s *crede mihi* here raises the possibility he is not to be believed, yet he is speaking to his own book and, in a sense, to himself. This *crede mihi* raises more questions about Baudri’s ability to articulate the nature of his writing life than about his honesty in doing so.
kings have free time to spend as they wish, though their avocations are less worthy than
devotion to literature, and some blame others in order to avoid being blamed themselves
(70-84). This section closes with a prediction which my writing about him and his
libellus confirms:

Sed tu, vade, liber terroreque liber ab isto;
   Si sit opus, pro me martirium patere.
Olim tempus erit, cum per me tutior ibis,
   Cum michi liber ero, cum tibi credidero (85-88).

But you, book, go out, free from dread:
   If there is need, bear martyrdom for me.
The time will come, when you go more safely because of me,
   When I will be free in myself, when I will trust in you.

Baudri’s appeal to the future and readerly participation in this evocation creates the kind
of moment Dinshaw describes as “partial, affective connection. . . a touch across time”
(Getting Medieval 21). The sense of momentary connection affects my reading of the
lines that follow, stirring belief in what he says and sympathy for his difficulties.

Abbatis nomen onus est, onus et labor, et me
   Non sinit alterius esse nec esse meum;
Esse michi vellem meus atque suus sociorum,
   Ut mea cui vellem tempora dividerem (89-92).

The name of abbot is a burden, burden and labor, and
   Does not allow me to be another’s or my own;
I want to be my own and my companions’,
   To spend my time with whom I want.

Because so much of Baudri’s language is allusive and ambiguous, a direct statement such
as this comes as a revelation, a moment of hearing the speaker’s possible real voice.

These lines also seem to be a conclusion to Baudri’s complaints, because after them
Baudri returns to preparing the libellus for its travels. First, he explains that he has asked
his scribe and gilder to make the pages beautiful “ut quos allicere sententia plena nequibit
hos salem species codicis allicat” (“so that those not attracted by the rich expressions
will at least be attracted by the look of the manuscript,” 101-102). The reciprocal relationship Baudri assumes between meaningful language and visual beauty has implications for Baudri’s comments on the beauty of men and boys in later poems.

Second, Baudri creates for himself and the *libellus* the community that seemed missing until this point in the poem. According to Ralph Hexter (“Ovid” 225-30), Baudri and other Ovidian Loire Valley poets felt a version of the longing for Rome expressed by Ovid in his exile poetry. In their case, however, the Rome they long for is a Rome rich in connections but inaccessibly distant in time, an invisible city kept alive by the Latin they wrote and the letters they exchanged (“Exile” 225). The poem ends with Baudri’s urging the *libellus* to go swiftly so that it may return swiftly and tell him everything said by his friends (127); the book that Baudri creates in turn creates the version of Rome that is possible for him, Baudri imagines. Similar phenomena take place in Baudri’s relationship with the graveyard he imagines, discussed in Chapter III, and the chamber he imagines for Adela of Blois, discussed in Chapter V.

“Somnium et expositio somnii” (“A dream and its exposition”)

The second poem in Baudri’s *libellus*, “Somnium et expositio somnii” is related to “Contra” through clear formal similarities; it also, I will argue, portrays the inner experiences of shame and fear that are implied in the “Contra” account of Baudri’s situation. In Tilliette’s terms, “Somnium” provides “une sort de contrepoint allégorique au poème precedent” (“a sort of allegorical counterpoint to the preceding poem,” *Carmina* 1 148). The discussion of the portrayal of shame in “Somnium” will draw on queer theory, particularly Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s consideration of shame and
performativity in her essay “Shame, Theatricality, and Queer Performativity: Henry James’s The Art of the Novel.”

Contra” is 130 lines; “Somnium” is 132 lines. Both declare affiliations with classical authors. “Contra” is in elegiac meter, the meter most associated with Ovid and other elegiac poets; “Somnium” is in dactylic hexameter, the meter most associated with Virgil and with epics. “Contra” opens with a reference to Ovid; “Somnium” opens with references to both Virgil and Ovid, since the words “Nox erat” (“It was night”) introduce recitals of dreams twice in the Aeneid (3, 147 and 8, 26) and once in the Amores (3, 65, 1). In both “Contra” and “Somnium,” the speaker’s awareness of time is heightened, and time seems to pass irregularly. In “Contra,” the speaker defends the time he spends writing personal poetry (56, 62, 64) and longs to spend time as he wishes (89-92). In “Somnium,” the speaker reports that the night of the dream seemed as long as a year (12), he wanted neither day nor night to exist, and he wanted there to be time without time (19-20). Both poems follow a similar arc, from anxiety to relief; in “Contra,” that change occurs after the speaker declares what he desires (91-92), in “Somnium,” it occurs after the speaker makes a decisive action, to be discussed below. Also, both poems play with a genre, “Contra” with the genre of accessus, and “Somnium” with the genre of the nightmare that warms the dreamer against reading classical literature. This tradition begins with a dream which St. Jerome (347-420 CE) narrates in a prose letter to the young woman Eustochium (Epistle 22, 30). He explains that even though he had entered an ascetic life, he continued to read Cicero and Plautus. After an illness brought him close to death, he dreamt he was summoned to judgment, where the great Judge ordered him to be scourged because he was “a Ciceronian, not a Christian.” Jerome swore never
again to possess or read worldly books. “Somnium” also begins with an account of feeling close to death, but the following dream and the lessons learned from it differ from Jerome’s in significant ways. Jerome’s dream made clear to him what he had done wrong and what he should do about it. In “Somnium,” Baudri’s dream, the nature of the coming judgment is never explained, and the encounters experienced in the dream suggest so many possible interpretations that to settle on a single meaning is impossible. Baudri’s musa iocosa is at work in this poem, bestowing ambiguity.

The introduction to the dream makes it clear that Baudri is tormented by anxiety.

It was night and I dragged myself through it as if it were day,
Made sleepless by the stinging torment of my heart
And the flame of cares burning my marrow:
For worry is heavier at night than in the day.
And the events which this evil turn brought forth
Rushed forward to rob me of dignity.
Day and night on guard I was wretched
And worried and I was afflicted by struggling with myself,
Utterly without hope of consolation from my friends.

But the introduction does not specify the nature and cause of the evil turn, what events it caused, why Baudri is losing his dignity, and why he cannot turn to his friends for help. Though his carefully neutral word choices suggest he is not responsible for the change in his fortunes, the lack of a specific defense also suggests that what he is accused of is unnamable. Because this poem follows “Contra,” readers are likely to infer that the undefined “res” (“events,” 5) and “malus rotatus” (evil turn,” perhaps of the wheel of
fortune, 5) relate to those accusations against which Baudri defends himself in the preceding poem, such as wanting a personal life and writing (and therefore possibly living) in ways others consider unwholesome and unchaste. Yet Baudri’s fears in “Somnium” are greater, which relates, I argue, to loss of dignity (6) and the loss of friendship (9), a loss that is described in even stronger terms in lines 17-18:

Me, quia torquebar, tedebat noctis, et inde
Sol metuendus erat, quia iudicium metuebam.
Quod nox illa suumque michi cras improperabat.
Dilectosque meos casus conflaverat hostes
Quorum lingua nimis crudelia tela vomebat (14-18).

Tormented as I was, I hated night,
But feared sunrise, since I feared the verdict
Night and the coming day would bring.
My problems had kindled enmity in those dear to me
Whose tongues spewed weapons cruel beyond measure.

Baudri fears a verdict he anticipates the next day, but the degree of fear seems related to the behavior of his former friends, who turn against him, shaming him (17-18).

Shame, Sedgwick argues, is a response to disruption in the connection of “identificatory communication” (“Shame” 36), experienced first between infant and mother and then in relationship to others. Drawing on Silvan Tomkins and Michael Franz, she explains that shame is the pain of a refusal to recognize us by those whom we expect to recognize us, a refusal that shake’s one’s sense of identity. In relation to that slippage of identity, shame seeks to undo itself by performatively claiming its contraries, among which Sedgwick lists pride, dignity, self-display, and exhibitionism (37-38).

16 Sedgwick’s essay

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16 The term performative in ordinary use means “relating to performance.” It also has a specific meaning in linguistics and philosophy, which was introduced by John L. Austin in the William James lectures he gave at Harvard in 1955, referring to language that effects a change in the world, such as the “I do” in a marriage vow. The lectures were published as How To Do Things with Words (1955, 1975). Judith Butler developed the concept further to describe how gender is constructed by language that creates what it seems to describe, by defining and maintaining identities (Gender Trouble passim).
investigates the relation of performativity to shame, in ways that are relevant to Baudri’s account of his dream-experience.

Just before the dream vision begins, Baudri cries out “Deus,” the first of two incidents of direct speech in the poem, which will figure in my discussion of the end of the poem. There are five encounters, or perhaps challenges, in the poem, in each of which Baudri notes the degree of fear he is experiencing. In the first, lines 35-44, he takes no action himself, but finds himself riding on a mule led by a soldier, crossing a bridge above a great river. At first the bridge seems stable and he is *securus* (“free from worry,” 41); but as he reaches the center of the bridge, it begins to tremble, and he reports “ipse nec impavidus metuo me precipitandum” (“not fearless I dread being hurled headlong,” 44). In the next encounter, lines 45-54, he is pulled downward by the swift current but takes action, struggling to rise. Perhaps as a consequence, he describes himself as less fearful than while awaiting judgment:

\[
\text{Non tantum metuens quantum vigilans metuebam:} \\
\text{Tunc minus in terra quam nunc in flumine tutus (53-54).} \\
\text{Not fearing as much as I feared keeping vigil} \\
\text{Less safe on earth than I am now in the river.}
\]

Baudri’s third encounter is with an object that seems highly symbolic but which the poem does not explain, a rock that falls into his hands when he tries to cling to the riverbank. As he holds and marvels at the rock, his relationship with time is restored; instead of anxiously imagining the future and wishing time would go more quickly, as in “Contra,” or dreading the future and wishing time would go more slowly, as earlier in this poem, he is able to take as much time as he wants to.

\[
\text{Admiror lapidem; lapidi studiosus inherens,} \\
\text{Admiror formam—mirari quippe licebat:} \\
\text{Ocia meranti fuerant haec atque natanti.}
\]
At lapis antiqua celatus gnáviter arte
Visus erat vivi speciém preferre leonis
Ut petra avisa satis, portu tamen ipse carebam
Protinus absque metu conitor et absque labore . . . (58-64).

I marvel at the stone: eagerly holding it close
I marvel at its shape—indeed, I could wonder,
There was free time to wonder even while swimming:
The stone diligently carved by ancient art
Seemed to display the likeness of a living lion.
When I had looked enough, I still needed refuge.
At once without fear or effort I push forward. . .

The change is related to the carved stone, which came to him easily, which he
discovers he can hold easily, and which, I speculate, temporarily resolves the tension
between classical art and monastic faith, since it could represent either or both. The stone
has been carved with “antiqua arte” (“old skill,” 61) and the adjective antiquus has an
association with classical writers. The carving creates a “vivi leonis,” (“living lion,” 62),
and, as Tilliette points out, though a lion is a polysemous symbol, a living lion was a
medieval emblem of the resurrected Christ (Carmina 1 149n15). Though the stone bears
no writing, by holding it and looking at it intently, Baudri performs reading gestures.
After gazing at the stone, Baudri has his fourth encounter. He tries to reach the opposite
bank but is thwarted by a blockade of rocks which strong waves have torn from the crag
that leans menacingly overhead. The situation seems dangerous, but once again Baudri is
unafraid. He reports that the rocks “michi non multum tamen incussere timorem” (“did
not strike me with great fear,” 72).

Baudri’s description of the fifth encounter is the longest and most symbolically
complex. Still unafraid, he turns back and encounters a marble column, in the middle of
the river:
Fluctibus in mediis, aqua quo properantior ibat
Eminus aspiciens de marmore cerno columnam,
Sive hominis cura, fortuna sive locatam (79-81).

In the midst of the waves, where the water flows faster
At a distance I see a marble column,
Placed there by the effort of men or by chance.

Baudri immediately wonders whether the column was placed there deliberately or ended
up in mid-stream somehow by chance: is the presence of the column in this particular
place intended to convey a message? The mysteriousness of the column continues as

Baudri adds details to the description:

Quaelibet ars tamen hanc quadros lateravit in octo,
Quam caperent hominis complexus unus et alter
Aequaturque hominum staturas longa duorum.
Ipsa mensura longam grossamque putares;
Abdita gurgitibus pars, experientia visus
Quam non metitur, a carmine semoveatur
Ipsa superficies, aliquod non sculpitile gestans,
Plana videbatur; decus addunt planicie
Octo politurae, quadri quas octo notabant (82-90).

Yet some art shaped its four sides into eight,
Which one man holding another’s hand could encircle,
And its length equaled the height of two men.
From this measure you can suppose its length and width.
The part hidden in the abyss, which, unseen,
Cannot be measured, this poem sets aside.
The surface bearing no trace of carving,
Looked smooth; the eight sides enhanced the dignity
By their polish, which the arrangement of eight emphasized.

As the description continues, the column acquires associations with both sexuality and
art. Its shape suggest a phallus, and its size is expressed in relation to male bodies. Its
eight-sided shape is not entirely natural but was achieved by “some art” (“quaelibet ars,
82”). Baudri’s emphasis on its eight-sided form might come to reader’s minds when they
reach the twelfth poem of the *libellus*, “Ludendo de tabulis suis” (“At play with his
tablets”), a poem about a set of wax tablets he received as a gift, consisting of eight thin
wooden frames fastened together, each frame long enough to hold eight lines of poetry.
The perfect smoothness of the column’s eight sides might also bring to mind tablets cleaned of previous writing, ready to receive new poems, and simultaneously the powerful blankness of what cannot be expressed. For one or both of these reasons, the eight-sided column retains what Baudri writes was taken from him, *decus* (which may be translated as “dignity,” as I have done, or as honor, or glory, or beauty, on line 6 and line 81). The following two lines further complicate the symbolism of the column.

\[
\text{Inque modum sperae finitur summa columnae,}
\text{Marmore de Pario ducens genus atque colorem (82-93).}
\]

At its top the column came to a sphere
Fine-grained and pure like Parian marble.
The polished eight-sidedness and Parian marble connote classical sculpture, the rounded top emphasizes its phallic quality. As described so far, the column seems authoritative, powerful, and, highly suggestive.

The next section describes the strength of the column’s resistance to the current, ending with these three lines.

\[
\text{Sub pelago terrae firmis radicibus herens,}
\text{Excipiebat aquas, multis immotus ab annis,}
\text{Haut, reor, ignarus famosae colluviei (103-105).}
\]

Clinging to the land under the deep by strong roots,
It withstood the waters, unmoved for many years,
Not ignorant, I think of the famous flood.

Here, Baudri slips in a surprising allusion to the Biblical flood, which, in an instant, makes the description of the column comic. Those lines introduce a reversal of his circumstances. Though he has thought himself powerless to resist the current, he discovers he can act on his desires, which, surprisingly, turn him towards the column.
Et potui et volui; sed velle audacia vertit.
   Evehor in lapidem preceps humeroque sinistro
Fortiter impactum multa virtute subeqi.
   It lapsis in pelagus; loca marmoris occupant amnis (112-115).

I was able and I willed it; but boldness directed my will.
   I was dashed full-on against the stone and with my left shoulder
Strongly with great power I drove a blow.
   Stone falls into the deep; river takes the place of marble.

Despite the imposing qualities of the column, Baudri discovers that when he is dashed against it and strikes it, it shatters and disappears into the water. The destruction of the column has as many possible interpretations as does the column itself: it may represent Baudri’s resolving conflicts between reverence for classical literature and for Christianity, or overcoming sexual desire, or overcoming shame and guilt related to sexual desire. Whether the column’s fall represents any or all of these, describing the column and then shattering it allows Baudri to declare a restored identity. His speech is performative in both the theatrical and theoretical senses of the term, dramatically creating a change by naming it:

Deflectens ego retro caput, sic letus agebam:
   ‘Haec saltim nullos posthac obstacula ledent.’
Nam multi obiecti perierunt obice saxi
   Naufragiique fuit nautis lacrimabile signum.
Enato sospes ego, portu fruor eviloque
   Quae me confortans memet michi visio reddit.
Anxietate quidem sic vado, liber at omni (116-122).

Turning my head back, joyful I called,
   ‘At least from now on these obstacles will wound no one.’
For many died flung against this stone
   And it was a mournful sign of shipwreck for sailors.
I swim away safe, I gain refuge, I awake.
   The vision strengthening me restores me to myself.
Thus I go on free from all anxiety.

He gives a specific role to the column, which has previously been enigmatic, he assigns himself the role of savior of others, and he emphasizes the vision’s ability to restore his
identity by repeating variants of the first person pronoun three times, in line 121. The following line, 122, is similar to the line that marks a turning point in “Contra,” when Baudri advises his *libellus*, “sed tu, vade, liber terroreque liber ab isto” (“but you, book, go on, free from dread,” 85). In the first poem of the *libellus*, Baudri comforts his book; in the second poem, Baudri’s dream offers comfort to him. His relationship to his creations is fluid and shifting. Baudri addresses this fluidity in most detail in the long poem to Godfrey of Reims (c. 99), discussed in Chapter IV.

Just before the dream vision began, he cried out “Deus” (29), the first instance of direct speech in the poem. In the last five lines of the poem, Baudri again mentions God, which is a rare occurrence in any of his poems not portraying monastic life.

Haec divina tamen clementia cuncta patravit:  
Quippe quod evasi meritis non deputo nostris;  
Divinus mos est, ut in ira propicietur.  
At Deus iste meus per secula sit benedictus,  
Qui, dum castigat, castigati miseretur (128-132).

But divine mercy brought about all this  
No merits of mine led to my escape  
It is God’s custom, in anger to have mercy.  
May my God be blessed through the ages  
Who when he punishes, pities the punished.

The call to God just before the dream, and the thanks to God after the dream’s interpretation, present the dream as a gift, rather than a creation. Indeed, “Somnium” has seemed to many scholars a description of an actual dream. For example, in the opinion of Baudri’s first biographer, Henri Pasquier, “Il l’emploie pour faire part de ses joies ou de ses troistesses, pour inviter à venir le voir, à partager son diner... Il n’est pas jusqu’à ses cauchemars qu’il ne raconte en vers.” (“He uses [his facility in Latin verse] to share his joys or sadness, to invite someone to come and see him, to share his dinner... He even tells his nightmare in verse” (68) and Tilliette states that
Yet Baudri’s account is also obviously a translation of the dream into literary form and language, in ways that place it in conversation with “Contra obtrectatores” and with other poems in the *libellus*.

“Ad iuvenem nimis elatum” (“To a youth too proud”)

In the introduction to this thesis, I discussed the different ways Boswell, Bond, and Tilliette viewed this poem, focusing on questions of whether the poem is homoerotic or morally instructive, or both. Here, I focus on the instability of identities in the poem as the context of the poem’s homoeroticism and ways the poem’s placement in the *libellus* fosters that instability. In “Contra,” the first poem of the *libellus*, Baudri as author and Baudri as speaker seem identical, especially so since the poem describes the very manuscript in which the poem appears. In “Somnium,” the second poem, identification of Baudri as the speaker is supported by the continuity between Baudri expressing fear of accusations in “Contra” and suffering from accusations in “Somnium,” reinforced by the apparent authenticity of the dream. In the third poem, “Ad iuvenem nimis elatum,” in contrast, the identities of the speaker and of the young man or boy being addressed are both unstable. For that reason, I will refer to the person voicing the poem as “the
speaker,” rather than as Baudri, and to the person being addressed as “the boy.”17 In this section, I draw on Kathryn Bond Stockton’s explorations of the experiences of queer children in *Growing Up Sideways*. Stockton directs attention to the disparity between what a queer adult may remember feeling as a child and the child’s own feelings (2-5). I apply this disparity to “Ad iuvenem,” in which the speaker describes the boy without, it seems, awareness that the boy has an interior life of his own. I will discuss ways the poem destabilizes the speaker’s and the boy’s identities by similarities to another poem in which the speaker is crudely seductive, and by situating speaker and boy in different kinds of time, the speaker’s fixed, the boy’s transitory. I will also discuss the speaker’s portrayal of the boy within the contexts of classical literature, with no evidence that the boy recognizes the context, and the ambiguous description of a physical touch, which might be mutual.

It is likely that Baudri’s poem was influenced by a similar poem written by Marbod, archdeacon at Angers and later bishop of Rennes (1035-1123). Some historians have speculated that Baudri was a pupil of Marbod’s at Angers, though Tilliette finds no evidence of that relationship. Whether or not Baudri was a student of Marbod’s, he shows his respect for him in the poem “Marbodo poetarum optimo” (“To Marbod the best of poets,” c. 86). Marbod, like Baudri, was strongly influenced by Ovid, and experimented with writing poems in *personae*, that is, as characters other than himself. The poem

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17 There is no evidence in the poem of the age of the addressee, other than his being in puberty. From the fourth through the tenth centuries, the custom of *oblation*, by which noble families dedicated some of their children to monasteries at ages as young as four or five, was common. Oblation became institutionalized in the rule of St. Benedict, which also included regulations for the conduct of boys in the company of men and with each other. In the tenth century, influenced both by the reform movement and by monastic overcrowding, Benedictine monasteries raised the age of oblation to twelve years. At the time Baudri joined the monastery at Bourgueil in the late eleventh century the community would probably have included oblates twelve to fifteen years old, as well as postulants, novices, and monks of various ages, including youths in their middle teens (Kolve 1023-1028).
which may have influenced Baudri’s c. 3 is entitled “Satyra in amatorem puelli sub assumpta persona” (“A satire on the lover of a boy in an assumed persona,” which Stehling included in Medieval Latin (31-34). Both poems contain a classical reference within the first few lines; both poems praise the beauty of a boy through the rhetorical figure effictio, an idealized physical description; both remark that the boy’s appearance might be a girl’s; neither names the boy; both criticize his rough manners and disdainfulness; and both tell the boy, in painfully vivid terms, that age will destroy his beauty. Marbod’s persona argues that the boy should take advantage of beauty while he has it and yield to a lover, repeating an argument that Ovid and other elegiac poets make to courtesans. The speaker in Baudri’s poem draws a different lesson from the evanescence of the boy’s beauty, advising the boy that since his attractiveness will come to an end he should behave with less disdain and more humility, though the poem’s ambiguities encourage speculation that Baudri’s speaker struggles to avoid the attitude of Marbod’s speaker.

“Ad iuvenem” begins with the speaker declaring the consistency of his taste, in an implicit contrast with the boy, who is in the process of change:

Cum michi nil placeat nisi quod bene sit placiaturum
   Nec mihi displiceat nisi quod sit displiciturum—
Cuius testis eri, si testem queris, Alexis—
   Constat quod quicquid placet aut mihi displicet in te
Iure quidem placeat de te mihi displicateque (1-5).

Since nothing pleases me except what will be well pleasing
   Nor does anything displease me except what will be displeasing—
Of this Alexis will be the witness, if you seek a witness—
   It follows that whatever in you pleases or displeases me
Rightly indeed pleases or displeases me about you.

The speaker claims an absoluteness for his standards, which are correct in the present and will be correct in the future, making his opinions about the person he is addressing
unquestionably just. In the midst of making that claim, he suggests the boy turn to “Alexis” for verification. The name Alexis is almost certainly an allusion to Virgil’s Second Eclogue, in which the slave boy Alexis is loved and serenaded by the shepherd Corydon, a text described by many scholars as homoerotic. Baudri also refers to Alexis in “To Avitus so he will come” (c.129), urging Avitus to join him in a locus amoenus, or pleasant place, an idyllic garden described in stylized terms. It is possible that there was an Alexis in the community at Bourgueil, whom both the speaker and the recipient knew; but none has as yet been discovered. It is more likely that by referring to Alexis as someone known to both the speaker and the boy he addresses, the speaker signals that the poem takes place both in present time and in the world created by texts of classical literature. The existence of the poem proves the speaker’s familiarity with that world, but there is no evidence, other than the speaker’s presumption, of the boy’s degree of familiarity, and no clear indications of whether this boy is an individual or a representative figure.

What is clear is that the boy is at the cusp of a transformation. The word iuvenem, which appears in the title, refers to a youth or a young man; but throughout the poem the speaker addresses him as puer, which means a boy or a child. Though the speaker’s tastes will not change, the boy will. His voice now could be either a boy’s or a girl’s, but it is inevitable that he will age and begin to grow a beard, as described below:

Vox tua demulcet nostras et mitigat aures,
Quae tam dulce sonat quam dulce sonat Filomela;
Incertum an pueri sit vox tua sive puellae;
Orpheus alter eris; nisi vocem sauciet aetas,
Aetas a pueris quae dat differe puellas,
Cum gena vestitur iuvenum lanugine prima (9-14).

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18 Parsons and Townsend, for example, characterize it as “notoriously homoerotic” (438).
Your voice caresses and soothes our ears,
   It sounds as sweetly as Philomela sounds.
It’s uncertain if your voice is a boy’s or a girl’s.
   You will be another Orpheus, unless age harms your voice,
   Age which makes girls different from boys,
   When the cheeks of young men are covered with first down.

Both Philomela and Orpheus, named above, to whom the speaker compares the boy, carry complex associations. Philomela (line 10) is a name for the nightingale and the name of a mythological Athenian princess who appears in the Metamorphoses (Ovid, 6, 472-780). Philomela’s brother-in-law Tereus rapes her and cuts off her tongue to ensure her silence. Unable to speak, Philomela weaves a tapestry depicting the rape and sends it to her sister, Procne, who takes revenge by killing the son she and Tereus share and serving the flesh to Tereus. Philomela and Procne then escape by turning into birds. The speaker’s comparison to Philomela creates associations with, in addition to sweet voices, sexual violation and forced silence (Holsinger 303-306). Philomela’s inability to speak is especially resonant, since the poem does not include anything said by the boy, and the speaker does not ask the boy for any spoken reply.

The statement that the boy could be “another Orpheus” is equally complicated. Orpheus appears in the Metamorphoses Book 10 (1-109). Grieving for the loss of Eurydice, he rejects all other women and chooses to love boys who are also at the cusp of transformation, “enjoying / That brief springtime of blossoming youth” (Lombardo, 88-89). Though Baudri describes Godfrey of Reims, a man older than Baudri, as “Orpheus or better” in a panegyrical letter-poem (c. 99, 65-66), “Ad iuvenem” does not anticipate that this boy can retain the sweetness of his voice after puberty. For the boy in “Ad iuvenem” to become “another Orpheus” would be impossible, unless he could escape physical change or unless he, like Orpheus, came to love boys when he grew older. This
faint suggestion of an intergenerational affective cycle is the only place the poem engages with the possibility that the speaker himself was once a boy, or that the boy might become like the speaker. Stockton adapts the Freud’s term Nachtraglichkeit, “a ‘deferred action,’ whereby events from the past acquire meaning only when read through future consequences” (14) to refer to the temporal gap between a child’s impressions and an adult’s experience of a past trauma. In this model, the feelings and experiences of speaker and boy in the poem are inaccessible to each other, though the boy may later come to understand what he felt.

Lines 15-18 continue the idealized description of the boy’s beauty, followed in line 19 by a fleeting ambiguous reference to the thrill of a touch, which is central to the poem, as the possible source of the speaker’s anxieties:

Et pandae nares faciem speciemque venustant;  
Cor pectusque meum tua vitrea lumina tangent;  
Sidus enim geminum cristallina lumina credo.  
His bene respondet caro lacteal, pectus eburnum;  
Alludit manibus niveo de corpore tactus (15-19).  

And your turned-up [or strong] nose adds to the beauty of your face and shape.  
Your bright clear eyes touch my face and soul.  
For I believe these crystal lights to be a double star  
Matched by your milk-white flesh and ivory chest.  
The touch of your snow-white body plays with my hands.19

The line can be read as an account of an accidental touch, or one initiated by the speaker, or by the boy, or both; it conveys the speaker’s attraction to the boy while the boy’s

19 Those who have translated the poem approach the ambiguity with variations, as listed below:

Stehling: The touch of your snow white body sports with my hands (39)  
Tilliette: le contact d’un corps de neige est un doux agrément pour la main (the touch of a snowy body is a sweet pleasure for the hand) (Carmina 1, 9)  
Jaeger: A touch from this snowy body gives the hands a sportive pleasure (222)  
Brower: A touch from your snowy body plays with my hands (129)
feelings remain unknown. The poem creates puzzles that are compelling though unresolvable, through the boy’s silence and through modern audiences’ scant knowledge of the context or historic circumstances in which he’s writing, as Bond points out in relation to another poem of Marbod’s (*Loving* 73).

In the remainder of the poem, the speaker addresses the boy’s behavior. He begins by comparing him favorably to Ganymede, introducing yet further complications, since the term had multiple connotations in the High Middle Ages, most associated with homoeroticism:

> Laudo Iovis quoniam Ganimedes esse refutas  
> Et precor et laudo ne corrumparis amando.  
> Sed non laudo tuam de moribus improbitatem,  
> Quippe supercilio, puer improbus, utere tanto  
> Ut vix obliquo quenquam digneris ocello  
> Vix aliquando aliquem summotenus ore salutes  
> Dum tamen et salve tibi primus dixerit ipse.  
> Forsitan ipse putas quia regnes solus in orbe  
> Atque putas quia sis puero praestantior omni;  
> Sed te Narcissus reprimat qui fabula uiuit  
> Exemplumque manet elatis ut resipiscant (24-34).

I praise you for refusing to be Jupiter’s Ganymede  
And I pray and I praise that you are not corrupted by love-making.  
But I do not praise the impudence of your manners.  
Certainly, impudent boy, you enjoy such great arrogance  
You scarcely honor anyone with a sidelong eye,  
You scarcely greet anyone with a full mouth  
Even when he had greeted you first.  
Perhaps you think that you alone rule in the world  
And you think you are more distinguished than every other boy.  
May Narcissus who lives in tales restrain you,  
whose example abides to bring the proud to their senses.

Boswell asserts that in the High Middle Ages “‘Ganymede ’was a synonym for ‘gay,’” less pejorative because of its classical associations (245n). Ganymede was a term that
recurred in literature read and written during Baudri’s period. Medieval readers familiar with classical literature would have encountered Ganymede being carried off by Jupiter’s eagle in the Aeneid (1.28), and beauteous Ganymede becoming Jupiter’s cupbearer through Orpheus’s song in the Metamorphoses “of boys beloved by gods, and girls dazed by unnatural desire” (Lombardo10, 154-161). As the monastic reform movement grew more powerful in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Ganymede story acquired connotations of sodomy and sexual assault (Kolve 1022-23). With what tone Baudri uses the term “Ganymede” is unclear. It appears in three other poems in the libellus, in ways that suggest Baudri might be simultaneously seeking the approval of reformers and sharing a wry smile with friends. In his version of a letter-poem from Paris to Helen, “Paris Helene” (Paris to Helen, c. 7) Paris argues that Helen would be better off with Trojans than with Greeks, because the Greeks are effeminate and prefer Ganymedes to their wives (118-29). Helen, who seems far more sensible than Paris in Baudri’s pair of poems, dismisses Paris’s assertions as foolish, in “Helena Paridi” (“Helen to Paris,” c. 8). The third example occurs in the last of a series of poems to Gerard of Loudun, “Ad eundem ut monachus fiat” (“To the same so he may become a monk,” c. 77). As part of an argument in favor of monastic life, Baudri describes the dangers of sexual

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20 Many scholars have pointed out the anachronisms of defining “Ganymede” as synonymous with “gay,” for a time when an identity of “gay” comparable to modern understanding did not exist. In a review of the influence of Boswell’s Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality, Matthew Kuefler notes, “It sparked a fierce scholarly debate about the relationship between sexual desire and individual identity in history” (1246).

21 According to Tilliette(1998, 190n) “Ad eundem” is Baudri’s version of a contemptus mundi poem, a form which became increasingly popular in the first part of the twelfth century, culminating in Bernard of Cluny’s three-volume De Contemptu Mundi, c. 1140. In “Ad iuvenem” the speaker warns the boy that he will grow ugly as he ages and in “Ad eundem” the speaker warns men that their young lovers, their Ganymedes, will grow ugly as they age.
relationships with women and with Ganymedes, employing a hyperbole so extreme it casts doubts on the genuineness of the argument.

In c. 77, the monastic setting is a place to escape sexual temptation, but in “Ad iuvenem,” the speaker acknowledges that Ganymede-Jupiter relations exist in the monastery, through his praise of the boy for refusing to be Ganymede. The poem implies that resisting the Ganymede role was the boy’s responsibility, rather than the responsibility of others to resist pursuing him, but the speaker offers no advice or support on how to resist, and instead advises the boy to behave more humbly. The speaker draws on the mythological figure of Narcissus to reinforce his corrections of the boy’s behavior. Narcissus, whose story appears in the Metamorphoses (3, 371-561) was a beautiful young man who treated admirers with disdain, then fell in love with his own reflection in a pool and wasted away. The speaker in “Ad iuvenem” characterizes the boy’s impudence and haughtiness as Narcissus-like, rather than a reaction to the anxieties of his environment. He argues that the boy’s pride in his beauty is undeserved, since it is a gift of nature, and he should behave pliantly, humbly, and flexibly. The speaker concludes this advice with a vivid description of the ways age will attack his body. Yet near the close of the poem, he appeals to the reader for confirmation, indicating some awareness of the problematic nature of his stance:

Censeat en lector an sit mea iusta querela;
   Iusta querela quidem, vere querimonia iusta.
   Tuque satisfacies si te correxeris ipse (78-80).

Let the reader decide whether my complaints are just;
   Indeed this complaint is just, truly this complaint is just.
   And you will give satisfaction if you set yourself right.

The insistent repetition in line 79, and the shifting of responsibility to the boy, in line 80, cast doubt on what the speaker is over-asserting.
I have written above that interpretation of this poem is affected by the poems that precede and follow it and that this poem affects ways the earlier poems can be read. In “Contra,” Baudri instructs the *libellus* to spar with and contradict reformers who might question him; and he reassures the *libellus* that he has given it a beautiful appearance, to engage readers who do not appreciate the text. He offers his protection to the book, and in turn he instructs the book to defend him. In “Ad iuvenem,” the speaker urges the boy to be agreeable rather than impudent and to give up relying on his beauty to grant him privileges. The speaker claims his advice to the boy is intended to protect him from the miseries that aging and changing will bring, and in turn he asks the boy to treat others—a category which includes the speaker himself—with courtesy and kindness. In “Ganymede/Son of Getron: Medieval Monasticism and the Drama of Same-Sex Desire,” V. A. Kolve describes a play, *Filius Getronis* (The Son of Getron), that addresses these issues. *Filius Getronis* was probably written for performance in a Benedictine monastery in the late twelfth century (1028). Though this play is after Baudri’s time, it responds to and attempts to resolve complex and possibly painful feelings about the story of Ganymede likely to arise in monasteries. In this play, derived from a ninth century text about St. Nicholas, a young Christian boy is carried off by the soldiers of a pagan king and miraculously restored to his family a year later, by St. Nicholas (1029). To quote Kolve, “There is nothing obviously queer about such a story, nothing queer at all” (1030), and yet, Kolve makes clear, there is. The boy is beautiful, wise, and noble, and the king makes him his cupbearer, as Ganymede was for Jupiter. Though the king treats him with tenderness he insists on keeping the boy with him, and the boy, until his rescue by St. Nicholas, grieves for his home. Kolve writes,
The speeches from the king to the boy contain no sexual overture, no sexual inuendo; but I detect in them what Judith Butler in a different context has called “systemic melancholia”—melancholy that has less to do with the loss of a particular object of desire than with the loss attendant on proscribed desire itself (1044).22

Baudri’s speaker tries to treat the boy in the poem with tenderness. However, the speaker, unable or unwilling to change himself, instead instructs the boy to change the way he behaves, as if that change could resolve the speaker’s difficulties of resisting temptation and experiencing the melancholy of desire that cannot be acted upon.

Considered together Baudri’s “Contra obtrectatores” and “Ad iuvenum nimis elatum” exemplify different approaches to the anxieties of what Kolve calls “a contradiction at the heart of monastic culture” (1044), the requirement that same-sex people of different ages live together but avoid any physical expressions of same-sex desire, especially from older to younger. “Somnium,” the second poem in the *libellus*, is a bridge between the two, as a vision that represents of the intensity of the anxieties and the challenge and satisfaction of resolving them. That resolution, however, occurs only in a dream, and only, the narrator of “Somnium” concludes,” as a gift of mercy.

> At Deus iste meus per secula sit benedictus, Qui, dum castigat, castigati miseretur (128-132).

But divine mercy brought about all this
> No merits of mine led to my escape.

In the waking world, however, the task of managing desire has to be carried out as regularly as desire recurs, just as, in Sedgwick’s formulation, relief from shame requires repeating performances of pride and dignity as regularly as shame recurs.

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22 Kolve notes that he refers to Sedgwick, “Queer Performativity” (1-16), as originally published in *GLQ*, vol. 1, no. 1 (16-32) and to Butler’s reply, “Critically Queer” (17-32). My references to the Sedgwick article are to a revised version, listed in the bibliography.
The nine poems that follow “Ad iuvenem” each express desire and the problem of managing desire in various ways. Poem 13, “Ad Radulphum monachum” (“To monk Radulphus”) includes desire but presents a thematic turning-point, though one revealed as such only in retrospect. In this poem Baudri addresses Radulphus, with endearments that are tropes in the classical literature of friendship, such as *alter ego* (“other self”). Radulphus, it seems, has heard that Baudri is about to undertake a voyage, and he has written to tell Baudri about his fears for the journey. Baudri responds that his journey may or may not take place, but if Radulphus is intent on worrying, he should instead fear Baudri’s death, which is bound to happen. This poem, unlike many others of Baudri’s letter-poems, does not request a reply. It concludes with its only request, that Radulfus pray for him:

Me tamen et certum reputa tibi semper amicum  
Omnipotens donec finiat alterutrum.  
Nunc quoniam fragilis sine remige cimba procellis  
Erro, mihi portum redde tuis precibus (33-36).

Still know that I am always a true friend to you  
Until the almighty puts an end to one or the other of us.  
Since now a fragile boat without an oarsman  
I wander in storms, deliver me to harbor by your prayers.

In these lines, Baudri may be referring both to the actual voyage that worries Radulphus and to the common metaphor linking human life to the predicament of a small boat in a storm, which, according to Tilliette (*Carmina* 1 169n) goes back to Cassian. This poem adds to the themes of desire and its management, the certainty of death, which the next seventy poems address.
Chapter III
Funerary Poems as a Graveyard

In Chapter I, I described Baudri’s circulation of his *libellus* to trusted friends as a way of creating a textual version of the Rome for which these humanist classicists longed. In this chapter and Chapter V, I discuss other alternate worlds Baudri creates, worlds in which time and space function differently from the ordinary. The first such world, the focus of this chapter, is created by a grouping of seventy memorial poems that becomes an imaginary graveyard. The second, discussed in Chapter V, is a special chamber Baudri designs for Countess Adela. In this chapter I will discuss the types of poems in the graveyard, the tensions perceptible here between Baudri’s abbatial writing and his personal writing, and the role this section plays in the structure of the *libellus*, referring to Foucault’s discussions of heterotopias and to descriptions of modern queer heterotopias.

Medieval Funerary Poems

This section of funerary poems begins without any clear introduction, but simply progresses from the reminder in “Ad Radulphum monachum,” mentioned at the end of the previous chapter, that Baudri, too, will die, to a poem reporting the death of another abbot. Baudri was one of the first medieval Latin writers to collect the funerary poetry he wrote, and apparently there were as yet no conventions for such collections. Here, readers make the discovery for themselves, and as a result, reading these poems in sequence conveys a feeling of entering a graveyard almost accidentally. The repetition of one
memorial poem after another intensifies awareness of the ubiquity of death and curiosity about those whose bodies had been, figuratively, laid to rest in the space.  

There are two major types of medieval funerary poems: tituli, written for mortuary rolls, defined below, and epitaphs, written to be inscribed on grave markers or to create other kinds of memorialization. Baudri included all types in the libellus group. Mortuary rolls came into use during the ninth century and became more common as monastic communities grew (Velte 258). Bearing notices of deaths of clergy, the rolls were usually carried from monastery to monastery by a rider, with representatives of each receiving monastery adding tituli, showing the notice had been received and expressing sympathy. Receiving monasteries added additional parchment to the rolls as needed. In addition to sharing information, mortuary rolls had a social function, encouraging reciprocity in praying for the dead. By the twelfth century the beliefs were common that all the dead, except saints, were required to spend time in purgatory as penance for their sins and that the living could shorten that time by praying for the dead (O’Sullivan 259-260). Typically the tituli included a promise to pray for the deceased and a request that the deceased pray for the clergy of the monastery. It is likely that Baudri, as abbot, took on the responsibility for writing tituli for St. Peter at Bourgueil. He did not list memorial poems among examples of his religious writing in “Contra obtrectatores,” an absence which suggests that he considered writing these poems as part of his abbatial obligations, rather than a voluntary activity. Unlike Baudri’s personal letter-poems, mortuary roll poems were publicly circulated, largely formulaic, and usually rhymed. Those conditions

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23 Tilliette’s notes on these poems (Carmina 1 169-94) and the information in Corpus Des Inscriptions De La France Médiévale (VIIIe-XIIIe Siècle), Vols. 24 and 25, are helpful in identifying those whose names appear.
probably influenced Baudri’s attitude toward writing the poems. Yet he cared enough about them to include them in his *libellus*, though he criticized their lack of originality. The great majority of the memorial poems in the graveyard section are epitaphs, including memorializations for those whose names would not have appeared on mortuary rolls. Following the arrangement practices similar to those of the *libellus* as a whole, Baudri has grouped poems that have an obvious relation to each other, such as poems about the same person, interspersed with poems that change the topic and create new connections. Since epitaphic poems were presumably written to be inscribed on a gravestone or plaque or on a wall, most of these poems are short. However, Baudri sometimes includes multiple poems about or to the same person, which indicates the intensity of his mourning. A striking feature of the epitaphs as a group is their insistence on bringing the reader into the presence of these dead. Some epitaphs are written as if the deceased person were speaking to passers-by, who, in this graveyard, are the readers. Some address the deceased. Some address the reader directly. Some are deictic, written as if the reader and the inscription were both at the gravesite, as in “Hic situ est” (“Here lies buried”). Even when records show that the actual grave of the deceased was so far distant that it was unlikely anything Baudri wrote would have been inscribed there, Baudri retained such expressions.

**Baudri’s Graveyard as a Heterotopia**

Baudri’s practices in choosing those memorialized and in writing and arranging these mortuary poems create a place that is both real and unreal: real, because the people memorialized really lived and died and Baudri really wrote *tituli* and epitaphs for them, and unreal because there is nowhere else in the world their names and semblances of their
graves appear in this arrangement other than Baudri’s *libellus*. Arranged in orderly lists in the manuscript of the *libellus*, the poems name and memorialize the dead. But the more real this graveyard seems, the more, paradoxically, its differences from a medieval graveyard reveal themselves. There are no real bodies in this graveyard, only reminders of bodies, and those represented by mortuary roll poems are as present as those represented by epitaphs. This graveyard is hidden, open only to readers of the *libellus*, but medieval graveyards were generally accessible in a churchyard or within the monastery grounds (O’Sullivan 269-70). In this graveyard, the reader knows the identity of the author of all the memorial poems, though epitaphs in graveyards were usually anonymous. Though the placement of graves in medieval graveyards generally related to the status of the dead and the date of death (O’Sullivan 273), the reader knows that in this graveyard the author arranged the order of the poems/graves, according to a system not readily identifiable.

Like a real graveyard, the poems create a liminal space, inhabited by the dead and visited by the living. In this graveyard, however, the visitors are the readers. This graveyard, also, holds multiple temporalities, producing, in Dinshaw’s phrase, “a fuller, denser, more crowded now” (*How Soon*, 4). The dead include those who were dead when Baudri wrote these poems, and, for modern readers, Baudri himself is dead but also present, narrating stories of those longer dead. Freccero expressed this paradox from her point of view as an author. “I often work on the dead,” Freccero wrote, “and as time goes by I have begun to think of myself as a future dead person writing myself out of my time while time is running out” (“Theorizing,” 184). That “Ad Radulphum monachum,” which alludes to Baudri’s death, comes just before the series of funerary poems, suggests that
Baudri, too, had his eventual graveyard presence in mind. Further disarranging time, some others whose deaths are recognized here are represented as living in other *libellus* poems, a contradiction which emphasizes for the reader the non-chronological nature of Baudri’s arrangement. Foucault has given the name *heterotopia* to such spaces that are both unreal and real. He introduced the term in the preface to *Les Mots and Les Choses* (*The Order of Things*), published in 1966, referring to textual spaces. Later that year, in a radio series on utopias and literature, he discussed heterotopias as social spaces, a talk which was transcribed and published in English as “Heterotopias” (2014). In 1967 he spoke further on heterotopias as social spaces in a talk to a group of architects. That lecture was published in 1984 as “Des Espaces Autres,” translated into English as “Of Other Spaces” (1986) and as “Different Spaces” (1998). Two aspects of heterotopias as Foucault defined them are especially applicable to Baudri’s graveyard. First is heterotopias’ association with different kinds of temporalities and with the achronological. In the introduction to “Different Spaces,” Foucault writes “We exist at a moment when the world is experiencing, I believe, something less like a great life that would develop through time than like a network that connects points and weaves its skein” (“Different” 175). In fact, the comparison Foucault makes to illustrate strange temporality is to a cemetery,

More often than not, heterotopias are connected with temporal discontinuities [decoupages du temps]; that is, they open onto what might be called, for the sake of symmetry, heterochronias. The heterotopia begins to function fully when men are in a kind of absolute break with their traditional time; thus, the cemetery is indeed a highly heterotopian place, seeing that the cemetery begins with that strange heterochronia that loss of life constitutes for an individual, and that in which the inhabitants exist in a “quasi eternity” (“Different” 182).
The second applicable aspect of Foucault’s heterotopias is the reciprocal relationship between heterotopias and real places. Heterotopias, Foucault asserts, are places in which real places are “represented, contested, and reversed” (“Different” 178), places that, like reflections in mirrors, are simultaneously real and unreal and, strangely, capable of making the source of the reflection seem unreal. He describes this process:

In the mirror I see myself where I am not, in an unreal space that opens up virtually behind the surface. . .But it is also a heterotopia in that the mirror really exists, in that it has a sort of return effect on the place that I occupy. . .The mirror functions as a heterotopia in the sense that it makes this place I occupy at the moment I look at myself in the glass both utterly real, connected with the entire space surrounding it, and utterly unreal—since, to be perceived, it is obliged to go by way of that virtual point which is over there (“Different” 179).

The image of the body in the mirror represents the real body, challenges it by transporting it to a different space, and reverses it, as mirror images do. The image of ourselves in the mirror is impossible for us to see, without the mirror, and what we see in the mirror challenges concepts we may have about how the world is represented. Foucault did not elaborate on heterotopias’ ability to represent, contest, and reverse real spaces, but many of those who have investigated and adapted the concept of heterotopias have written about them as spaces of resistance, and particularly as spaces of queer resistance. Angela Jones offers what is almost a litany of statements on this topic: Queer heterotopias “are spaces for the ‘other’ to be transgressive … are places where individuals can challenge the heteronormative regime … are material spaces where radical practices go unregulated … are sites of empowerment … exist in opposition to heteronormative spaces and are spaces where individuals seek to disrupt heterosexist discourse” (23). I argue that Baudri’s graveyard heterotopia resists and disrupts norms of monastic mourning and burials, through his dissatisfactions with tituli as impersonal expressions of mourning, through juxtapositions
of epitaphs for people who would not have been buried close to each other, and through an intermediate, heterogenous series of funerary poems at the close of this section.

The arrangement of the graveyard poems manifests the tensions Baudri describes in “Contra obtectatores” between his official writing and his personal writing and the tensions between his expressions of monastic mourning and personal mourning. Of the six poems related to tituli in the libellus, two criticize the genre, and a seventh poem is an invective against the arrival of mortuary rolls. The graveyard section begins with a titulus for an abbot Natalis,⁴⁴ which exemplifies Baudri’s mixed feelings about tituli. He begins his entry by criticizing the frequently used titulus convention of naming Adam as the origin of all troubles.⁴⁵

In rotulo multi, cum sollicitudine quadam,  
Dicendi seriem semper moetantur ab Adam.  
At, dum pro pramenti plasmati crimine plorant,  
Sepius incassum subnectere multa laborant (1-4).

On this scroll always there are many who  
Carefully trace their words back to Adam.  
But, while they mourn for their progenitor’s crime,  
Mostly they fail to show any connection.

After that barb, he turns to the purpose of the poem, to pray for Natalis and to request prayers for him, in this case from Nicholas, the saint for whom the abbey Natalis served is named. Then Baudri takes six lines to urge brevity for others:

Nos pro Natali carmen faceremus anheli,  
Si multum carmen posset prodesse fidelii;  
Sed quia non prosunt odarum garrulitates,  
Odarum, queso, seponamus levitates.  
Intenti precibus, breviter loca subtitulate,  
Ne calamus vehemens pariat dispensia cartae (11-16).

⁴⁴ Abbot of Saint-Nicolas of Angers, 1080-1096.  
⁴⁵ Though Baudri ridicules the trope here, he makes use of it himself in c. 73, though perhaps understandably, in a titulus for an abbot named Adam.
We gasping for breath have made a poem for Natalis,
If a poem in many pieces can be of use to a faithful man.
But since the chattering of odes is of no use,
I beg, let us set aside odes and their lightness.
Intent on prayers, below list briefly your locations,
Lest your eager pen increase the cost of parchment.

In this poem ten of eighteen lines are devoted to criticism of the way others write

*tituli.* “Rotulo pro archiepiscopo Biturigensi” (“On the mortuary roll of the archbishop of

Bourges,” c. 22) and “Invectio in rolligerum” (“Invective against the roll-bearer,” c. 23)

provide additional explanations for Baudri’s frustration with *tituli.* Not only do the

mortuary rolls bring news of deaths, but their rote formulations seem to disrespect the

depth of personal grief. Baudri begins “In rotulo pro archiepiscopo Biturigensi” with a
description of the suffering caused by the arrival of mortuary rolls:

> Cum velut examen rotulorum venerit ad nos
> Mortem, non vitam, rotulus michi nunciat omnis:
> Nuncius ergo ferus, qui semper nunciat illud,
> Quod semper lacrimis nos impetit atque dolore (1-4).

The rolls come at us like a swarm,
Every roll brings us news of death, not life;
Rude herald, who always brings the same announcement,
Always assails us with tears and grief.

It continues with a list of those whose deaths were recently reported, all of whom are

named by Baudri in other poems in this section.26 The list is long, but even so, it is

incomplete, as Baudri acknowledges that there are dead he has neglected or forgotten to

mention. The *titulus* then turns to its real subject, the death of Audebertus, archbishop of

Bourges and of Deol, someone whom, judging by the text, Baudri respected:

> Hunc Audebertum validum iuvenilibus annis
> Effera mors rapuit, quae nulli parcere novit.
> En michi dat lasrmas rotularis epistola vivas,

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26 Reginald of Reims, Durand, Hoel of Le Mans, Johannis of Orleans, Geraldus of Poitiers, Joel of Le

Mans, and Natalis of Anger.
Has lacrimas reduces faciet mea questio Semper
Audeberte, meo nec pectore dimovearis
   Nec, si quid valeant, nostris precibus reproberis (24-29).

Savage death who knows to spare no one, has snatched away
This Audeburtus strong in his young years.
The letter of the roll makes my tears well,
   Tears my grief will always renew.
Audebertus, may you never be separated from my heart,
   Nor may you, if my prayers avail, be rejected.

The difference between someone Baudri knew, such as Natalis, and someone whom
Baudri profoundly misses, such as Audebertus, becomes clear when tituli for them appear
close together. “Invectio in rolligerum” proceeds in a similar sequence, but even more
forcefully. It begins with a condemnation of mortuary rolls:

   Obsecro iam parcat tam sepe venire veredus:
      Per nimios usus nimium sua verba veremur.
   Vivant prelati, pro quorum morte vagatur.
      Vultur edax coruusque niger volitansque veredus.
   Necnon bubo canens dirum mortalibus omen
      Significant mortes presagantur cadaver:
   Sic rotulus semper mortem cuiuslibet affert (1-7).

   I plead, may this horseback courier spare us such frequent visits:
      After so many visits, we fear his words.
   Prelates were living, whose deaths now send him wandering.
      The greedy vulture and the black crow and this swift horse
   And the owl crying an omen fatal for mortals
      Signify deaths and predict a corpse.
   The roll-carrier always brings someone’s death.

As in the previous poem, after condemning the roll, Baudri explains the roll has just
informed him of Audebertus’s death, and he seeks company in his grief, asking
permission of Bourges and Deol to join his grief to theirs, since he was like a brother to
Audebertus. His need to find a community of mourners is similar to his need to share his
poems with a community of writers.
In the epitaphic poems, the tension between the formality required by Baudri’s role as abbot and his desire to express his feelings can be seen through juxtapositions of poems, particularly in the neighboring series of epitaphs for Godfrey of Reims and Alexander of Tours. The first is someone he rarely, if ever met, whose poetic skills he admires; the other is a beautiful, possibly fragile boy, who died at a young age. He has placed them together in his imagined graveyard, though he could not have put them together in life. Baudri revered Godfrey of Reims, an older poet with whom he shared literary interests, especially in poems related to the legends of Troy. The graveyard section includes five mournful and reverential epitaphs for Godfrey, cc. 35-39. The poem “Ad Godefredum Remensem” (c. 99), in which Baudri entrusts the most extensive discussion of his literary theories to Godfrey, appears fifty-four pages after the first epitaph, illustrating Godfrey’s on-going presence in Baudri’s life. In the epitaphs devoted to Godfrey, Baudri celebrates and mourns him and pledges that Godfrey will be remembered eternally—or at least as long as the poem is remembered—transferring the permanence of an epitaph on stone to ink on parchment. He also compares Godfrey to Ovid, which may be Baudri’s highest compliment:

Hoc apices donec oblitteret ipsa vetustas
    Aut inimical manus, celebri relegetur honore
Ille Godefredus, quem lucida musa secundum
    Nasoni peperit; quem littera multa replevit (1-4).

As long as time’s passage or an unfriendly hand
    Will not have erased these letters, with great honor
Will be read the name Godfrey, to whom a brilliant muse
    Gave birth as a second Ovid; whom great literature nourished.

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27 Tilliette remarks, “Godefroid est salué comme un maître par le plus charmant des poètes dits ‘du cercle de la Loire,’ Baudri de Bourgueil” (Godfrey is greeted as a master by the most charming of the poets of the ‘Loire Circle,’ Baudri of Bourgueil, “Troiae” 411). I discuss Baudri’s relationship with Godfrey of Reims further in Chapter IV.
Throughout the sequence, Baudri expresses no doubt that Godfrey deserves a heavenly afterlife. The last epitaphs concludes “Territ colit terram, sed spiritus incolat astra” (“Earth inhabits earth, may his spirit inhabit the stars,” 8).

The four epitaphs to the young Alexander of Tours, in contrast, focus on Alexander’s youth and beauty. Stehling claims that this Alexander is the person named in “Avito pro Alexandro” (“To Avitus for Alexander,” c. 4) whom Avitus seems to adores (Medieval Latin xviii). Though Tilliette notes only that the Alexander of the earlier poem is unidentified (Carmina 1 170n), the association Stehling makes is certainly plausible. Because the name Avitus, as discussed earlier, is associated with the homoeroticism of classical literature (p. 43), and the name Alexander is also associated with homoeroticism, due to Alexander the Great’s reputed relationship with his slave Bagoas (Ogden, 203-17), Baudri’s praise of Alexander’s youth and beauty cannot be separated from the possibility that his youth and beauty make him the object of homoerotic desire.

The poems for Alexander, cc. 40-43, are more repetitive than those for Godfrey, perhaps because Alexander’s life was so brief, and perhaps because Baudri knew little about the young man except his beauty, as seemed to be true in “Ad iuvenem.” Three of the four describe him as a flower: a rose (40 and 41), a violet (41), a tender flower (43) and, saddest of all, in death, his neck like a lily torn up by the roots (42). Baudri describes Alexander’s burial with far more physicality than he does Godfrey’s: Alexander, unlike Godfrey, does not simply lie in the earth: “he is now ashes and mud” (40), and “the worthless glory of splendid flesh is now nothing but stench” (43). “If beauty and youth have been for him the occasion of defilement,” Baudri prays, “take pity on him, o king who granted him both” (40), which suggests that beauty and youth are a likely cause of
defilement. Baudri asks once more that God “have mercy on [Alexander’s] sins” (42), and he asks passers-by also to pray for God’s mercy on Alexander’s sins (43). In death, as in life, for a young man to be sexually desirable may present dangers to himself and, as Baudri implies in “Ad iuvenem,” dangers to those who desire him. This juxtaposition of epitaphs for Godfrey and Alexander both contrasts and equates these two forms of desire and of mourning, which Baudri could not display together outside the boundaries of the graveyard he imagined.

Foucault introduced the mirror metaphor discussed above with an allusion to liminal space: “I think that between utopias and these utterly different emplacements, these heterotopias, there must be a kind of mixed, intermediate experience” (Different 179). Baudri brings his graveyard section to a close by creating a passage through such a mixed and intermediate space. Towards the end of the section, he begins to intersperse epitaphs for people who are marginal in various ways and who bring with them complications related to sexuality and reproduction. These include knights who are marginal because, as warriors they might have taken the lives of others and cannot be assured of their status in the afterlife. In addition, one of the knights is, like Alexander, young and beautiful, and another died while avenging his wife’s adultery. These marginal figures also include two women, one young and beautiful, the other, in her own epitaph, explains that she married in order to have a child and died while giving birth to her tenth. There is an even more marginal area at the edge of the graveyard, including three poems that are related to death but are neither tituli nor epitaphs.

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28 In 1095 Pope Urban began granting indulgences to crusaders, partially resolving that question of whether knights would endure lengthy times in purgatory.
29 The poems for knights are “Super militem iuvenem” (“To a young knight,” c. 53), four poems to or about the “good soldier” Burcardus (cc. 55-56, 69), and four poems about Raherius, “the most brave” (cc. 60-63).
The first of these is a *planctus* (lament) for Hubertus, the only teacher Baudri names as his own, and the only poem in the *libellus* that offers a glimpse into Baudri’s experience of the pupil-teacher relationship. It is “remarkably personal in tone,” as described by Janthia Yearley in her study of the *planctus* as a genre (70). It is also the most technically complex poem in the *libellus*, a tribute Tilliette describes as “‘le chef-d’œuvre’ que Baudri dédie au maître qui lui a appris la grammaire” (“the ‘masterpiece’ which Baudri dedicates to the teacher who taught him grammar,” *Carmina* 1 188n).

Though the medieval Latin *planctus* usually includes praise for the person lamented, Baudri’s focuses almost entirely on his own grief, and the desolation of his life in Hubertus’s absence, with the alternating refrains “How cruel your death is to me” and “What woe is my life.” He describes himself as torn away from Hubertus (5), rather than Hubertus having departed, as if their relationship had ended for reasons beyond his control. His suffering over Hubertus’s death brings him close to death himself (16-17), and his only comfort is looking forward to his own death, which will bring him and his teacher closer to each other (34). Another poem, in Baudri’s manuscript but not in the *libellus*, almost certainly refers to Hubertus, though he is not named. The lines report that a certain teacher’s instruction in rhetoric was crucial to his education:

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Attamen ille meus pauset cum pace magister
Toto qui studio me puerum docuit,
Qui mox a primis michi signavit rudimentis
Qualiter ex paucis plurima conicerem,
Qualiter in brevius restringere plurima possem,
Qualiter ex alio fingere possem alium (37-42).
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May this great man, my teacher, rest in peace
When I was a boy he taught me with zeal.
He soon marked out for me the first principles

The poems for women are “Super Elpem comitissam” (On Countess Elpis,” c. 55) and “Super Osannam” (“On Osanna,” c. 65).
How I could make much from little pieces,
How I could shape an abundance to be more brief,
How I could make one thing from another.\(^\text{30}\)

The specificity with which Baudri describes what Hubertus taught him implies that Hubertus gave him the instruction he needed and fostered the degree of learning that is remarkable, given the rustic background that Baudri repeats in many poems. But the *planctus* also has a performative aspect, in the intensity of the formal constraints and the repetitions of the refrains. Baudri’s sensation of being bereft seem real, but, I speculate, he might not have taken the opportunity to express the loss of Hubertus so intensely and publicly, were it not also an opportunity to grieve for other losses, such as desires that had to be restricted. Placing the *planctus* within the heterotopic graveyard may have been a way to suggest that Hubertus’s relationship with the young Baudri was the kind of relationship Baudri wishes he could have with young men but cannot.

In the next few poems there is a sequence that dramatically illustrates the contrasting pulls of monastic life and personal life, of restraint and desire. In the poem “*De Gerardo Lausdunis surrepto*” (“About Gerard taken from Loudun,” c. 75), Baudri plays on the trope of entering a monastery as dying from the world. Gerard was not taken from Loudun by death; he left to join the abbey at Bourgueil. Baudri presumably wrote c. 77, “*Ad eundem ut monachus fiat*” (“To the same so that he becomes a monk”), to convince Gerard to enter the monastic life, but the incentives the poem initially presents are not the pleasure of monastic life but the horrors of non-monastic life, as if the monastic life were a utopia, and the world outside the monastery a dystopia. As mentioned above (p. 48) this poem is in the genre of *contemptus mundi* (“scorn for the

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30 Tilliette notes that Baudri is referring to rhetorical exercises in *amplificatio* (expanding), *abbreviatio* (shortening), and the theory of tropes (figures of speech) (2002, 273n25).
world”), and it consists almost entirely of warnings against false and immoral worldly pleasures, particularly sexual pleasures. I summarize those arguments:

Giving in to sins of the flesh leads to defilement. Those who sin with women should know that inside every beautiful woman is a bag of filth and she will soon grow old. To live with a woman who bears a child is a form of prostituting (77-91).

To frequent a Ganymede is a greater crime, because it is against nature. Those who commit this crime should know that their young lovers will grow old and ugly, the guilty men will be forced to seek others who are young, and they will face eternal punishment. It is better to avoid both girls and boys (92-126).

Tilliette notes that male homosexuality, strongly condemned above, is not addressed in an earlier example of *contemptus mundi* with which Baudri probably was familiar, which suggests that addressing Ganymedism was Baudri’s decision. The tone is so harsh that it casts doubt on the sincerity of the argument and suggests Baudri is speaking in a persona. The following poem “Providentia contra lasciviam” (“Precaution against wantonness,” c. 78) further complicates the question. It is a brief rhyming lyric, wry in its acknowledgment of the persistence of desire and the effort required to resist it. Tilliette points out that its beginning, below, resembles songs of the *Carmina Burana* (*Carmina* 1, 194n78).

Veris adest tempus, quod amat lasciva iuventus,
Quae viciat teneros temperies animos.
Humida prata virent, humus albicat, arbuta florent
Et vernant passim floribus arva suis (1-4).

The time of spring, so loved by wanton youth, has come,
Weather which harms tender souls.
Moist fields turn green, soil turns white, trees bloom,
And everywhere fields are verdant with their flowers.

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31 Tilliette (Carmina 1 190n1), names Roger de Caen’s *Carmen de contempt mundi*, as one which does not list homosexuality.
In the last two lines, Baudri, speaking in the first person, concludes that he must resist spring’s appeal.

Gnaviter ergo meum muniri pectus oportet,
Ne male pro vernis obruar illecebris (5-6).

So I must diligently protect my heart
Lest the enticements of spring overthrow me.

This poem marks an exit from the graveyard heterotopia, as if the speaker had closed a gate, returned to his own present time, and begun looking once again at the living world around him. One more series of epitaphs follows, five poems to Geraldus, the respected abbot of Silva Maior, but these epitaphs memorialize and praise their subject with thanks for his life, not grief for his death. The speaker’s tone has changed.

Few of the poems in the *libellus* show Baudri fulfilling the responsibilities of an abbot. Instead, most of the poems depict him finding moments in which to recognize and express his struggles at fitting into his clerical role. For that reason, the graveyard section is an important counterpoint. The poems discussed in this chapter were written from inside the graveyard heterotopia, looking out. They show Baudri carrying out his duties, writing *tituli* and epitaphs, saying and requesting prayers for those who have died, as his position required him to do. Yet the arrangement of the poems in this section demonstrates the possibility of resistance, in Baudri’s frustration with the formulas of *tituli*, in his arranging the epitaphs that symbolize graves in the order he wants to have them, in the inclusion of marginal figures, in the extremes of emotion expressed by the lament for his teacher, and in the contrast of the *contemptus mundi* poem and “Providentia lasciviam,” which calls for restraint because the world is beautiful, not because it deserves contempt. Baudri’s resistance creates, what Robert Reid-Phar, in “Disseminating Heterotopia,” calls “the possibility of possibilities” (924), the opportunity
to experience the world, however briefly, to however small a degree, as different from the way it seemed before.
Chapter IV

*Ars Poetica* and Appeals to Current and Future Readers

Chapter II discussed Baudri’s needs to shield his manuscript from overzealous clerical reformers yet make his work available to the community of readers who were likely to understand and appreciate it, a community that would have included those who shared his education in and familiarity with classical Latin poetry. Chapter III focused on a group of funerary poems that express resistance to norms indirectly, through the arrangements of poems, creating a heterotopic space.

This chapter focuses on another group of poems, at the approximate center of the *libellus*, that express more concern on forming relationships with readers than on protecting poems from censors and that address Baudri’s writing process. This section includes two poems, “Qua intentione scripserit” (“With what intention did he write,” c. 85) and “Ad Godefredum Remensem” (“To Godfrey of Reims,” c. 99), in which Baudri presents his ideas about the relationships among writer, text, and readers, which I will discuss through close readings. Baudri’s addresses to readers, like his heterotopic resistances, are an opening to possibilities, an invitation to understand what he cannot say.

This section also includes other poems that show Baudri writing in a variety of roles: offering generous incentives to his current scribe to encourage him to work more swiftly, asking fellow Loire poets Marbod and Hildebert to exchange poems with him, inviting—in some cases imploring—friends to visit, giving advice to young men, and lamenting the loss of his broken stylus, as well as the pair of letter-poems in which Florus shares his plan to join Ovid in exile, and Ovid responds that Florus can serve him better
by remaining in Rome. Among these poems, I will focus in particular on two that show Baudri writing with different degrees of openness and veracity, carrying on what I surmise are activities of his daily life. One is an apparently sweetly affectionate poem to another monk, urging him to return soon, and the second is a poem of advice to a young man who wants to become a monk.

“Qua intentione scripserit” (“With what intention did he write”)

This poem is a complement to the first poem of the libellus, “Contra obtructatores consolatur librum suum,” and takes up the topic of *intentio* (“intention”), a customary element of an *accessus* not addressed in “Contra.” *Intentio* is usually defined as the writer’s intention, but it can also mean the intention of the work itself. In this poem and in “Ad Godefredum,” Baudri uses the word *intentio* in both senses of the term. There are three aspects of this poem of particular interest for my argument, which I will discuss below: that Baudri addresses the poem directly to his readers and invites readers to share the responsibility for the meaning; that he explains the nature of his own writing through what I will argue is a semi-persona; and that he shares responsibility for the *intentio* of his poem with the poem itself.

The poem begins with Baudri’s defining its readership as those who interested in the kind of playful work he writes: “Qui iocular cupis ludentis carmen adire / Tanquam nugarum proprio pelluctus amore,” (“You who want to visit the playful poem of a jokester / drawn as if by your love of trifles,” 1-2). Using the *topos* of comparing a poem to a meal, he advises readers to lower their expectations: he will be serving one dish—or poem—after another, without savory taste, on a small table (5-7), and—giving up the dining metaphor—far from literary excellence (8). He reminds potential readers that their
interest in his poems could be considered a fault, since he dares to pursue not only trifles, but “lubricas…nugas” (“slippery trifles,” i.e. trifles with inexact meanings, 11) and he is too old to play at “pueriles…mimos” (“boyish farces”). Here he turns his readers into collaborators:

Ipse recognosco quia iure quidem reprehendor,
   Sed eniamque peto veniamque petendo merebor,
Excusanti me si credulous ipse favebis (15-17).

I recognize that by right I am indeed blameworthy,
   But I seek forgiveness and by seeking deserve it,
If having forgiven me you trust and are well disposed.

He suggests his writing exists in an indeterminate state, where it might or might not be improper, and his readers have the power to release his writing from that perilous condition, by trusting him. In the next line, he describes his writing project as an experiment, “Dicere quod poteram? Temptando probare volebam” (“What was I able to say? I wanted to find out, by trying,” 18). Baudri may be explaining that he wanted to find out what kinds of poetry his skill level would allow him to compose. I speculate that the lines can also be read more literally, as Baudri’s explanation that he was experimenting in order to find out what his language allowed him to say about love and eros. In Tison Pugh’s terms, in Baudri’s poetry, and Marbod’s and Hildebert’s as well, an “almost cacophonous plurality of desires exposes the contradictory impulse of the queered lyric to speak and to conceal simultaneously” (16). If the genres and words available to Baudri did not allow him to form descriptions of his own experiences, it is not surprising that some of his poems claim desire, some disown it, and some do both.

In the next section of the poem, Baudri adapts a voice that is close to his own, but not his own. Gerald Bond uses the word drift to denote such interplay between the speaker as author of the poem and the speaker as not-the-the author of the poem, a figure
who can express what would otherwise go unsaid (“Composing” 87). Here, the speaker, whose identity is indeterminate, continues the rationale for the nature of his writing with lines that parallel Ovid’s *Tristia* 2 (317-326), listing topics he could not write about. He also reports that he is taking advice (from Horace’s *Ars Poetica* 3, 39) to avoid subjects that would have been too heavy for him to bear. Even if he did make the attempt, perhaps no one would read what he wrote; and he wants to be read. This is a poignant admission, even via persona, from a writer who, it seems, did not circulate his work:

> Et cur scribatur nisi scriptum forte legatur?  
> Ergo quod pueros demulceat atque puellas  
> Scripsimus, ut pueris id consonet atque puellis,  
> Sique meum relegatur opus volitetque per orbem,  
> Illud dum relegent pueri relegentque puellae (30-34).

Why write unless the writing be read?  
I write what charms boys and girls,  
So that it will resonate with boys and girls,  
And my work is upheld and flies through the world,  
While boys and girls read it again and again.

The lines above are confusing, perhaps deliberately so, when considered in relation to his *libellus*. Baudri refers to “boys and girls” three times, yet his subjects and his readers, based on the poems in the *libellus*, are not primarily boys and girls, who would be unlikely to share his knowledge of classical Latin poems. Though he sometimes uses the word *puer* (“boy”) in poems, he usually refers to young males with the term *iuenis*, which connotes adolescents, and the *libellus* includes few poems to or about girls or women other than those who are noble or learned.32 Nor does he broadly encourage boys and girls to read his work, based on the limited circulation of his manuscript. Tilliette laconically comments that Baudri’s use of the terms *pueris atque puellis* is an

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32 His most flirtatious poem to a young woman, “Ad Dominam Constantiam” (“To Dame Constance,” c. 200) and her reply (c. 201), arguably also written by Baudri, are not included in the *libellus*. 

Next, he defends his poetry by drawing distinctions between what he writes and how he loves:

Quod vero tanquam de certis scriptito rebus
   Et quod personis impono vocabula multis
Et modo gaudentem, modo me describe dolentem
   Aut, puerile loquens, vel amo vel quidlibet odí—
Crede michi, non vera loquor, magis omnia fingo.
   Nullus amor foedus michi quidlibet associavit (35-40).

When I write about things as if they were real
   And because I put give names to many characters
And I write about myself as joyful, and as grieving
   Or writing as a boy say “I love” or “I hate” something or other,
Believe me, I do not speak truth, I invent all of it,
   No amor has attached any bond to me.

Regarding Baudri’s description of himself as writing as a boy (line 38), Tilliette questions to what texts Baudri could be referring, and wonders if he ever wrote under a different name (Carmina 1 197n10). I speculate that the answer to this contradiction is rather that the description of Baudri’s readers in lines 30-40 above is in the voice of a persona, and the paradoxical line 39, “Believe me, I do not speak the truth, I invent all of it” applies to both the lines above and the lines below it. That is, Baudri’s descriptions of his own work and of his young audience are in part a fiction, and the lines that follow “Crede michi” are also a fiction, but a different kind of fiction, a metaphor representing the relationship between writers and their works, by which the works participate in their own creation. In the quoted material below, I repeat lines 39-40:
Believe me, I do not speak truth, I invent all of it.
No amor has attached any bond to me.
But this way of writing has grown in me.
Thus I gave shape to what in me agrees with many,
And took from myself nothing but the seed of the material
And I thought this category to be more pleasing to me.
Therefore, I pray, let the word’s meaning be my responsibility,
And let the intention of the material be its own, not mine.

Tilliette suggests that by *sententia verbi* Baudri refers to the style of the work and by
*intentio materiei* to the content of the work (*Carmina* 1 197n11). Otter goes into more
detail. In her view, because Baudri is writing within the literary genre of love poetry, the
first person “I” is a stand-in for “many,” and “[t]he ‘intention’ then (perhaps in multiple
senses: the intentionality of the writing, as well as its reference, the thing ‘intended’) resides not in [Baudri] but in the words” (“Renaissances” 547). As I interpret Otter,
writing within the genre of love poetry requires Baudri to give up some control over how
what he writes will be understood, which makes him even more dependent on his readers.
His appeal to readers at the poem’s conclusion illustrates this relationship.

See into my discourse with a faithful heart
And my verses take joy in a worthy interpreter.
Do not be a scurrilous pimp of my words.
Read well what is there without malicious suspicion.
As the identity of the speaker has become indeterminate, so has the interpretation of the poem, depending upon the attitude of the reader; the writer may create ambiguities, the reader becomes responsible for choosing among the possible interpretations. To engage with his writing is to play a game.

“Ad Godefredum Remensem” (“To Godfrey of Reims”)

The *libellus* includes many poems in which Baudri praises the work of and requests letter exchanges with other poets, but Godfrey is among those for whom he shows the highest esteem, based on the five epitaphs for him in the graveyard section and this poem, one of Baudri’s longest letter-poems. In “Ad Godefredum Remensem,” Baudri’s process of praising Godfrey and comparing his writing to Godfrey’s leads him to articulate an *ars poetica* of his own, developing further an explanation of and justification for the fictionality of his poems and seeking connections with readers.

The poem begins with Baudri listing how much he knows about Godfrey and how much he admires him. Though Baudri’s poem asserts that Godfrey’s skills as a writer were widely known and praised, ironically Baudri’s poem is the major source of biographical information about him and little of his work has survived. Godfrey was born and educated in Reims, home to one of the most well-regarded medieval cathedral schools. He became a teacher there and rose to the position of chancellor, succeeding Bruno of Cologne. Godfrey was a favorite of the Archbishop Manasses I, an opponent of Gregorian reform, who was deposed. Despite that association, Godfrey was able to remain at Reims, probably until his death, some time in 1094 or 1095 (Williams, 29-31). Baudri does not comment on any poems of Godfrey’s by title or subject but praises his talents. I summarize what Baudri finds admirable: There lives in Godfrey the spirit of the
great authors, the majesty of Virgil, the lightness of Ovid (7-8). When Godfrey develops a theme, the ornaments he chooses are so perfectly in harmony they enhance both theme and style (9-12). He reads aloud so well that his audiences are charmed and the words and the melody always harmonize (13-24).

Baudri’s praise of Godfrey’s ability to read aloud musically is the only indication Baudri has been in Godfrey’s presence, and the description of Godfrey’s skillful integration of theme and style is the only sign Baudri has read (or heard?) his work. However, studies of the four letter-poems of Godfrey’s that have survived suggest they are on subjects that would be of great interest to Baudri (as described by Helena de Carlos, “Approach” [1-18], Jaeger Envy [114-115, 160-61, 186] and Verbaal [120-21]).

All four of these letter-poems are about poetry literally or metaphorically, three are addressed to other poets, and three include retellings of events from, or related to the Trojan War. Carlos points to the commonality of interests Godfrey shares with Baudri: “like his friend Baudri of Bourgueil, [Godfrey] creates a poetic world in which the classical poets seem to be alive and to share their literary ideas with him” (“Poetry” 18). Carlos describes other traits of Godfrey’s which Baudri shares: a reliance on verse letters to create community and a belief that poetry can make poets immortal (“Approach” 16). I have not found any descriptions of Godfrey’s poems as homoerotic or queer, but, several critics comment on the influence of Ovid in Godfrey’s poems (e.g., Williams 39; Carlos, “Poetry” 19-21). One of the surviving works is an Ovidian erotic poem to a young woman, which is also an allegory about ornament in poetry. Gregory’s longest surviving poem, a verse letter to Hugh Raynard de Bar, a bishop, comprises ekphrases of images on a cloak to be presented to the muse Calliope: Hercules’s battle with Cacus; Orpheus’s
rescue of Eurydice, in which she survives; Ganymede portrayed as a great hunter, and the fall of Troy, with Achilles and Hector still alive and engaged in a duel (Tilliette, “Troiae” 420-429). I speculate that this poem of Godfrey’s may have influenced Baudri’s ekphrastic poem to Countess Adela, to be discussed Chapter V.

It is likely that Baudri was drawn to Godfrey as a possible mentor because of their common interests and the common intensity of their interests. He may also have been intrigued by Godfrey’s position as chancellor in a cathedral school. Over the course of the poem, Baudri invites Godfrey, in a variety of ways, to enter into a relationship with him, a relationship that for Baudri seems to consist of exchanging poems, commenting on poems, and writing about each other in poems. His first approach is simple, a request that Godfrey, though he has so many noble and powerful friends, not disdain him as a modest friend. Here Baudri uses the word amicus (“friend”), but as the poem progresses, he will change to the word amor, “love,” in both its noun and verb forms. The concept of spiritual love, or, as C. Stephen Jaeger names it, “ennobling love,” derived from Cicero’s treatise De Amicitia, was powerful in monastic and noble communities in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (Jaeger, Ennobling passim). Such friendships were understood, as an aspect of Christianity, to include encouragement of virtues in each other and reciprocal exchanges of favors. Baudri translates the concept of Christian amicitia into a literary rather than religious context, in which participants read each other’s writing and exchange poems, in relationships that he sometimes describes as friendships but more often as love.
Godfrey is a bold writer of longer works who praises his own skills. In contrast, Baudri is a poet who rarely praises himself, most of whose poems are short, a self-declaimed poet of trifles, a jokester with a playful muse. As he compares Godfrey’s work to his, Godfrey always comes out ahead, but Baudri demonstrates worth in his own work. He devotes eighteen lines (33-51) to proofs that “big things need small things within the same whole” (34). The fluency with which he praises Godfrey shows that Baudri, too, is eloquent. When he asks Godfrey to immortalize him by writing about him in a poem, his persuasion includes promising Godfrey to return the favor, which he then proves himself able to do by writing the biography of Godfrey that remains the primary source of knowledge about him. These examples of Baudri’s skills are subtle yet persuasive, but the most surprising and effective turn Baudri makes is a display of the work of his playful muse in creating ambiguities, particularly around his use of amor.

Baudri first uses the word amor in relation to Godfrey in a comparison of his poems to food he had prepared, similar to the same comparison in “Qua intentione.” Godfrey’s love, he writes, would give his dishes the respect and flavor they lack (119). This is an unremarkable use of the word. But shortly thereafter he uses the word four more times, in a more potentially suggestive manner:

\[
\begin{align*}
  \text{Denique quantus amor mea viscera moverit in te}, \\
  \text{Hic aditus nostri proloquitur calami.} \\
  \text{Namque tuos vultus non presumpisset adire} \\
  \text{Ni processisset tutus amore tuo} \\
  \text{Ergo alternus amor me scribere paucat coegit} \\
  \text{Ut sic te cogam scribere multa michi} \\
  \text{Hoc etiam spectat tenor inconvulsus amoris (133-138).}
\end{align*}
\]

How great the love that moves my inmost being toward you
This approach by pen reveals.

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33 Wim Verbaal writes that Godfrey “expresses himself in almost extravagant lyrical terms on his own poetical gifts” (20).
The poem would not have dared come into your presence
If it had not set forth safe in your love.
Thus love shared compels me to write a few lines to you
To compel you to write many to me.

As mentioned in the introduction to this thesis, Gerald Bond has pointed out that Baudri frequently uses the term *amor* where the term *amicitia* would be the more conventional choice, evoking the ambiguity of possible associations with homosexuality (“Locus” 166). Bond elaborates on that concept in a later essay, stating that “*amor*, as ‘physical desire’ in any positive sense” could not be spoken in late eleventh-century monastic culture” (“Composing” 97).\(^{34}\) Indeed, the preoccupations and tone of the speaker change immediately after this cluster of uses of amor. First, the speaker becomes fearful and defensive, declaring that he has to observe the unshaken constancy of love, lest his poem wander at crossroads, then he explains that his poem is particularly susceptible to hostile gossip, since “suquae non est pondere fixa, / Ut nostra, a multis dilaceranda foret” ("poetry which is not attached to a firm base / like mine, would be torn to pieces,” 145-146). Then he, strangely, urges someone—but whom? Godfrey? the readers? himself? — to check every line of his poem, to make sure it is not open to malicious interpretations (147-148). Next, switching tone again, the speaker vents scorn on those who would blame him, as did the speaker in “Contra obtrectatores,” and, changing tone yet again, begins listing the reasons why he writes. Writing prevents boredom (155-156). The anxiety of writing drives out other anxieties (157-160). Writing fills time that if left to idleness might encourage vices (161-162). In this list, Baudri addresses a specific group of readers much as he did in “Qua intentione,” and to those

\(^{34}\) Bond made this comment in the context of discussing the Florus-Ovid poetic exchange, but I find it applies also to Baudri’s poem to Godfrey.
who want to avoid a plague of upheaval, he recommends taking up composition. Writing is not mere amusement; it is a necessity (163-166). Moreover, writing well is a skill that can be learned, and a poem well written is a kind of treasure (172-176). In other poems, he has described his writing as playful and an activity that keeps him from dullness and torpor, but he has not stated as clearly as he does in the lines below the pleasure, he takes in the writing itself:

Abseque mora et lima nemo poeta bonus.
Versibus in centum si versus fulserit unus,
Irritus ex toto non erit iste labor.
Si vero nostri versus poterunt decimari,
Ecce meus sudor prosilit uberior (172-176).

Without time and revision no poet is good.
If among one hundred verses one verse shines
The work will not be a complete waste.
If my verses could give one in ten,
Look, my sweat brings forth plenty.

But the speaker switches again, finding fault with his own work, and addressing Godfrey as if they had discussed this matter earlier, or as if the “you” in the previous section of the poem had been Godfrey all along:

Ecce tibi dixi, mi Godefrede, quid hoc sit
Quid studio, licet hoc nil valeat studium.
Carmina confiteor nil in se nostra valere,
Sed valet id quod me devocat a viciis (179-182).

Here as I told you, my Godfrey, is the reason
Why I study, though the study be worthless.
I confess that my poems have no worth in themselves
But worth in calling me away from my vices.

Whether by viciis (vices) Baudri means ordinary faults or moral failings is, perhaps deliberately, unclear. In either case, describing writing poems as a way to avoid wrong-doing is a bold move on the part of a writer who has been accused of, or who fears being accused of, writing poems that themselves are examples of wrong-doing. Baudri’s
invention, as Bond describes it, is to “declare the realm of *iocus* as a world unto itself, a fiction which has no direct correlation with any reality” (“Iocus 183), which Baudri explicitly puts forth at the end of this poem to Godfrey.

Obiciunt etiam iuvenum cur more loquutus
Virginibus scripsi nec minus et pueris.
Nam scripsi quaedam quae complectuntur amorem.
Carminibusque meis sexus uterue placet.
Dicere quid possem potius temptare volebam
Quam quod amavissem versibus exciperem
Nam si quid vellem, si quid vehementer amarem,
Esset amoris tunc nescia carta mei.
Non promulgetur confession carmine nostra,
Solus cum solo criminal confitear.
Non est in trivis alicuius amor recitandus;
quisquis amat, cautus celet amoris opus.
Et michi nulla amor, nulla incentiva fuerunt,
Execere meum sic placet ingenium.
Musa iocosa fuit moresque fuere pudici;
Pectine cantatur lucidiore iocus.
Me quemcunque velit vulgaris opinion, semper
Sum, quod sum, neque me carmina precipitant.
Nec mores nostros infecit carminis usus
Nec nostros actus, ut reor, inficiet (183-202).

They blame me since in the manner of a young man
I wrote to maidens and no less to boys.
Certain things I wrote touch on love
And my poems find attractions in both sexes.
I wanted to discover what I was able to say,
More than to collect past loves in verses.
For if I wanted, if I loved, anything passionately
The page would be unaware of my love.
My poems do not publish confessions,
To myself alone I confide any misdeeds.
No one’s love should be declared at crossroads,
Whoever loves, hides with care love’s work.
I have no love, there were no provocations,
To practice my talent is my pleasure,
My muse is playful and my character chaste;
The music is brighter when the song is playful
Whoever the common opinion wants me to be,
I am as I am and my poems do not ruin me.
The practice of poetry has not stained my character
Nor, I contend, will it stain my conduct.
If readers accept the text above as fiction, which neither correlates, nor is compelled to correlate, with what appeared earlier in the poem, there are no paradoxes, no requirement that the fiction portray Baudri accurately. That Baudri the author of the \textit{libellus} has not written as many letters to maidens as to boys and does not write as someone who finds both sexes equally attractive, becomes irrelevant. But for the speaker of this fiction to insist repeatedly that if he loved he would keep his love a secret, that he would not confess love in a poem, that he does not love—all these denials closely following a declaration of love to Godfrey—certainly seems a contradiction. The contradiction is left to his readers to resolve. If the passage above is not a fiction, or not exactly a fiction, does Baudri lie when he writes that he loves Godfrey, or does he lie when he writes that he has no love? Does he imply that his “love” for Godfrey is a different kind of love, that is completely innocent? If so, why would he repeat the word \textit{amor}, when \textit{amicitia}, the term that, since Cicero’s \textit{De Amicitia}, signified more a profound friendship than a carnal relationship, was available? Does he repeat \textit{amor} to create opportunities for flirtation?\textsuperscript{35} Especially since these disclaimers end with a reminder that “my muse is playful” (197), readers of his circle would be led to conclude that he was inviting them to his game, creating ambiguities pointing towards what was otherwise inexpressible. He does also, however, suggest a possible resolution of his own dilemma in the last four lines:

\begin{verbatim}
Ipse legam quod agam, faciamque legatur amicis
Carmen amicorum non minus ipse legam.
\end{verbatim}

\textsuperscript{35} It is true that \textit{amor} fits more flexibly into Baudri’s meter than does \textit{amicitia}; yet probably he could have avoided \textit{amor} more often than he chose to. In Gerald Bond’s view, Baudri’s frequent use of \textit{amor} for \textit{amicitia} made it possible for him to “flirt simultaneously with codes of friendship between monks and codes of desire between males” (Loving 50).
Tu magis alter ego, non ut communis amicus,  
Sed specialis, ave; missaque nostra lege (211-214).

I read what I am working on, and I work to be read by friends.  
No less do I read the poems of my friends.  
You my other self, not as an ordinary friend,  
But as a special friend, I greet; read what I sent.

He brings the poem to an end by including Godfrey among his friends, not his loves, as *alter ego* (“other self”) and *specialis amicus* (“special friend”), are less suggestive than *amor*. He also includes Godfrey among his readers.

“Ad Stephanum monachum suum” (“To his friend monk Stephanus”) and “Invitatio ut quidam se monacharet” (Invitation so become a monk”)

In the above close readings of Baudri’s poems, I have discussed his cautiousness about revealing himself, his sensitivity to the composition of his audience, his modes of creating ambiguity within poems, and ways the arrangement of poems creates ambiguities that are not conveyed within the poems themselves. There are two adjacent poems in this central section of the *libellus* that seem relatively straightforward when read individually, but when considered together, exemplify how Baudri plays with the degree of directness in his letter poems, adjusting it depending upon likely reader(s). In the first of these, “Ad Stephanum monachum suum” (“To his friend the monk Stephanus,” c. 90), Baudri urges his traveling friend to return as quickly as possible. He compares being apart from Stephanus to the pain of having a fingernail torn from the flesh. He writes that without Stephanus he feels he has lost half of himself, and that he relies on Stephanus to pay attention to his poems and put them in better shape. This is the kind of shared interest in poetry for which Baudri often writes that he longs. There is even a part of the poem that seems to be a reference to a private joke or pet name, relating
to a poem about a mole (the animal), a reference that recurs in two other poems to Stephanus (c. 107 and c. 131). The appearance of the mole is an odd detail that works to convince readers the poem describes an actual relationship, even though the relationship is close to the ideal Baudri has described in other poems as an incentive to a friend to become a monk. Without either the word *amor* or the word *amicitia* appearing in the poem, it reads like a love poem, but it is not explicitly a love poem.

The poem that follows, “Invitatio ut quidam se monacharet” (“Invitation to become a monk,” c. 91), is more formal and presents a different version of the place of poetry in the life of a monk. As the poem narrates, Ramnulfus, the recipient, has already requested poetry from Baudri twice, but poetry, Baudri tells him, is not a way to reach heaven; rather than requesting poems, Ramnulfus should request a conversation. Baudri continues with the claim that he chooses not to spend much time writing poems and that he has given up reading pagan literature.

Nos quoque carminibus aliquando iocando vacamus,
   Sed neque carminibus otia multa damus.
Cum volumus siquidem nostrum leviare laborem,
   Quod magis aedificet scribimus aut legitimus.
Dormit gentilis nobiscum pagina vilis,
   Namque libros gentis illius exuimus (13-18).

I too occasionally spend time playing with poems
   But I do not give much free time to poems
Since when I want respite from my work
   I write or read what edifies me more.
Worthless pagan literature is dead for me,
   For I cast aside the books of that people.

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36 *Cuidam Guauterio* (“To a certain Guauterius”) is a good example. In that poem, Baudri tells Guaterius they could share the comfort of mutual conversations eternally, if he became a monk (c. 6, 19-22).
37 The adjective “*gentilis*” in line 17 had a different meaning in Baudri’s time than it does now, connoting *foreign, heathen, or pagan*, as opposed to Christians.
These are claims that directly contradict other writing by Baudri about his need for poetry and his respect for writers such as Cicero, Virgil and Ovid. As the poem continues, its message becomes analogous to the message of “Ad Godefredum,” that the reader must come to an understanding of the contradictions:

Me rogo Rannulfus sua per rescripta salutet
   Et michi quicquid erit perlegat et recitet;
Explicet umbrosos sensus obscura verbaque,
   A me se donec noverit implicatum (27-30).

I ask that Rannulfus greet me in his reply
   And that he read carefully and recite whatever I send.
May he clarify the dim ideas and obscure words
   until he figures out what is entangled.

Baudri’s recommendations that Rannulfus find a way to meet with him in person and that he make an effort to understand thoroughly what Baudri has written are clues that Baudri’s letter means more than, or something different than, it appears to, something that can perhaps be conveyed in a conversation or, if in writing, by paradox. Also, Baudri is playing his game, and inviting players.
Chapter V

“Adelae Comitissae” as Heterotopia

Baudri’s poem to “Adelae Comitissae” (To Countess Adela), 1368 lines, is the longest, most complex, and most sumptuously written poem of Baudri’s collection. In the body of the poem, Baudri describes a private chamber he designed for the Countess Adela, daughter of William the Conqueror. Adela (1067? -1137), usually referred to as Adela of Blois, was the youngest daughter of William and Mathilda of Flanders and grew to become a personage of unusual consequence. She was among the first in a new category of powerful women that arose at the beginning of the twelfth century—noblewomen or ladies, as characterized by Gerald Bond (Loving 129-130, 137)—who developed other identities in addition to according to those related to sex, familial associations, and religious devotion (LoPrete, “Gender” passim).

The chamber contains a series of artworks that represent the knowledge of his period, as Baudri imagines and remembers it, or as he imagines Adela might imagine and remember it. He provides detailed ekphrases of the artworks, comprising four tapestries that cover the walls, celestial images on the room’s ceiling, a map of the world on the room’s floor, and statues of women representing Philosophy, Medicine, and the seven Liberal Arts, placed around a bed. Like the graveyard Baudri described in Chapter 3, this chamber is heterotopic. Multiple kinds of time seem to exist in the same moment within

38 Translations in this section are from Monika Otter’s “Baudri of Bourgueil, ‘To Countess Adela,’” unless indicated otherwise. I retain the British spellings which Otter used.
39 Though Tilliette (“Chambre” 151) explains that these textiles are embroideries rather than tapestries, they have been called “tapestries” by most scholars, and I continue that usage.
the artworks, particularly the tapestries; times and spaces that would normally not be juxtaposed come into relationship; norms are challenged; and real and unreal coexist. Baudri’s acute awareness of the variability of the passage of time is present throughout his poetry, in his waiting for replies to his letters or the arrival of friends, in his expressed desires to spend his time as he wishes with people he chooses, in his anxieties related to the attractiveness of boys for the brief interval just before adulthood, and in his attachment to the literature of the classical past, which provided a kind of intimate but distant companionship. I have discussed the organization of Baudri’s *libellus* as a deliberate ring structure, in which the end is a return to the beginning, rather than the result of a linear progression. In “Adelae Comitissae,” he becomes master of his own times, combining periods, compressing them, and extending them, as he wishes, all in what he portrays as a present moment, creating a freedom not available otherwise. In Caroline Dinshaw’s words, “a longing for another kind of time beyond linearity. . . can coexist with a conviction that there are many possible times in the now, including many possible pasts” (*How Soon* 36).

In this chapter I will describe Baudri’s “Adelae Comitissae” as a heterotopia, offer examples of multiple temporalties existing simultaneously in the poem, and argue that the real yet unreal nature of the chamber allows Baudri to imagine himself in relation to Adela and, possibly, as the Adela he imagines.

**Adela’s Identity**

Adela was born circa 1066. That some of her correspondents, including Baudri, compliment her by referring to her as royal indicates she was born the daughter of a king, that is, after her father’s 1066 coronation (LoPrete, *Female* 356). In the early 1080s, at
about the age of fifteen, Adela married Stephen, son of and heir to the count of Blois. In 1089, upon her father-in-law’s death, her husband became the Count and she, the Countess, of Blois, Chartres, and Meaux. She and Stephen had five sons and one daughter; there may also have been two step-daughters whom Stephen brought to the marriage (LoPrete, Female 80n145; 390). Baudri mentions husband and children only once: “Nobilis hanc soboles ornat amorque viri” (“her noble offspring and love of her husband adorn her,” 62), indicating her domestic life was less important to him.

In the period before Stephen left for the First Crusade, Adela joined in governance, “routinely and publicly participating in the exercise of all non-military aspects of comital leadership,” which probably helped prepare her to serve as regent during her husband’s absences for the First and Second Crusades and after his death, in 1102 (LoPrete, “Gender” 93). Renowned for wealth, generosity, and diplomatic skills, literate in Latin, she was involved in the education of her children (Orderic Vitalis qtd. in Lo Prete, “Gender” 98) and, according to Bond, created a literary court (Loving 136). In addition to numerous prose letters from bishops and other clergy, and in addition to Baudri’s “Adelae” and another short poem, she received two poems from Hildebert of Lavardin and one poem from an unidentified author42 and was praised by Godfrey of Reims in a letter-poem to a friend, which was probably also sent to her (Bond, Loving 145-47). Adela, Bond wrote, “[i]n personal terms…seemed to have it all: status, power, wealth, beauty, grace, brains, education, virtue, and a spirited nature” (Loving 130). There is also evidence that being Adela was complicated. Drawing on surviving

42 Bond speculates this poem may be the poem by a cleric named Ingelrannus, which Godfrey of Rheims criticized as inadequately describing Adela’s excellence (Loving 146-7).
documents addressed to Adela or about her from men prominent in ecclesiastical and lay affairs, LoPrete concludes that male contemporaries viewed Adela as a woman who was also a lord. As a woman, they portrayed her in the same general terms typically used to represent any lay woman: with particular reference to her sexuality and relationships to men. As a lord, they depicted her wielding the same lordly powers as her male peers. Though those powers were often construed as “male” and Adela herself was occasionally portrayed as acting “with manly strength” (*virilter*). . . her male contemporaries . . . expected her to conform to stands of behaviour applicable to any woman active in the world (“Gender” 95).

LoPrete goes on to list ways communications from male authors sometimes showed insistence on emphasizing her female sexuality, as well as respect for her ability to rule. The strongest example is in the work of historian Orderic Vitalis, who, among accounts of her governing activities, asserted she used “conjugal caresses” to persuade her husband to undertake the Second Crusade (LoPrete, “Gender” 97-98). No personal documents written by Adela survive, and Adela may never have confided uneasiness in writing, but one may speculate she sometimes struggled in negotiating conflicting roles.

Adela was well-known among Baudri’s circles, as the correspondence from Hildebert and Godfrey attests. Baudri may have been written a poem to her in friendly competition with others whose work he admired, he may have chosen to address a poem to her in hopes of her support, or, as one line in the poem suggests, she may have requested a poem from him (54). She may have asked a number of poets to write panegyrics for her, in effect commissioning them, to enable her to be described as she wished to be (Bond 1995, 144-45). There are multiple reasons for Baudri’s writing a poem to and about Adela, but few obvious reasons for writing a poem in this particular format, as a description of a private room and its beautiful furnishings, except that such rooms were becoming of increasing interest to members of the aristocracy. Baudri may
have found a union of subject and form that suited his writing process particularly well, freeing him to create a panegyric by collecting and organizing his knowledge and presenting it to a powerful person who interested him and who was interested in poetry.

At the time Baudri wrote this poem, aristocratic readers such as Adela were beginning to share monastic literary habits of reading and discussion in a place designated for that purpose called, variously, *cubiculum*, *thalamus*, or *camera*, all of which could be translated as bedroom or chamber, etc. These new literary habits required new kinds of spaces, rooms that were reserved for reading, discussion, and contemplation (Rector *passim*). The chamber Baudri designed for Countess Adela was such a room, though an extraordinary version of one. Its artworks are described with so much detail, while being so improbably extravagant and ornate, the question of their actual existence led to decades of scholarly debate. Based on the luxurious materials in use throughout and the size of the statuary, Tilliette concludes that works of such magnificence, if they existed, would have been on display in a public area, not in a private room, nor would there been, at the time Baudri wrote, a private room large enough to contain these elements. By presenting Adela with this poem, Baudri gives her a space for reading and reflection that is more magnificent than any she otherwise could have had, in every way except by being real. This quality of being a different—in this case, according to Baudri, a more appropriate—version of reality, is one of the characteristics of heterotopias.

45 Bond estimates the poem was written c. 1087-1097 (*Loving* 131); Otter, following Abrahams, suggests 1101 or early 1102 (“Baudri” 102n63-75).
46 Tilliette, “La Chambre” 145-49)
At the Entrance to the Chamber

Baudri gives “Adelae Comitissae” an elaborate framing device. The poems begins in an indeterminate location outside the chamber, with Baudri addressing the parchment on which he will write the very poem the reader is now perusing. The poem also begins at an indeterminate time. Its conceit is that Baudri is telling the poem-to-be about Adela, in order to prepare it to meet Adela and describe to her the chamber Baudri has designed. However, most of Baudri’s description of the chamber is in the present tense, as if it is a record of his creation, moment-by-moment. Readers know that Baudri’s writing and Adela’s reading would have to take place at different points in time, but the events are presented here as possibly simultaneous. Time moves in varied ways throughout the poem, as will be discussed below.

The poem begins, as does the first poem of the *libellus*, “Contra obtrectatores,” by sending the poem out into the world, but with the anticipation of seeing splendors, rather than, as in “Contra obtrectatores,” of facing criticism. He signals that in this space, as long as he and his poem have good manners, there is nothing to fear. It is a space unlike the world in others of Baudri’s poems, in which desires that can be sources of melancholy and shame have to be encoded or denied. This space is both his and, ideally, Adela’s.

Vadis ut insolitos videas, mea cartula, fastos
Ut regum thalamos et comitum videas.
Vadis ut egregiam michi gratifices comitissam,
Si tamen ipsa prius gratificeris ei.
Gratificeris ei dicens: “Comitissa, valeto,
Reginae potius nomine digna, vale.” (1-6)

Go, little poem, to see a display of matchless adventures;
Enter the private rooms of kings and counts.
Go to flatter and please my most excellent lady Countess
Always assuming, of course that you find favor with her.
Please her first by saying; “My Lady Countess, be greeted;
Queen, rather (for you can claim royal honour), good day.
At the beginning of the poem, also, Baudri calls attention to Adela’s mixture of masculine and feminine qualities. The second line of the poem, refers to the private rooms of regum (kings) and comitum (counts), rather than queens and countesses, though it is Adela’s chamber the poem is about to enter. Baudri may have used the masculine nouns as generics, but he continues playing with gendered terms. The third and fifth lines use the noun comitissam and comitissa (countess), which the sixth line corrects to reginae (queen), the title she earned by being William’s daughter, born after his coronation. His description begins with setting Adela in familial terms and continues to do by recounting her father’s victories, generosity, and lineage (7-24). When Baudri returns to describing Adela herself, he inventories the ways she is like and unlike her father:

Non virtute minor successit filia patri,
    Excepto quod non militis arma gerit.
Arma tamen gereret nisi mos opus hoc inhiberet
    Nec fas est ferro membra tenella premi.
Una tamen res est qua praesit filia patri:
    Versibus applaudit scitque vacare libris.
Haec etiam novit sua merces esse poetis
    A probitate sua nemo redit vacuus. (33-40)

Equally worthy herself, the daughter follows her father,
    With the exception that she cannot bear warrior’s arms.
Surely she would bear arms if custom did not forbid it;
    But such delicate limbs shouldn’t be burdened with steel.
One thing there is, however, the daughter has on her father:
    She has an ear for verse and takes an interest in books.
Also she is well aware that the poet deserves his stipend;
    Through her largesse, no poet must leave her court unpaid.

She is like her father, except in her inability to bear arms, which she could do if custom and the delicacy of her limbs did not prevent it. Adella’s membra tenella (delicate limbs, 36) recall Baudri’s epitaph for the young knight Goffredus, Nulli Goffredus genio formave secundus (Goffredus second to none in intelligence and beauty, c. 53, 1), who also had membra tenella (3). Perhaps this repetition is a suggestion that the two both had
qualities of both genders, Goffredus as a knight but delicate, Adela as delicate but strong in other ways. Adela is unlike her father only in her knowledge of poetry, interest in books, and generosity to poets (37-40), which, in Baudri’s time, were far from exclusively feminine qualities. Other qualities Baudri praises in her also are terms that could be applied to men or women: *probitas* (uprightness, 58, 61), *castum pectus* (chaste heart, 619), and *decor insolitus et inequiperanda venutas* (rare elegance and unequalled loveliness, 67). All her qualities, according to Baudri’s description, are balanced. Her attractiveness draws suitors, but she has a *duram silicem* (granite firness, 69) that suitors cannot soften. They know that Adela will never choose them, but they cannot stop staring at her.

Irritantque suos hanc inhiando oculos  
Nec mirum, quoniam species sua tanta refulgent  
Debeat ut cunctis praefore virginibus (72-74).

Vainly, they stare at her, though they seem quite content:  
Little wonder they do; for her beauty is so resplendent  
That she would surely stand out in any group of young girls.

Yet, after vouching for Adela’s beauty, Baudri reveals that he never in fact saw Adela

Hanc ego vidissem, nisi rusticus erubuissem;|  
Ipsam quippe loquens, inspicere erubui.  
Tunc, nisi palantes obliquarentur ocelli,|  
Mox exhausisset omnia verba michi.  
Gorgone conspecta, quamplures destituuntur|  
Taliter a propriis protinus officiis (75-80)

I would have seen her myself, had I not blushed like a peasant;|  
For as I spoke, my eyes fell on her, and I blushed.  
Had I not quickly averted my eyes and turned to look elsewhere,  
She would have quickly dried up all my beautiful words.  
Seeing Medusa, many have been in a similar manner  
Wholly diverted from their original aim.

He was near her, but her presence overwhelmed him, and he had to look away, lest, he says, the sight of her would have dried up his words, suggesting that his poem is about
the Adela he imagines, rather than an Adela he could have seen. To see the actual Adela might have made him, like the suitors, content to gaze at her, vainly, or like one seeing Medusa, he might have been paralyzed by fear. This is a strange compliment, but certainly one that conveys her strength.

Baudri continues, declaring that though he may not have seen her, he is able to remember seeing her, though the “her” he remembers is, not a dream, but dream-like.

Vix ideo vidi, vidisse tamen reminiscor,
Ut reminiscor ego somnia visa michi.
Sic me sepe novam lunam vidisse recordor,
Vel cum vix video, meve videre puto
Vix ipsam vidi, sed sicut et ipse recordor,
Dianae species anteferenda sua est (83-88).

Thus, I have barely seen her, and nevertheless I remember,
Just as I clearly recall what I have seen in a dream,
In the same way that I often remember “seeing” the new moon
Or, though I barely saw, I believe I have seen.
Barely I saw her, yet my memory clearly bears witness
That her beauty exceeds Diana’s beauty by far.

Mary Carruthers offers a source for this description in what she considers the likely experience of medieval monks in unilluminated spaces, glimpsing dark figures through peripheral vision. Like this glimpsing, medieval memory work, according to Carruthers, required a kind of lifting from obscurity (Craft 216). Here Baudri describes not only what he remembers but the act of remembering. It is this kind of “seeing,” which is not ordinary sight, but vision formed by imagination and memory, that allows Baudri to create the artworks and chamber that are unreal, but versions of reality. Carruthers makes a similar point in The Book of Memory: “The past . . . is not something itself, but rather a memory, a representing of what no longer exists as itself but only in its memorial traces” (238).
The poem then takes a strange turn, which is repeated two more times: Baudri
seems to think Adela is present, or has been present, in the chamber that, according to the
beginning of the poem, she has not yet seen.

Participaturus verbis ipsius, ad ipsam
Accedo et thalamus ocius ingredior.
De me quippe suis, veluti praesaga, ministris
Dixerat: hac de re promptius excipior (89-92).

Trying to catch a few of her words, I move a bit closer
To her and quickly slip into her private room.
For, prescient as it were, she has told her servants about me:
Therefore without delay I am allowed to go in.

Of course, neither Adela nor her servants are in the chamber, because he has not written
that they are, but, in a way that seems playful, and possibly as a protection, he evokes her
presence. Baudri pauses on the threshold, and, though he composed, or is in the act of
composing, the chamber himself, its beauty takes him by surprise. It is as if he were
Adela, seeing the chamber for the first time.

Obstupui, fateor, substans in limine primo,
Elisios campos esse ratus thalamos. (93-94)

I confess I was stunned at first, standing there on the threshold:
That bedchamber seemed to me like the Elysian fields.

The reference to the Elysian fields supports the idea that this is an entrance to an other-
world, one where classical literature can come to life, approached through the kind of
vision and special portal that marks a heterotopia.

Within the Chamber

The description of the artworks in Adela’s chamber is one of the longest
ekphrastic works in Latin poetry, extending over 1248 verses (Tilliette 2002, 165-66 n.
28). “Adelae Comitissae” has received attention from scholars investigating the
relationship of the tapestry showing the victory of William the Conqueror to the Bayeux Tapestry and from many others in a variety of fields, due to the breath of its subject matter and the range of textual allusions Baudri interweaves (Otter, “Baudri” 63-64 n13; 64 n14-16). The artworks represent “a microcosm of the knowable world,” according to Otter: history through the four tapestries on the walls, astronomy through the planets and constellations on the ceiling, topography through the mappa mundi (map of the world) on the floor, and intellectual disciplines through the statues surrounding Adela’s bed (Otter 2012, 62). Though Otter describes the ekphrases as a “concretization of “Adela’s mind,” I argue it would be more accurate to say a concretization of Adela’s mind as Baudri’s imagines it, drawing on his own reading and memory. The poem is wonderfully complicated. Each form of artwork represents vast periods of time (the wall tapestries) or vast spaces (the celestial and topographical maps) or compilations of vast knowledge (the group of statues). Each is composed of multiple individual parts, some of which seem to come to life, making sounds, moving, and speaking. The texts that describe these objects are themselves assemblages, quoting, paraphrasing and referencing classical authors, with biblical references intermixed. The poem is also self-referential: texts that describe the making of the artworks are at the same time descriptions of the making of the poem.

The dimensions of the chamber also seem variable, adapting themselves to the nature of the artwork being described. The room is rectangular, Baudri states, with an entrance on one of the shorter sides (140-141). Though the tapestries are described as hanging on the walls, one them is described as around the bed “ambit enim lectum

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47 Shirley Brown and Michael Herren presented convincing evidence that Baudri was not describing the Bayeux Tapestry, though he might have seen it (139-156).
dominae mirabile velum” (“around my lady’s bed is displayed the most marvelous hanging,” 207), where the statues are also standing. Otter’s solution is that the bed is placed in an alcove with the tapestry hung on the alcove walls (“Baudri” 110). In order to display the celestial map as Baudri describes it, the ceiling would have to be vaulted (Otter, “Baudri” 122), and there is no explanation for how the section of the mappa mundi under the bed could be visible.

My close reading focuses on the four wall tapestries and the group of statues, in which Baudri’s relationship to Adela and his attention to multiple temporalities figure prominently. Each of the tapestries represents within itself a fusion of various beliefs and times; each of the tapestries also faces on the opposite wall a tapestry that fuses other beliefs and times. I speculate that Baudri may have seen in Adela’s blend of feminine and masculine qualities an analogous fusion. The first tapestry describes creation, fusing language from Ovid’s Metamorphoses and Genesis, and it faces the tapestry that narrates William the Conqueror’s victory in classical epic form and presents it as a new creation. The description of the first tapestry begins with its own creation, a description that also applies to the creation of the poem.

Nam thalamos operis aulæa recentis obibant,
Quae cum matheries tunc pretiaret opus.
Serica materies, opus est quod vivere credas,
Quod nobis iteret historias veteres. (95-98)

For the chamber was decked with a tapestry, recently fashioned,
Precious the stuff it was made of, precious the workmanship.
The material was silk, you would believe the work brought to life
Old stories of which it reminded us.48

48 Lines 97-98 are my translation.
Like the tapestry, the poem was made recently, also of precious materials and workmanship. For the poem, those precious materials are the literary and biblical texts which Baudri draws on, and the precious workmanship is Baudri’s skill in combining them to create the poem. Through description of stories that readers may remember, the *opus*—a word could refer to either poem or tapestry—invites them to become viewers and as viewers to imagine the figures in the tapestry, contributing their own memories of the stories portrayed. This is the kind of vision through which Baudri reports he saw Adela as a recollection of what was barely seen. This is also the kind of reader cooperation Baudri requested in “Qua intentione scripsit” (c. 85) and “Ad Godefredum Remensem” (c. 99), the two poems about Baudri’s writing process and relationship with readers discussed in Chapter IV. Throughout “Adelae Comitissae,” Baudri gives directions to see, to look and to believe, the repetition repeating his invitation to bring the poem-tapestry to life. 49 In my experience reading “Adelae Comitissae,” when I am familiar with an image for which Baudri offers a brief description, my memory makes Baudri’s image more vivid.

The next couplet also applies to both tapestry and poem, both of which are collage-like and mosaic-like, formed through unexpected collections and juxtapositions.

Hinc videas elementa novo moderamine iuncta
   Et liberate suis singular ponderibus. (99-100)

Here you will see the elements mixed in new combinations,
   Every one in its place, held by its proper weight.

The text of the poem draws on a variety of older sources but Baudri has arranged these parts in new combinations, and the juxtapositions of sources add layers of meaning.

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49 In “Adelae Comitissae” *vides* (you will/would see) appears fifteen times; *ecce* (the command see!), twelve times; *putes* (you will/would believe), six times; and *credas* (you will/would believe), three times.
In the creation tapestry being discussed, as noted above, the source Baudri refers to most frequently is Ovid’s Metamorphoses, but there are also many references to Genesis, and individual references to works by Prudentius, Lucan, Statius, and Avitus (Carmina 2160-161n, Otter 2012 104-105n). The preponderance of references to Ovid is significant because in “Contra Obtrectatores” (c. 1) Baudri expresses fears he might be censured for his interest in secular reading (and in “Invitatio ut quidam se monaracharet” (c. 91), Baudri claims he has rid himself of pagan books. In the context of this poem to Adela, he apparently does not fear criticism for his classical reading.

Close to the beginning of the creation ekphrasis, there is another example of Baudri’s evoking Adela’s presence.

Astiterat dictans operantibus ipsa puellis
Signaretque suo quid facerent radio. (103-104) 50

She herself stood by directing the girls at their work
And marked what to make with their shuttle.

Again, Adela’s presence in the past of an artwork, as if the artwork had actually existed, makes the artwork and the poem seem more real.51 This passage also creates a layering of creators, intertwined with the layering of creation accounts. There are the young women who actually do the weaving, and, above them, Adela who supervises the weaving. Above the young women, and Adela, and the beginning of the creation process, is “creation’s creator himself”:

Erumpit caelum, tellus manet, ignis et aer
Iam velut evadunt mobilitate sua;
Corpora iuncta simul faciunt et corpora vivunt.
Desuper, ut decuit, est Opifex operi (104-108).

50 Lines 103-104 are my translation.
51 It is highly unlikely that Adela supervised the weaving of such a tapestry. Nevertheless, according to the passage below, Baudri’s description provides useful evidence on the life “of an aristocratic secular woman” in northern France.

[The poem is significant, since it illustrates what an important abbot thought was a suitably flattering description to offer an important woman, as well as providing clues about the material culture of an aristocratic secular woman. It also illustrates the range of cultural influences in northern France, and, significantly, Baudri emphasized the role of Adela in the design and creation of tapestries (Johns 33)]
Heaven breaks out, the earth remains stable, the air and the fire
By their mobility seem on the verge of escape.
They combine into bodies; the bodies have instant being.
Throning above, you will see creator’s creator himself.

Tilliette (Carmina 2) capitalizes Opifex; as seen above, Otter does not capitalize her translation of the term. In either translation, both “Opifex” and “creation’s creator” may refer to the Christian creator, or a pagan creator, or to Baudri himself, author of the ekphrasis in which the textile, the girls, Adela, and the Opifex appear. Baudri presents himself, outside the chamber, as in awe of Adela, afraid to look directly at her. Inside the chamber, however, he presents her as a partner in his process or, possibly, as someone to whom he gave a role in the poem he created.

The creation tapestry begins with “antiquum cahos” (“primeval chaos,”101), and progresses through the appearance of lands and waters, beasts and birds, Adam, Eve, Cain and Abel, Enoch, the great flood, the ark floating on high seas, the drawing back of the flood, revealing rot and mud-covered surfaces (98-138). Each event is presented as a memorable vignette, such as “Arbore sub quadam stetit antiquissimus Adam / Fructum carpebat Eva viroque dabat” (“Under the tree of desire stood Adam, our oldest sire; / Eve was snatching the fruit, handing it to her man,” 115-116). The tapestry that portrayed all these events, with their tituli (identifying captions, in this context) would be extraordinarily long.

The second and third tapestries face each other on either side of the chamber. Instead of the common medieval comparison of Old and New Testament scenes, these portray biblical and pagan history. Baudri makes no attempt to synchronize events in the two. Each takes its own course, and they coexist.
Temporis eiusdem dissona signa dabat
Sensus imaginibus erat alter, et altera gens est:
Hac genus Hebreum, hac tabula Greca fuit (142-144).

[The pair] gave conflicting accounts of the same stretch of time
The pictures had different meanings, concerning different peoples:
Here was the Hebrew race, there the Greek fables were shown.

The biblical tapestry draws mainly on Genesis, the pagan tapestry on the
Metamorphoses. Both are similar to the creation tapestry in consisting mostly of easy to
visualize two- or three-line descriptions of personages and events, alluding to stories that
reader-viewers would remember. Baudri does make a few suggestions that the pagan
tapestry might be less reliable, such as the description “Ambages veterum Grecaque
fictitia” (178). Otter translates this line as “Ancient riddles, obscure fictions and tales of
the Greek” but notes that “there is no medieval term or concept exactly equivalent to our
‘fiction’: fictitia . . . always has a tendency to slide into falsehood” (107n). The biblical
tapestry begins where the first ended, with Noah, then Abraham, Sodom’s downfall,
Jacob the shepherd, Joseph in Egypt, Moses, Joshua, judges and kings, ending with
David and Solomon (145-168). The pagan tapestry (146-206) is longer and has more
variety, naming myths roughly in the border figures are mentioned in Metamorphoses.
This tapestry ends with fall of Troy, the founding of Alba, leading to the birth of Rome,
and a series of one hundred Roman kings (202-206). Though the two time lines are
different, they both end with a list of kings. The fourth tapestry, about the creation of a
new king, Adela’s father, William, is positioned around the countess’s bed, and facing
the first creation tapestry. This is the place of honor, Tilliette says, and the location
identifies William as the culmination of history (Chambre 154). The way the
arrangement of tapestries creates significance is similar to the ways adjacencies of poems
within the libellus create a silent commentary, as discussed in thesis Chapter II.
The ekphrasis of the fourth tapestry begins with a more elaborate version of the introduction to the creation tapestry, as if creation were beginning again, with even finer materials and workmanship. The materials are gold, silver, and silk threads, spun as fine as a spider’s web (210-215), the weaving is finer than Athena’s or Arachne’s (217-228), and the tapestry gleams so brightly you would say its radiance surpassed the sun (229-232). Once again, the description of the tapestry also fits the poem, which is itself an interweaving of different threads, including both classical literature and events of the Norman conquest, which took place when Baudri would have been about 16 years old. The account begins with William’s birth in Normandy, continues with his claim to monarchy after the death of Edward the Confessor, his claims that Harold Goldwinson had usurped the throne, his planning for battle, leading a fleet to England, and his triumphing over Harold at Hastings, concluding with his coronation. Baudri’s describes events as if he were present, hearing and seeing them, varying the point of view for dramatic effect. At the same time, the text is a skillful blend of quotations from and allusions to classical Latin. Demonstrating this interweaving, Tilliette points towards a passage describing Normans building boats to prepare for the invasion (330-361) which includes seven references to Virgil, four to Lucan, and one to Statius. According to Tilliette, some of these are direct quotations, some are rephrasings, and some are repetitions of words frequently used by those writers, which may or may not have been deliberate echoes (Chambre 168-9). This degree of interweaving, carried out throughout this ekphrasis, suggests that Baudri is thinking in the language of Latin epic, in addition to consciously making references to it, simultaneously inhabiting present and past. Perhaps analogously, in creating this chamber for Adela, Baudri was thinking as himself
and, simultaneously, as the Adela he described at the beginning of the poem, who is powerful, generous, chaste, and strong, and who is not afraid of censorious detractors.

Adela is not alluded to or named again until the last ekphrasis, which describes the ivory statues surrounding her bed, in a text that largely follows Martianus Capella (Otter, “Baudri” 129). Like the arrangement of the tapestries, the arrangement of the statues is significant. Philosophy is placed on a throne at the head of the bed, the same position the tapestry of William the Conqueror holds. The statue of Philosophy could be a version of Adela. Philosophy’s throne (953) indicates she is royal, as is Adela. Like Adela, Philosophy unites qualities that otherwise might seem conflicting. Her face is youthful and clear, but also stern (956), as Adela is gracious and affable but hard as granite (68-9). Her body is that of a mature woman, but before there are any signs of age (959-60), as Adela’s resplendent beauty would have stood out even among young girls (73-4). Also, Philosophy’s breasts seem to flow with a liquid like milk (954), which is a symbol of nurturing and generosity (Bynum 269-70), and Adela is known to be generous (40-50).

The places of the other statues are listed in relation to Philosophy. The Quadrivium are next in importance, placed at Philosophy’s feet, Music and Arithmetic on her right, Astronomy and Geometry on her left. Statues of the Trivium are at the foot of the bed, Rhetoric in the center, Dialectic and Rhetoric at either side. Arranged along the side of the bed are a statue of Medicine and figures of Galen and Hippocrates (950-1342). It is in the description of Medicine that Baudri reports Adela’s presence once again. Seeing the statue of Medicine, Baudri at first thinks it might represent Medea, but Adela

52 Otter (“Baudri” 129) notes that Ratkowitsch described the statue of Philosophy as associated with Adela (28).
has placed a *titulus* that identifies the figure. Adela has also added statues of Hippocrates and Galen, the only men represented here. There is a possible parallel between Medicine and Hippocrates and Galen and Adela and Baudri.

Cura sagax etenim comitissae praeipientis  
Hunc super efficiem composuit titulum  
“Haec est de phisica quae disputant ars medicine  
Quae praeeunte magis corpora nostra valent.”

Tales praeterea comites adiunxerat illi  
E quibus ediscas cuius erat statua:  
Alter erat comitum Galienus et alter Ypocras;  
Ambos visceribus foverat ipsa sui;  
Abdita nature gemini sic exposuere  
Quatenus unierint pene deis homines;  
Pene suis scriptis humanam perpetuantes  
Naturam aeturnum vivere nos faciunt. (1331-42)

For the Countess’s prudent care, foreseeing such errors  
Had composed a sign fastened above her head:  
“This is the Art of Medicine, whose discourse is about physics  
Who with her effort and skill makes our bodies whole.”

Then she had flanked her with companions, fashioned so clearly  
That you could easily tell who each of the statues was.  
One of them was Hippocrates, the other was Galen;  
Both she had sheltered and warmed in her maternal womb.  
They were so shrewd in exposing the deepest secrets of nature  
That they almost made humans equal to gods.  
Only a little lacked, and with their writings they could have  
Altered man’s natural life and made us life without end.

Hippocrates and Galen have been sustained by Medicine, as Baudri will shortly explain he hopes to be sustained by Adela (1337-8). The writings of Hippocrates and Galen almost gave humans eternal life, as Baudri repeatedly expresses hopes his poetry will do.  

At the Exit from the Chamber

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53 Tilliette note on these lines points out connection to Baudri’s hopes for immortality through poetry, such as in c. 99, 71-74 (*Carmina* 2 216n519).
Baudri does not say directly that he has arrived at the exit, but in the lines following the reference to immortality, it is clear there has been a change. He addresses Adela directly (1343), he refers to his work as completed (1344), and he asks her for rewards (1345), none of which he did inside the chamber. The rewards he asks for are forms of, or metaphors for, protection, which he did not require inside the chamber. The first is a request for covering.

Cartula nuda venit, quia nudi cartula vatis,
Da nudae cappam, sique placet, tunicam (1357-58).

Naked my poem arrives, the child of a naked poet.
Give to the naked a cloak, also a shirt, if you please.

The description of poem and poet as naked and the request for the cloak have many possible interpretations: Tilliette’s is that Baudri, as a form of modesty topos, presents himself not as literally naked, but as lacking talent, and that his request for a cloak, which might be a liturgical garment, is a *iocus*, a jest (Tilliette, Carmina 2, 216-17n525). Otter suggests “there may be some playful eroticism involved” in poet and poem’s nakedness (“Baudri’s” 135n1357-58), and Carruthers finds further erotic notes in “Nempe decet talem talis thalamus comitissam” (1353), which she translates as “Surely such a bed is fit for such a countess,” and explains Baudri’s reference to nakedness as a trope for the poem’s lack of definition and commentary (Craft 219-220). All of these could well be true. In the context of this thesis, however, the nakedness of poem and poet represents their having left the chamber and being without its protective enclosure. Before Baudri created the poem that created the chamber, Adela never saw him, because his *rustica simplicitas* (rustic simplicity) hid him from her view, and before the chamber’s creation, Baudri never saw Adela directly, because he was afraid to look directly at her (77-82), though imagination and memory enabled him to remember having seen her (83-88).
Having created the chamber and exited from it, however, Baudri wants to be seen and recognized by Adela.

Adela, me videas aliquando fronte serena;
Si me respicies, id michi sufficient (1361-62).

When you see me, Adela, be gracious and look at me kindly;
All I want is a look—that is sufficient for me.

He uses the same verb, videas, that he addressed to his poem and readers, to urge her to look attentively. Then he asks her, having seen him, to provide him with her protection:

Si quoque livor edax aliquid praesumpersit in me,
Tu michi munimen, tu michi testis eris
Nec dissuasa meo fies intrata labori
Sed facies quod erit lausque decusque tuum.
Misi qui nostrum reddat recitetque libellum
Ipseque, si tandem iusseris, adveniam (1363-68).

And if voracious envy should try to conspire against me,
Be my protection, I pray, witness on my behalf.
Don’t let anyone move you to be ungrateful towards me;
Do what is proper and right; do what’s a credit to you.
I am sending a man to deliver and read out my poem;
You only say the word, and I will be there myself

Despite Baudri’s success in completing the description of the chamber, he ends with notes of his familiar anxieties, repeating the fears of livor edax (voracious envy) that he expressed in “Contra obtructatores,” the first poem of the libellus, telling the libellus that friends would protect it from livor edax by keeping it hidden. Baudri’s urging Adela not to be ungrateful (1365-66), and his uncertainty about whether she would want to hear the poem read aloud, by him or someone he would send (1367-68), seem continuations of that anxiety.

However, the thirty-two line poem that follows this one, “Ad eandem pro cappa quam sibi promiserat” (“To the same about the cloak she promised to him,” c. 135),
provides a joyous and assured alternate ending, in which Baudri is confident about the
power of his poem and his choice of Adela as the subject.\textsuperscript{54} He tells Adela “Carmine tu
nostro latum spargeris in orbem” (“By my poem you are spread throughout the wide
world,” 6) and describes himself as transformed, reciprocally, by having written about the
countess.

Grandia dico quidem, sed grandia dicere novi
Ex quo materiam michi sumpsi de comitissa (9-10).

I say lofty things, indeed, but I learned to say lofty things
The moment I chose the countess as my subject.

He renews his requests that Adela give him a cloak, but in this poem he asks for a cloak
that will bestow beauty on him, rather than protection.

Ergo tuum vatem, comitissa, revise loquentem
Et refer, o domina, scribenti praemia cappam,
Capam quae Frigium rutilans circumferat aurum,
Cappam quae gemmis ambitum pectus honestet,
Ut te habeat pectus, haec dum superinduet artus,
Cappam quae precium comitissae praefarat instar,
Quam merito valeam comitissae dicere cappam (15-21).

Therefore, countess, look back on the speech of your poet
And give back, o lady, a cloak as reward for his writing,
A cloak which glittering Phrygian gold encircles,
A cloak which honors with gems the heart it covers,
So that his heart may carry you, when the cloak covers his limbs,
A cloak that displays the value of a reward from the countess,
Which deservedly I may call the cloak of the countess.

Because the cloak’s decorations of gold and gems recall the gilding and brightly colored
initial letters Baudri designated for the \textit{libellus} (“Contra,” c. 1 95-100), such a cloak
would declare Baudri’s identification with his manuscript. Because such a cloak would
“ennoble . . . the heart it covers” (18), it would symbolize the restoration of Baudri’s

\textsuperscript{54} The translation of c. 135 is my own.
dignity, described as lost at the beginning of “Somnium” (c. 2, 6), and it would reference his description of Adela, at the beginning of “Adelae Comitissae,” as one ennobled by her “chaste heart” (c. 134, 61). Because, Baudri asserts, the cloak could be called the cloak of the countess, such a cloak would also declare his relationship with Adela. Just as Baudri created the chamber for Adela by imagining it, he creates the cloak from Adela by imagining it, and he asserts that his asking for such a cloak is in itself a ratification of his and Adela’s reciprocity: “Id petiise meum est, id te praestare tuum sit” (“It is mine to ask, may it be yours to give” (30).
This thesis has described Baudri’s *libellus* as a work in ring structure, which the last poem of the manuscript, c. 153, confirms. This poem is designed to fit together with the first, to create the ring. It is addressed to Emma, whom Tilliette identifies as probably a teacher of grammar at the abbey of Notre-Dame de Ronceray d’Angers. Baudri wrote one previous poem to her, “Dominae Emmae” (“To Lady Emma,” c. 139), praising her poetry and her wisdom, in language that seems possibly flirtatious (*Carmina* 2 221n). In the last poem, however, Baudri is entirely devoted to the purpose expressed in the title, “Emme ut opus suum perlegat” (“To Emma so she will read his work carefully,” 153). It begins by asking Emma honestly to evaluate the *utilitas* (usefulness) of the *libellus*, one of the major elements of an *accessus* which Baudri did not mention earlier. The lines have a sense of urgency and directness.

Qualescumque meos versus complecteris, Emma,  
Et magnae similas utilitatis eos … (1-2).

Sed tibi nunc totum nostrum commendo libellum  
Ut studiosa legas, sollicite videas.  
Forma censoris, non allusoris amore (9-11).

Whatever their quality, Emma, you embrace my verses  
And call them of great usefulness . . .

But now I entrust my whole libellus to you  
And ask you to read carefully, please,  
Read as a critic would, not as a playful friend.
The “whole libellus” which Baudri is entrusting to Emma is clearly the very work he bid farewell to in “Contra obrectatores,” the book about which he repeats here that only his death will put an end to (c.1, 20; c. 153, 15). The “urban aptness of words” which he wrote in “Contra” that he lacked (21) in “Emme” becomes the absence of “flowers of urban eloquence” (31); and the bishops and rulers who “live ignorant and uncaring” in “Contra” (80) in “Emme” become bishops and kings who, “if they lack letters, are living like cattle” (52-3). The longing for the companionship of other male poets that Baudri has expressed throughout the libellus is expressed in this poem as grief over the loss of Marbod, not caused by death but by Marbod’s appointment as Bishop of Rennes (Tilliette Carmina 2, 234n).

Quid modo Marbodus, vatum spectabile sidus?
    Eclipsim luna, sol patitur tenebras.
    Nunc est deflendus, extinctus spiritus eius,
    Nam non est lux quae luceat in tenebris (59-62).

What now is Marbod, remarkable star of poets?
The moon suffers eclipse, the sun, shadows.
Now weep over that spirit of his, quenched,
For there is no light to light the shadows.

But his grief over Marbod’s departure is balanced by the return of other elements that recur throughout the libellus: Baudri’s questioning the worth of his writing, followed by renewed commitment to the effort and a request for help.

O utinam afflasset pleno michi gutture musa!
    Nam me nullus honor a studiis raperet .
    Nunc quia mua deest et rauco pectine canto,
    Emma, meis saltem versibus assideas (63-66)

I wish the muse would breathe into me with full throat!
For no honors snatch me from my efforts.
Now the muse is gone, and I sing with a hoarse lyre,
Emma at the least pay attention to my verses.
This direct plea to Emma suggests that the *libellus* which Baudri bid farewell to in “Contra obtrectatores” is, in the present moment created by the poem to Emma, now in her hands, awaiting her careful reading and her returning the *libellus* to Baudri. Baudri, according to his plan, will then send it out again, to other friends. Through this cycle, the end becomes the beginning, and the entire *libellus* becomes an ongoing heterotopia, a vessel for multiple forms of temporality.


Thurot, Ch. “Etudes Critiques sur les Historiens de la Première Croisade: Baudri de Bourgueil.” *Revue Historique*, vol. 1, no. 2, 1876, pp. 272-386. 1926)


