

**TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE RENAISSANCE  
ICONOGRAPHY OF ANTICHRIST:  
Concept and Image**

**VOLUME I : TEXT**

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## ABSTRACT

The thesis analyses the transformations of the image of Antichrist in European art during the Renaissance. Antichrist is defined as the false Christ, based on patristic writings and scriptural exegesis and the typological tradition established in mediaeval illustrated manuscripts and encyclopaedic literature. The introductory section defines the tradition and gives an account of the contrasting Protestant interpretation of Antichrist which developed later. An identification and analysis of Antichrist's typological make-up and mode of rule take up the four succeeding chapters.

The further development of the imagery is then explored in a representative selection of influential 15th century illustrated manuscripts and block books. Bosch's Prado *Epiphany* (1500), Luca Signorelli's *The Rule of Antichrist* (1499-1504), Dürer's 15 woodcuts of the *Apocalypse* (1498), and other selected material, are discussed in detail and generally indicate typological expansion, experimental processes in format and presentation and interpretational changes. An analysis of the total content of Bosch's Prado *Epiphany* adduces arguments supporting the presence of Antichrist depicted as a Jewish priest. Signorelli's, the *Rule of Antichrist*, is a major endorsement of the traditional viewpoint, confirming the authority and doctrines of the Church of Rome which were re-affirmed during the Counter Reformation in terms which protestants could not accept. A distinct movement towards a clearer and more persuasive message in the block books develops further in the literature of the Lutheran reformation, and by the early 1520s the identification of Antichrist as the pope is sufficiently defined to constitute a second distinctive point of view. Lucas Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), which is based almost entirely upon episodes in Christ's ministry, sets Christ and Antichrist as the pope, in close antithesis. This seems to be a revival of the anti-papal arguments advanced by Nicholas of Dresden in *The Old Colour and the New* (c.1412).

The succeeding chapter tracks the crucial developments in Luther's translations of the September and December Testaments (1522), and other similar publications, which contain definitive anti-papal interpretations of recognised Antichrist chapters in the *Apocalypse*. A mid-16th-century *Apocalypse* commentary by Sebastian Meyer, illustrated by Matthew Gerung, adds substantially to the existing body of polemical imagery. Five sub-chapters present a selection of Antichrist themes from the Commentary, which develop notions of the false church, its doctrine and practice, and the differentiation of Protestant and Catholic in relation to truth and error, Christ and Antichrist.

The obligation to separate from the false ecclesia was fulfilled at national level in the English Reformation, the subject of the final chapter, where a wide range of imagery confirms yet again the continuing influence of Antichrist's typological make-up. Further issues of importance which are also addressed are the characteristically English traits and attitudes, the imperial principle upholding English sovereignty, and Italian humanist influences.

# VOLUME I

## CONTENTS

List of Plates	i
Preface	viii
<b>Part I Introduction</b>	
1. The Antichrist Tradition	1
2. The Protestant Interpretation of Antichrist	5
3. The Apocalypse	9
4. The Secondary Literature	11
Notes	20
<b>Part II Antichrist's Typological Ancestry</b>	
5. Human, Semitic and Evil	24
6. Tyrant King, Warrior, False Priest	27
7. Leader of the Vices	34
8. Miracle Worker	36
Notes	37
<b>Part III The Fifteenth Century: Depictions of Antichrist</b>	
9. Illustrated manuscripts and block-books	
a. <i>Nicholas of Dresden: The Old Colour and the New.</i>	42
b. MS Casanatensis	43
c. Wellcome MS	45
d. Block-books	48
e. The Netherland Apocalypse	51
f. The Preaching of Antichrist... Nuremberg Chronicle	52
g. <i>Livre de la Vigne de nostre Seigneur</i>	53
h. MS Vitrina	54
10. Hieronymous Bosch: the Prado <i>Epiphany</i>	56
11. Luca Signorelli : <i>The Rule of Antichrist</i>	71
12. Albrecht Dürer : <i>The Apocalypse Woodcuts (1498)</i>	82
Notes	86

## **Part IV The Sixteenth Century: The Papal Antichrist & the False Church**

<b>13. Lucas Cranach - <i>Passional Christi und Antichristi</i></b>	<b>96</b>
<b>14. Apocalypse illustrations in 16th century Bibles</b>	<b>105</b>
<b>15. Sebastian Meyer's <i>Apocalypse Commentary</i></b>	
<b>a. The Word, Law and Grace</b>	<b>109</b>
<b>b. The Ship of the Church</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>c. The Witnesses and Antichrist Enthroned</b>	<b>117</b>
<b>d. Vices: the Revelling Clergy</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>e. Babylonian Links and the Destruction of the Catholic Church</b>	<b>122</b>
<b>16. Antichrist and the English Reformation</b>	<b>125</b>
<b>Notes</b>	<b>144</b>
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>155</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>163</b>
<b>Abbreviations</b>	<b>163</b>

## LIST OF PLATES

- Plate 1. Antichrist Seated on Leviathan, *Liber floridus* (c.1110-20). Ghent, Rijksuniversiteit, Centrale Bibliotheek, MS 92, f. 62v.
- Plate 2. The City Babylon, Beatus of Liebana (1180-1220). Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale lat. 8878, f. 217.
- Plate 3. The Devil rides Behemoth, *Liber floridus* (c.1110-20). Ghent Rijksuniversiteit, Centrale Bibliotheek, MS 92, f. 62r.
- Plate 4. Antichrist destroys Jerusalem and slays the Witnesses, Beatus MS (926 AD), New York Pierpont Morgan Library. MS 644, f.151r.
- Plate 5. Antichrist as Priest attacks Jerusalem, Beatus MS (c. 926) New York. Pierpont Morgan Library. MS 644, f. 215v.
- Plate 6. Antichrist as Priest attacks Jerusalem, Beatus Facundus (1047 AD). Madrid. Biblioteca Nacional Vitrina. 14-2 (B 311), f. 247 v.
- Plate 7. Nebuchadnezzar attacks Jerusalem, Beatus Facundus (1047 AD). F.268v-269.
- Plate 8. The Emperor Augustus, *Liber floridus* (c.1110-20). Ghent Rijksuniversiteit, Centrale Bibliotheek, MS 92, f.138v.
- 
- Plate 9. Abaddon Kills the Witnesses, *Liber floridus* (c.1110-20). Wolfenbüttel, Ducal Library, MS 1, f. 14r.
- Plate 10. Antichrist slays the Witnesses; Rewards the Kings of the Earth; Performs Miracles, *Hortus Deliciarum* (c.1175-1185). Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Facsimile. Fol. 8 (XI), fol. 241v.
- Plate 11. Antichrist sits in the Temple of Solomon, rewards and punishes. The Fall of Antichrist (2nd register). New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, MS 524 f. 7v. (c.1245).
- Plate 12. The Witnesses Confront Antichrist; The Execution of the Witnesses; The Fall of Antichrist and the Ascension of the Witnesses. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS FR. 403, f.17r, 17v, 18r. (c. Mid 13th century).
- Plate 13. Antichrist, Leader of the Vices. Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian, MS L.A. 139, f. 40v. (c.1255-65)
- Plate 14. Antichrist Preaching, *Velislai Biblia Picta* (c.1340). Prague University Library MS XXIII. C.124, vol. 132r.
- Plate 15. Antichrist's Prophecies, Birth, Rule and Fall. Rome, MS Casanatensis (1425-40), f. 30v., 31r.
- Plate 16. The good and the bad priest. Rome, MS Casanatensis (1425-40), f. 8v.
- Plate 17. Aurimons Civitas. Rome, MS Casanatensis (1425-40), f. 32r.
- Plate 18. The Witnesses Slain. Wellcome MS (1420-25). London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. MS 49, f.10r. Parchment 400 x 30.
- Plate 19. The Fall of Antichrist and the Aftermath. Wellcome MS (1425-40). London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. MS 49, f. 13r. Parchment. 400 x 30.
- Plate 20. Worshipping the Beast, Apocalypse 13. v.14. Wellcome MS (1425-40). London, Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, MS 49, f.16v.

- Plate 21. The Witnesses Slain. Block-book, Bodleian Auct. M.3.15.
- Plate 22. Worshipping the Beast, Apocalypse 13. Unbound block-book. German (c.1470). 2 Sig. BB. London, British Library 1B 14.
- Plate 23. Rewards, Slaying of Opponents and Antichrist's Fall. Coloured block-book of the Apocalypse (c.1470). Modena, Biblioteca Estense. AD 5.22. 181.
- Plate 24. Sham death, Resurrection and Bizarre Miracles. Nuremberg block-book (c.1467). f 5, f.13r H.T. Musper, *Der Antichrist und die funfzehn Zeichen* (Munich: Prestel.1970, facsimile volume).
- Plate 25. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale néerlandais 3 (c. 1400-1420). Antichrist Scenes, XII, Apocalypse 11.
- Plate 26. *The Preaching of Antichrist and of Enoch and Elias*. Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum*, Nuremberg. Woodcut. Published by Anton Koberger, Nuremberg (1493), f.cclix v. London, British Museum.
- Plate 27. Antichrist Walks the Earth, *Livre de la Vigne de Nostre Seigneur* (c.1450-70). MS Douce 134, f. 4r. Oxford, Bodleian Library.
- Plate 28. Death of Antichrist on the Mount of Olives, *Livre de la Vigne de Nostre Seigneur* (c. 1450-70). MS Douce, 134, f. 36r. Oxford, Bodleian Library,
- Plate 29. Antichrist supervises tortures. *Livre de la Vigne de Nostre Seigneur* (c. 1450-70). MS Douce 134, f. 30r. Oxford, Bodleian Library,
- Plate 30. Antichrist Preaching. Cod. MS Vitrina, I, folio 23v. (1430 to late 15th century). Madrid, Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial.
- Plate 31. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany* triptych (c.1500). Central Panel. Oil on panel (138 x 72cm). Prado, Madrid.
- Plate 32. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany* triptych (c.1500). Detail, Central Panel.
- Plate 33. Hieronymus Bosch, *John Baptist in the Wilderness* (c.1504-5). Oil on panel (48.5 x 40cm). Madrid, Museo Lazaro-Galdiano. .
- Plate 34. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany*, triptych. Left and Right Wings, Oil on panel (138 x 133 cm). Prado, Madrid.
- Plate 35. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany*, triptych. Detail, Central Panel. .
- Plate 36. Hieronymus Bosch, earlier *Epiphany*: (c.1470-85). *Adoration of the Magi*. Oil on panel (77 x 54 cm) John G. Johnson Collection, Philadelphia.
- Plate 37. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany*, triptych. Detail, Central Panel.
- Plate 38. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany*, triptych. Detail, Central Panel. .
- Plate 39. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany*, triptych. Detail, Right Wing.
- Plate 40. Hieronymus Bosch, Temptation of St. Anthony, triptych (1505-6). Detail from Left Wing. Oil on panel (131.5 X 53 cm) Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga.
- Plate 41. Journey of Magi, Master of the St. Bartholemew altar-piece.
- Plate 42. Hieronymus Bosch, *Epiphany* triptych (c.1500). *The Mass of St. Gregory*, outer wings (138 x 66 cm).

- Plate 43. Israhel von Mechenem *The Mass of St. Gregory* (c. 1480-85).
- Plate 44. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Mass of St. Gregory, Epiphany* triptych, outer wings.
- Plate 45. Luca Signorelli, *Rule of Antichrist*. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 46. Luca Signorelli, *Rule of Antichrist*. Detail: Antichrist. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 47. The Emperor Constantine on his rostra in the Forum addressing the people. Relief on the frieze, Arch of Constantine, Rome (AD 315).
- Plate 48. Luca Signorelli, Scene from the *Phillipics*. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 49. Luca Signorelli, *Flagellation* (1470s ?), (85.5 x 62 cm). Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera.
- Plate 50. Andrea Mantegna, St. James the Greater condemned to death by Herod Agrippa (1449-54). Fresco, formerly in the Erimitani, Padua.
- Plate 51. Luca Signorelli, *End of the World*. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 52. Luca Signorelli, *Rule of Antichrist*. Detail: group of friars, Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 53. Luca Signorelli, *Rule of Antichrist*. Detail: Luca Signorelli and Fra Angelico Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 54. Luca Signorelli, *End of the World*. Detail: prophetic group. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 55. Luca Signorelli, Empedocles. Cappella Nuova (1499-1504), Duomo, Orvieto.
- Plate 56a. *The Whore, The Fall of Babylon, The Harvest of the Earth and The Beast thrown into the Bottomless Pit*, Cologne Bible (c.1479).
- Plate 56b. *The Beast thrown into the Bottomless Pit, The Fall of Babylon, The Whore, The Harvest of the Earth*, Grüninger Bible (1485).
- Plate 56c. *The Martyrdom of John*, Grüninger Bible (1485).
- Plate 57. Albrecht Dürer, *The Martyrdom of John* (1498). *The Revelation of St. John* (1498). Woodcut (388 x 281 mm). London BM 1895-1-22-575.
- Plate 58. Albrecht Dürer, *The Whore of Babylon, the Destruction of Babylon and the Vision of the Knight Faithful and True*. *The Revelation of St. John* (1498). Woodcut (391 x 282 mm). London BM 1895-1-22-577.
- Plate 59. *The Woman on the Beast*, San Millan Beatus (c. 970). Madrid, Acad. Hist. f. 197v.
- Plate 60. *The Whore on the Beast*, Pierpont Morgan Library, New York. MS Morgan 524, f.16v.
- Plate 61. Jean Duvet, *The Whore of Babylon*. Engravings of the Apocalypse (1555). (303 x 215 mm) London, British Museum 1842-8-6-125.
- Plate 62. Jean Duvet, *The Destruction of Babylon; the Descent of the Whore into Hell* Engravings of the Apocalypse (1555). (300 x 211 mm) London, British Museum 1842-8-6-126.
- Plate 63. Jean Duvet, *The Martyrdom of St John*. Engravings of the Apocalypse (1555). (298 x 209 mm) London, British Museum 1840-6-27-130.

Plate 64. Jan Wellens de Cock, *St. John on Patmos* (c.1520-25). Woodcut, 269 x 375mm. London, British Museum 1918-7-13-70.

Plate 65. Monogrammist H.W.G., *St. John on Patmos* (c.1545-55). Woodcut (193 x 370mm) London, British Museum 1848-2-12-83.

Plate 66. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). First pair. (11.8 x 9.6 cm - not including text). BL C53. c.6, f. Ai v. and Aii r. Hollstein VI, p. 40 (nos.66a, 66b).

Plate 67. Matthias Gerung, Illustration in *Des Bapsts und der Pfaffen Badstub*. J.Cammerlander, Strassburg, 1546. Woodcut. Strauss, 1975, vol. 1305, no. 50.

Plate 68. The Pope as Antichrist: Charles V submitting to the Pope. Printed 1576, based on a broadsheet of c.1470. (390 x 265) Munich (SB-V.59a). Diederichs: no.362.

Plate 69. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Second pair. Hollstein VI, p. 40 (nos.66c, 66d).

Plate 70. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Third pair. Hollstein VI, p. 40 (nos. 66e, 66f).

Plate 71. Albrecht Dürer, *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet*, from *The Small Passion* (c.1511).

Plate 72. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Fourth pair. Hollstein VI, p. 40 (nos. 66g, 66h).

Plate 73. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Sixth pair. BL C53. c.6. f.Biiiv., f.Biiir. Hollstein VI, 140 (no.66l).

Plate 74. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Seventh pair. BL C53. c. 6, f.Biiiv., f.B4 r., Hollstein VI, 140 (nos. 66 m, 66n),

Plate 75. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). BL C53. c. 6. f.Civ., f.C2iir. Hollstein VI, 140 (nos. 66q, 66r). 11.8 x 9.6 cm - not including text)

Plate 76 Cranach, *Christ on an Ass confronts the Pope on a Mule*, Dahlem. (35 x 25.5cm). Strauss 1975: 1, 466.

Plate 77. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). BL C53. c. 6. f.C4v., f.Dir. Hollstein VI, p. 40 (nos. 66w, 66x).

Plate 78. Cranach, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*. Johann Grüenberg, Wittenberg (1521). Final pair. BL C53.c.6, f.Div., f.Diir. Hollstein VI, p.40 (nos. 66y, 66z).

Plate 79. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *Measuring the Temple, the Two Witnesses and the Beast of the Bottomless Pit*. Apocalypse 11.1-8, in *Das Neue Testament Deutzsch*, translated by M. Luther. (M.Lotter, Wittenberg, September 1522). British Library. 25 x 17cm. Hollstein VI 28 (no. 30e).

Plate 80. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *The Seven-Headed and the Two-Horned Beasts*. Apocalypse 13, in *Das Neue Testament Deutzsch*, September 1522. 25 x 17cm.

Plate 81. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *Angels pouring out the Seven Vials*. Apocalypse 16 in *Das Neue Testament Deutzsch*, translated by M .Luther. September 1522.

Plate 82. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *The Whore of Babylon*. Apocalypse 17, in *Das Neue Testament Deutzsch*, translated by M. Luther (September 1522) 25 x 17 cm. Hollstein VI 29 (no. 30h).

Plate 83. Lucas Cranach the Elder. *The Destruction of Babylon*. Apocalypse 18, *Das Neue Testament Deutzsch*, translated by M.Luther. September, 1522). 25 x 17 cm. Hollstein VI 29 (no. 30i).

Plate 84. Hans Holbein, *Angels pouring out the Seven Vials*. Illustration to Apocalypse 16. Thos. Wolff, Basel (1523). Fol. clxxxir. Woodcut, 125 x 76mm. British Museum 1904-2-6-59.

Plate 85. Lucas Cranach, *The Two Witnesses attacked by the Beast*. Illustration of Apocalypse 11.2-8 in *Biblia* (1534).

Plate 86. Lucas Cranach, *The Whore rides the Beast*. Illustration of Apocalypse 17 in *Biblia* (1534). British Library.

Plate 87. Lucas Cranach, *The Destruction of Worms*. Illustration to Apocalypse 18, in *Biblia* (1534).

Plate 88. Lucas Cranach, *The Turks Storming Vienna*. Illustration of Apocalypse 20.9, in *Biblia* (1534).

Plate 89. Matthias Gerung, *Roman Clergy in the Bottomless Pit* (1546). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Woodcut. 233 x 162 mm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), frontispiz, Abb.1a.

Plate 90. P. Schöffler, Title page to *Die Luterisch Strebkatz*. (P. Schöffler, Worms, 1524). 11.4 x 10.8 cm. British Library.

Plate 91. *Leo X, Murner, Emser, Eck and Lemp as animals*. Broadsheet, early 1520s. 27 x 39.2 cm. Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg.

Plate 92a. Matthias Gerung, *The Twenty-Four Elders*, Apocalypse 4 (1546). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592: Roettig (1991), Abb.3a.

Plate 92b. Matthias Gerung, *Law and Grace* (c.1546). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991) Abb. 3b.

Plate 93. Albrecht Dürer, illustration to Doctor Brants *Narrenschiff* (1499). British Library 1A 37957. Fol. Siii. Hollstein VII 245-6 (no 12).

Plate 94a. Matthias Gerung, *3rd Trumpet*, Apocalypse 8.10 (1547). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb. 11a.

Plate 94b. Matthias Gerung, *Ship of the Catholic Church* (1545). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. British Museum 23.5 x 16.5 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm: 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb.11b.

Plate 95a. Matthias Gerung, *Woman clothed with the Sun*, Apocalypse 12 (1547). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm.6592. Roettig (1991), Abb.17a.

Plate 95b. Matthias Gerung, *Ship of Christ* (1548). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*, British Museum 23.4 x 16.4 cm. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb. 17b.

Plate 96a. Matthias Gerung, *John Measures the Temple*, Apocalypse 11 (c.1548). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb.16a.

Plate 96b. Matthias Gerung, *Two protestant preachers and the throne of Antichrist* (1548). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991) Abb.16b.

Plate 97a. Matthias Gerung, *Pouring out the Vials of Wrath*, Apocalypse 15; 16. (1547). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb.20a.

Plate 97b. Matthias Gerung, *The Gaming table of Blasphemers* (1546). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb.20b.

Plate 98. Matthias Gerung, *Revelling Catholic Clergy* (c.1544-58). British Museum 1910-4-18-4. c.323 x 236 mm. Hollstein 68.

Plate 99a. Matthias Gerung, *The Fall of Babylon*, Apocalypse 18 (1547). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592. Roettig (1991), Abb 22 a. Woodcut. 232 x 162 mm. British Museum. 1911- 7-8-145.

Plate 99b. Matthias Gerung, *The Fall of the Catholic Church* (c.1547). Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cgm. 6592: Roettig (1991), Abb 22 b. 234 x 164 mm. British Museum 1867-13-107.

Plate 100. *A lively picture describyng the weight and substaunce of Gods most blessed word, against the doctrynes and vanities of mans traditions*. End of first volume (771), John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments* (1570).

Plate 101. *The husbandman. Doctor Martin Luther. The Pope. The Cardinall*. The Pepys Collection. Woodcut from a ballad (c.1550).

Plate 102. Clement IV about to behead Emperor Conrad IV (1545). Commissioned by Martin Luther.

Plate 103. Wenceslaus Hollar, *Time and the Pope* (c.1641). Engraving. British Museum 300.

Plate 104. *Actes and thynges done in the reigne of kyng Evvard the 6*. John Foxe, *Actes and Monuments* (1563).

Plate 105. *The Images of Both Churches*. John Foxe, *Acts and Monuments*, 1570.

Plate 106a. Gerolamo da Treviso, *The Four Evangelists Stoning the Pope* (1547). British Museum, Harlican MS 1419A f.246b. 27 x 33 ins. Hampton Court.

Plate 106b. Artist unknown, *The Stoning of the Blasphemous Man*. Woodcut from the 1536 translation of the Bible into English.

Plate 107. Artist unknown, *Edward VI and the Pope* (1548). National Portrait Gallery. No. 4165. Private collection.

Plate 108. Luca Signorelli, *Group of monks destroying the idols*, fresco from *Stories from the life of St. Benedict*. Mont Oliveto Abbey, Siena (1497-8).

Plate 109. *The Kingdom's Monster Uncloaked from Heaven* (1648). Woodcut on a broadside. British Museum 375, pp.28-29.

Plate 110. *The Pope's float*. In *'The Solemn Mock Procession of the POPE Cardinalls Jesuits Fryers...through the City of London, November 17th 1680*. (Accession Day Procession). Illustrated broadside. British Museum C.20. f.6. (26).

Plate 111. R. White, *Britannia receiving the Last Rites* (before 1660).

Plate 112. *Run, for the Protestants Life and Estate*.

Plate 113. Thomas Cecil, *Elizabeth I as St George liberating Truth from her cave by defeating the hydra of Rome* (1625). Engraving. British Museum.

Plate 114. Pieter van der Heyden, *Queen Elizabeth and the Pope as Diana and Callisto*. Engraving.

Plate 115. The Pope's Cabbinett (c.1678).

Plate 116. Hendrick Hondius, *The Pope's Pyramid* (1599). Engraving (332 x 183 mm)  
British Museum 1992-1-25-16.

Plate 117. Samuel Ward, *The Double Deliveraunce* (1621). Engraving British Museum 41.

## PREFACE

A continuing familiarity with the theme of Antichrist in its prophetic and historical contexts and the subsequent realisation that the Antichrist has a long-established iconographical tradition, were influential factors in determining the subject-matter of the research.

The abundance of visual material which had accumulated over the years occasioned some surprise. It was noted that the periodic resurgence of interest at times of perceived apocalyptic import relating to specific moments of time, especially the cultures of a millennial *fin-de-siècle*, had added significantly to this corpus. Speculation and continuing anxieties about the future stemming from events on the international stage, in particular the lead-up to the new millennium, confirmed this phenomenon.

The terms 'Antichrist' and 'apocalyptic', the adjectival form of Apocalypse, often confront the uninformed merely as superlatives for new and unexpected horrors in the modern world and uncertainties about the future, inaccurately reflecting their earlier, more informed meanings. It seemed necessary therefore to address these two terms at the outset.

The inclusion of the period of significant change in the interpretation and identity of Antichrist, resulting in two opposing points of view, have determined the time-span and focus of the research. These developments span an extended period from the late fourteenth to the seventeenth century, leaving their mark upon contemporary art and literature.

While insularity and independence might be the foregone conclusion, the pictorial evidence is by no means wholly supportive. Iconographical and stylistic links between mediaeval and Renaissance imagery, the employment of *Apocalypse* imagery throughout, especially the commonality of the types, discount the idea of insularity, abrupt change and the complete independence of the visual formulae representing the two conflicting viewpoints.

An early chapter addresses Antichrist's typological ancestry and provides a basic procedural framework. This in turn is related to wider aspects of the subject which reveal Antichrist's seemingly inconsistent pursuit of religion and politics, his ambition to rule, his pseudo-Christ reputation fed by pride and ambition, his deceit, his usurpation of divine authority, the nature of his fall and ultimate fate.

These fundamental patterns are often problematical and are subject to development and change. Themes of the Reformation, one being the primacy of scripture upheld in opposition to the equivalence of secular sources, and growing concern about Church doctrine and practice, advance towards the notion of a papal Antichrist and a false church.

The papal identity of Antichrist is a *sine qua non* within the selected historical phase, and a key theme of the dissertation. Its various aspects appear in several contexts, particularly in the four chapters of

Part IV. In the first, Antichrist as pope is explicit throughout Lucas Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi*, based upon episodes during Christ's ministry. In the second chapter, *Biblia* translations by Martin Luther extend the range of identity in recognised Antichrist texts of the Apocalypse. Matthew Gerung's anti-Papal illustrations for Sebastian Meyer's Apocalypse Commentary of the 1540s, the basis of the third chapter, add substantially to the accumulation of polemical witness, including the Church's fall.

*Antichrist and the English Reformation*, the last of these chapters, reviews a wide range of visual material following the severance of state religion from Rome, based upon a conviction at national level about the identity of Antichrist and the state of the Church of Rome which was deemed to call for separation.

Interdenominational debate surrounds this historical phase and much stress has been placed on the polemical nature of the warfare between the opposing parties, which may have had the effect of undermining the serious nature of the conflict and minimising the deep-seated causes, attributing them to the religious prejudices and the ill-advised excesses of those times.

On account of the continuing sensitivities emerging from these matters, there may have been for some time a reluctance to explore this development and its iconography, particularly in the wider context, and perhaps to view it as too delicate a theme for extended enquiry. It is intended however that the constructive purposes behind the propagandist nature of the interchange and the weight of importance attaching to the underlying issues will be presented objectively.

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## Part I Introduction

### Chapter 1. The Antichrist Tradition

Ideas about Antichrist, an important character in medieval and Renaissance apocalypticism, have developed from early Christian times. He came to be understood as the antithesis of Christ, a false Messiah, a man of sin, a tyrannical ruler, a deceiver, and a usurper, achieving his objectives by preaching, intimidation and false miracles. With a period of rule at the time of the end of three-and-a-half years, based upon the length of Christ's ministry, he would endorse and promote the vices and spurn the virtues. His cosmocratic ambition was to usurp Christ's rulership of the world. As a manifestation of the last days, heralded by signs, he would gather a large following, bribe and reward his supporters, punish, even slay, his enemies, and in turn be slain at the coming of Christ in majesty (II Thessalonians 2. 8),<sup>1</sup> at which time the judgment of both living and dead would take place.

The mock sanctity of Antichrist set against the sanctity of Christ had a great fascination for the medieval mind and a seductive power that could lead astray and hazard the salvation prospects of the faithful. In spite of obscure, fanciful and contradictory claims and the existence of various schools of thought on numerous issues, he remained an important influence in the life and outlook of medieval and renaissance Europe. In spite of the ambivalence of good and evil in relation to the basic good-over-evil principle of apocalyptic expectation, the evil reign of Antichrist did not easily ensconce itself as a doctrine of the Catholic Church.<sup>2</sup> Antichrist was nevertheless regarded as a key figure in Christian eschatology, viewed as a threat, and a proper understanding was regarded as a necessary safeguard against his wiles.

As the word Antichrist appears only five times in the whole of scripture, these being confined to Epistles I and II of John,<sup>3</sup> most of the Old and New Testament texts, many of a prophetic nature, were selected on other grounds as being Antichrist-related. Several Apocalypse chapters were included, in particular chapter 11, because an Antichrist identity had been given to the Beast of the Bottomless Pit which opposed and killed the Two Witnesses, and chapter 13, because the Sea and Earth Beasts and the 666 identity could be associated with Antichrist. One of the vials in chapter 16, was poured onto the 'seat of beast' (v.10), identified as Antichrist. Chapters 17 and 18, the former about the Whore of Babylon and the latter about Babylon's Fall, were included because of Antichrist's typological links with Babylon. So also was chapter 20, because of Antichrist's ties with Gog and Magog (described more fully later in the chapter). In spite of both Old and New Testament texts being selected, Christ and Antichrist are essentially New Testament characters. This is explained by the fact that, as Christ is prefigured among Old Testament types, so is Antichrist.

By c.230 A.D. in the writings of Irenaeus and Hippolytus, for example, a picture of Antichrist was being established.<sup>4</sup> He had already been identified as 'the man of sin' in II Thessalonians 2. 3-9, and the beast of Apocalypse 11 which kills the Two Witnesses, usually identified as Enoch and Elias. This

episode with its attendant features, representing an amalgam of biblical fact and fanciful interpretation recurrent in subsequent art and literature, was ultimately to change.

Later commentators continued to draw on patristic literature, reinterpreting and increasing the number of supposed Antichrist references. While the Bible served as the principal source, heterodox material - Joachist prophecies and sibylline works influenced the development of Antichrist theory. In the five hundred years to the time of Adso, Jews, heretics, and any of those who opposed Christ in conduct or teaching, including infamous religious and political figures, might be the subject of speculation concerning their 'antichrist' identity. At the same time teaching about the final, individual Antichrist was also expressed.

What may be regarded as the basis of the traditional medieval view of Antichrist was virtually intact by the end of the tenth century. Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo* (c. 954), summarised earlier writings and reflected mid-tenth century beliefs. Its exposition of the origin, life and death of Antichrist greatly influenced what followed.<sup>5</sup> His *Letter* pointed out the contrariness of Antichrist to Christ in all things - magnifying sinners, exalting the wicked, fostering the worship of demons, seeking his own glory, calling himself God. The occurrence of many of these details in other manuscripts typifies the summarising nature of Adso's writings.<sup>6</sup> His ministers of evil, who had already appeared, such as Antiochus Epiphanes, Nero, Domitian, and any who manifested similar characteristics, were all 'antichrists'. Details of his origins, included in the same work, continue the antithesis:- born a Jew of the tribe of Dan, conceived wholly in sin, the devil entering the womb of his mother at conception, fostered by the devil, called the 'Son of Perdition' because he would destroy many of the human race and would himself be destroyed. Adso expanded on the final phase of Antichrist's reign, his three and a half years of tormenting the people of God, when the two witnesses, Enoch and Elias, would be slain, following which Antichrist would meet his end. The place would be the Mount of Olives, where Christ ascended to heaven; the mode of slaying and by whom, were left inconclusive, but the Day of Judgment would follow with a forty-day period of grace for repentance for those who had been led astray.<sup>7</sup>

Joachim de Fiore's (1135-1202), historical interpretation of scripture and his attempt to unlock its ordering patterns, led to the identification of apocalyptic signs in the events of his own times. He thought in terms of three significant periods of time, his three '*status*'. The 'End of the World' was not the final phase, but the second *status*, a period of time towards the end of which all 'antichrists' would arise. Their defeat would bring in the final phase, the third *status*, and spiritual renewal in the Catholic Church. This ensuing period would be a millennium of peace, at the end of which Satan would be released from his prison, as described in Apocalypse 20.6-10. He related each 'antichrist' event to the apocalyptic dragon; the first was represented by its seventh head, the second by its tail.<sup>8</sup> This new tripartite concept opened up new horizons for the Church of Rome. Joachim de Fiore associated Antichrist with Babylon, with Rome, with Empire and the 'fornicator' called Babylon.<sup>9</sup>

Identifications of Antichrist were given to various evil forces mentioned in scripture. Gog and Magog belong to this category and references are in Ezekiel 38 and 39 and Apocalypse 20. These texts about Gog and Magog were supplemented, and interpretations were numerous and varied, especially when they became related to the Alexander legend.<sup>10</sup> Gog was Antichrist, Magog his followers, sometimes identified as barbaric tribes, sometimes named, sometimes numbered (twenty-two, or 'as many as the sand of the sea'), and even the lost ten tribes of Israel were included.<sup>11</sup> The Alexander legend tells how hostile tribes were imprisoned behind Alexander's gate in the Caucasus mountains, in which direction apocalypticists looked for incursions of the enemy. Views varied as to the time - before Antichrist, when he comes (because they were his armies), after the millennial reign, a view supported by Apocalypse 20 as interpreted by Joachim.<sup>12</sup> In Roger Bacon's *Opus Majus*, 'Alexander... shut up twenty-two tribes of the seed of Gog and Magog that are to go forth in the days of the Antichrist, ... who (after devastating the world) will meet and call him "god of gods".'<sup>13</sup> Joachim's alleged thoughts and writings were written and talked about over a lengthy period and the situation became complex owing to variations of viewpoint, not all traceable back to Joachim. He was influential upon the traditional viewpoint, and the long period of renewal envisaged for the Church of Rome interposed prior to the final Antichrist, offered a more positive prospect.

After Constantine's conversion and the new status of the Empire, the emergence of any significant adverse force would almost inevitably arouse apocalyptic fears. The steady rise of Islam, its vigorous opposition to the Christian religion at a time when it seemed in the ascendant, and its domination of areas intimately associated with the events of Christ's ministry, could hardly escape being identified with Antichrist's evil forces.<sup>14</sup> It was also no doubt partly the unexpected rise of a new empire following the four empires of Nebuchadnezzar's dream image (Daniel, chapter 2), which created anxiety. As the last of four was believed to represent Rome, to be followed by the kingdom of God (Daniel 2.44), the apparent emergence of another dominant power was thought to portend an evil end-of-time phase. Such fears contributed to the spread of apocalyptic writings and attributions of Antichrist, which attempted to spell out the inherent hopes and fears of the times.<sup>15</sup>

Episodes in the life of Antichrist were developed or invented to parallel those in the life of Christ in an attempt to present him as a counterfeit figure. His mock death, resurrection and ascension, were perhaps the most impressive, attributed to his given power to deceive, or to the influence upon the senses of the deceived, or to diabolical assistance. These extensions of Antichrist's alleged miraculous powers were regarded as fanciful and drew criticism.<sup>16</sup>

While his human form seems to have been acknowledged much earlier than in the visual imagery, he was not conceived of as just an evil man, but as being an essentially evil, satanic figure, an apotheosis of evil in human form. For this reason, no doubt, as well as the beastly nature of some of the verbal imagery of the Apocalypse, a beastly form is the norm for pre-tenth century depictions; and for some time later a beast accompanied by a human figure was a common occurrence.

As a pseudo-Christ, a man of deceit, pretending to be Christ, but being the very opposite, meant that his religious teaching and priestly work would necessarily be false. He was recognised as purporting to function as a priest, albeit a false one. The combination of priest and tyrannical ruler created difficulties. How could there be a failure to recognise an obviously evil impostor as the Antichrist? This presented a problem for the artist.

The standard medieval tradition continued to be upheld, and its continuity is exemplified by the illustrated *Beatus* manuscripts of the ninth to the thirteenth centuries, the *Liber floridus* (c. 1120) and *Hortus Deliciarum* (c. 1180), encyclopedias; the *Velislav Biblia Picta*, c. 1350, and the large and influential Anglo-Norman group of Apocalypses of the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fifteenth centuries. Block book Apocalypses starting about the mid-fifteenth century continued the traditions of the medieval *vitae* and so did later Apocalypse commentaries. By this time the medieval tradition had been challenged and under the influence of protestantism a new anti-papal interpretation of Antichrist was emerging. These two continuing traditions are principal themes of the thesis and an outline of the latter is introduced in the next chapter.

## I Chapter 2. The Protestant Interpretation of Antichrist

The most crucial and far-reaching change came about when protestants gave Antichrist a papal identity. Previously the term 'antichrist' had been applied to individual popes, rulers and others, on account of their evil reputation, but it stopped short of calling the pope Antichrist. Even Gerolamo Savonarola in the 1490s, who condemned the state into which the Church had lapsed, did not use the term Antichrist for the pope, and so far as the Church was concerned spoke of a coming *renovatio*.<sup>1</sup>

Protestant criticisms of the Church of Rome can be traced back to dissident sources in the latter half of the 14th century. Changing opinions and attitudes expressed by Wyclif, and his followers in England, and those of Huss in Bohemia, were among the chief reformist influences at this early stage. Master Nicholas of Dresden's *Tabule, The Old Colour and the New* (c.1412), published an extended account of the grounds for these criticisms of both pope and papacy. Nicholas's *Tabule* contrasts the Roman Church with the Primitive Church with supporting evidence from decretals and glosses on the canon law, the New Testament and patristic writings. A comprehensive list explicitly associated with the *Tabule* takes up the following positions:- the Roman Church is not the one universal Church founded by Christ; it became corrupted from the time of the Emperor Constantine; the Church's power of the keys and of binding and loosing are denied and the constitutions of the Church and the holy canons are opposed. Unless sin excommunicates a man, the Church's excommunication is nothing; it is not licit to kill heretics physically; the miracles performed by the Church are not of God and Indulgences and offerings for them are venal. Confession should not be made to priests, only to God. The bread and the wine remain in the Eucharist after consecration, and communion should be given to the laity in both kinds. The existence of purgatory is denied.<sup>2</sup>

At this early stage, the typology of Antichrist as tyrannical ruler and false priest had become associated with the pope, and the conduct and policy, not only of the Pope, but the Catholic Church itself, were implicated. Critics regarded it as the church of Antichrist which had resulted from a historical process of perversion. Too many features of the Primitive Church had been changed after the Donation of Constantine, which the Church Rome claimed was the document on which papal secular power was based, allegedly granted by Pope Silvester.<sup>3</sup> There were developments in both viewpoints during the fifteenth century (discussed in Part III), but it was not till the 1520s in connection with the Lutheran reformation that protestant witness took off. Lucas Cranach's ground-breaking *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), compared the example of Christ with that of the pope. It bore the imprint of Master Nicholas's *Tabule* in its presentation of moral issues, its Christ versus Antichrist themes and antithetical contrasts.<sup>4</sup> When, in the early 1520s, attitudes against Lutherism were beginning to harden, protestant imagery dropped its reserve and specific anti-papal identities were incorporated in the illustrations of Luther's New Testament and Biblia translations of 1522 and 1523, and in later publications. (These identities are discussed in Part IV, chapter 14.)

Protestant belief was that Antichrist was already in existence, had been ruling as pope for a long time and that his rule would continue until terminated by the arrival of Christ at his Second Coming. The

traditional view was that Antichrist's rule was exclusively eschatological, with a reign of three-and-a-half years at the end of time. Protestants also believed that he had arisen from within the ecclesia, as the Apostle Paul had warned (II Thessalonians 2.1- 8). As in Protestant terms the rule of Antichrist was thought to reflect the history of the papacy, it involved a period much longer than a human life-span.<sup>5</sup> For Protestants, therefore, it was divorced from the ideas of conception, birth, early and later life, defined in the *vita*. While these phases in the life of Antichrist were misconceptions so far as Protestants were concerned, they sometimes featured in their propaganda.<sup>6</sup>

Antichrist was identified with the papal system, which represented the established church of the day and to which protestants had generally belonged. Polarised against the Roman Catholic Church, which it regarded as the false church because of its teaching and practice, and which the scriptures had warned believers about (Apocalypse 14.8-10), Protestants called for separation from it.

The validity of the Whore of Babylon as Antichrist and Pope only came to prominence with the reformists, who were quite unequivocal about the issue and which the visual illustrations clearly endorsed. The scriptural evidence supported her Babylonian association, likewise her seduction of rulers and the usurpation of their rule (Apocalypse 17.3-18). She was an adulteress with connotations of disloyalty to true religion and the true church. Consistent with the well-established medieval concept of Antichrist's tyrannical rule, his control and subversion of rulers was recognised by protestants in the pope's ambition for political power, and political and military involvement of one kind and another, which constituted the *de facto* basis for Antichrist's false priesthood and tyrannical rule. It also substantiated the assumption by the pope of the mantle of imperial power.

The Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation, which on the one hand were concerned with the reform of abuses within the system, also confirmed the Catholic Church's stand on those issues to which protestants were most opposed.<sup>7</sup> It stood firm on its authority and power, its doctrines and religious practices. This entrenchment of the Church's stand defined the crucial lines of demarcation between the two interpretations of Antichrist, and was equally representative of the distinctions between Catholic and Protestant doctrine and practice. Protestant imagery advanced the view that it was the true Church of Christ and the Catholic Church the false church of Antichrist.

Some issues were common to both interpretations. They included the expectation of an apotheosis of evil during Antichrist's reign at the time of the end, leading to the outpouring of God's judgments, upon the Antichrist system and its followers and the establishment of Christ's kingdom, which would supersede Antichrist's rule. The diabolical and evil affiliations of Antichrist were other features common to both views. Both were caught up in the apocalypticism of the day, sensing either the presence, or the imminence of Antichrist's coming and the fulfilment of the final events. An increase in wickedness, a breakdown of rule and other political and social upheavals, would at least in theory be viewed by all parties as indicative of the last days being at hand.<sup>8</sup>

A semitic Antichrist was a feature of the traditional view, and frequently present in its imagery. So far as protestants were concerned, it lacked significance and is virtually absent from Protestant imagery. Antichrist as a Jew was iconographically associated with the tabernacle, the law and the rejection and crucifixion of Christ.<sup>9</sup>

Protestants concluded that whereas Christ's teaching led to salvation, the pope's inevitably took the opposite route and led believers into darkness.<sup>10</sup>

The assimilation of secular and pagan elements and their acknowledged equivalence to scripture were also denounced by Protestants as being contrary to the principles of the Word.<sup>11</sup> The Catholic Church's persecution of the faithful, identified in papal history, including deeds committed during the Crusades, the excommunication of Protestant reformers, the burning of alleged heretics and the excesses of the Inquisition, were believed to be telling issues when it came to deciding where Antichrist was to be found. Most of these issues were in the references to the *Tabule* quoted above. In Protestant imagery Catholic practices and artefacts used as aids to worship were looked at askance virtually from the beginning and remained the subject of frequent references.

On the appropriateness of 666 (Apocalypse 13.18), considered to be a reference to Antichrist, its various letter equivalents had been interpreted to spell out the names of various cosmocrators and 'Lateinos' would appear to have seemed to Protestants the most apt because of the pope's recognised association with Rome and the Church's insistence upon its use of Latin.<sup>12</sup> Catholics would naturally have other preferences. The meaning and significance of the papal triple tiara, indicating power in heaven and on earth, was similarly regarded as an assumption of all-encompassing power, which notion Protestants including Luther, denied.

False miracles practised by Antichrist according to medieval tradition and incorporated into manuscript illuminations, were regarded by Protestants as fanciful inventions, and papal practices with a miraculous element were allegedly contrived to preserve a sense of mystery and to facilitate control. Some of these subjects were taken up at the meetings of the Council of Trent and in the declarations of the Counter Reformation, and the claim that transubstantiation took place in the celebration of the Mass, came into this category.<sup>13</sup>

On the matter of papal authority, allegedly given by the keys to the Apostle Peter, protestants generally believed they were granted equally to all the apostles, not to Peter only, whom the Catholic Church regarded as the first pope and from whom all succeeding pontiffs held their entitlement (i.e. the theory of apostolic succession).<sup>14</sup>

A host of beliefs and practices, many already identified, were rejected as being in denial of scriptural principles, scripture being the Protestant touchstone for truth on such matters. They include worship of saints and images. Pardons, indulgences, for which fees were paid, were believed to usurp divine

authority in the sphere of forgiveness, and challenged Christ's saving power. Salvation by works, relying on tradition, was seen to annul the principle of salvation through faith by grace, taught in the Word.<sup>15</sup> Only Jesus Christ was head of the Church, the papal claim to infallibility was considered to be a usurpation of divine power, and both were held to be assumptions based upon false interpretations of scripture.

The Protestant point of view excluded the legendary additions concerning Antichrist's mock death, resurrection and ascension from the Mount of Olives, followed by his fall. The 'fall' of Antichrist was for protestants connected with his pride and the fall of Babylon, believed to be typologically related to Rome (Apocalypse 14.8f.; 18.2-24).

The medieval tradition set great store by the end-of-time return in the flesh of the Two Witnesses, long identified as Enoch and Elias, to preach to Antichrist and be killed by him. Protestants viewed the role of the Witnesses as being fulfilled by reformers from John Wyclif to Martin Luther, who they claimed were witnessing to the truth of the Word in opposition to the false teaching of Antichrist, manifested in the doctrines and superstitions of the papacy.

The Apocalypse features prominently in the imagery relating to both points of view and had been influential in defining the traditional view of Antichrist some centuries before it was interpreted as being in accord with Protestant conclusions.

While the identity of Antichrist with the papacy was revolutionary, representing a fundamental departure from the traditional medieval view, the latter remained intact and was not superseded by it. Both views prevailed, each with its body of supporters. As time went by, anti-papal literature and imagery accumulated, continuing unabated in Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*, mid-sixteenth century, and beyond into the 17th, to which the visual content of numerous German and English examples continued to testify. Protestant witness developed in the years covered by this study has continued to influence opinion.

## I Chapter 3. The Apocalypse

The Apocalypse which the Apostle John recorded is the last book of the New Testament, recurrent in the chapters that follow and an important unifying factor so far as much of the imagery is concerned. 'Apocalypse' and 'Revelation', which have similar meanings, are alternative titles for this last book of the Bible, which is an apocalypse *par excellence*. Its certification is of the highest authority - God-given to Jesus Christ 'to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass...sent and signified...to his servant John'.<sup>1</sup> This clearly identifies the source of its message and the agencies through whom it was proclaimed. (Throughout the thesis Apocalypse rather than Revelation is the term most frequently used for references to this last book of the Bible.)

It advances the mission of the Old Testament prophet, or seer, whose speaking forth declared the character as well as the will and purpose of God, often pointing to future events as warnings and assurances that God's purpose would triumph on earth as in heaven, ultimately bringing blessing to the righteous and judgment upon the wicked. It is strongly eschatological, sets forth the idea of divine intervention in history, leading up to the End, with details of the final phase, including God's final judgments. Its concluding verses warn against adding to or taking away from the prophecy of the book, and of God's punishment of those who do (Apocalypse 22.18,19).

Apocalyptic elements are present in most of the other books of the Bible.<sup>2</sup> Unfulfilled elements of God's purpose and new aspects of it are, one might say, gathered together in the Apocalypse, where they are expanded and attached to a wealth of verbal imagery, impressive and awesome. Cross-relationships with other parts of scripture are detectable, easing or further complicating the problems of interpretation.<sup>3</sup> The structured presentation of the message is itself complex, with triune, heptadic and telescopic features.<sup>4</sup> Its frequent commands and responses to see and to look, 'and I saw', 'and I heard', emphasise the sensory nature of John's experiences and provide a basis of attraction that lends itself to visual presentation.

Theologians and other exegetes have recognised in its message details of the actions of Antichrist, though the name does not appear in the Apocalypse text. Based on comparisons with other parts of scripture, many themes of the Apocalypse have become associated with the Antichrist message.<sup>5</sup>

At the outset the reader is urged to apply himself to its message. He is told in the first chapter 'to hear' and 'to keep' the things written (v.3); the final chapter reiterates this exhortation and speaks of Christ's coming, bringing his reward with him (vv.9,12, 20), giving to every man according as his work shall be. The promises are 'right to the tree of life' from which man and woman were originally cut off. A return to the Edenic scene and 'entrance through the gates into the city', show continuity of thought with earlier scriptural themes.<sup>6</sup> While the effect of the message has been to awaken the reader's desire to understand, the nature of its message has raised problems which numerous commentators have sought to resolve. Patristic writings come into this category, likewise the glosses, which as well as informing the reader,

guided the illuminators of medieval Apocalypse manuscripts. There is also a substantial body of literature, including commentaries, some by reformist authors, which presented new and challenging interpretations of its visions. In spite of the sustained interest and attention given to the book, translators of the Bible and others from Jerome to Erasmus have discouraged its use, condemned preoccupation with working out the fulfilment dates of its prophecies, or argued in favour of its exclusion from the canon.<sup>7</sup> Its judgmental nature and the anti-Roman slant of some of its visions have been viewed by some with understandable apprehension and with disfavour by the Church of Rome.<sup>8</sup>

There are numerous apocalypses besides those found in scripture and in status and credibility, content and form, there are substantial differences. Common factors include the idea of uncovering a plan, revealing a hidden message, symbolic language, dramatic form, esoteric content and pseudonymity. Perhaps surprisingly, an 'apocalypse' does not necessarily identify itself as such. They may lean more or less on scriptural apocalypses, not always acknowledged, or be wholly or partly astrologically-based predictions. The degree of credence is at times far from reassuring and the identity of the person who relates his visionary experience may be subsumed under another name, and pseudonymous at that!<sup>9</sup>

The 'pre-ordained plan', sometimes only a small part of it, forms the subject of the Apocalypse and the unveiling is necessary because it is secret. By taking the revealed plan, especially its end, as the vantage point, it may be possible to ratify political and social events and observe a kaleidoscopic image of the times in apocalyptic terms.

How apocalyptic expectations become attached to events varies - the conversion of Constantine and the early 4th century christianisation of the Roman Empire, the decline of the church and the Great Schism gave off strong signals, but the apocalyptic significance of an event in history may not necessarily become apparent till quite some time later. Apocalypses have sometimes been expanded by taking earlier writings and adding details of recent history, or by adaptation of an earlier apocalyptic scenario. Interpretation and commentary inevitably follow apocalyptic statements and the attribution of the specifics of the message to identifiable parties have had the effect of associating them with the age-long apocalyptic struggle, political issues, even military conflict. Any reaction that has been precipitated has probably more frequently taken the form of verbal witness against evil.<sup>10</sup>

A divinely predetermined plan unfolding itself in world events is found in both general and specific terms in Old and New Testament texts, the promised Redeemer being one notable example, but not all apocalypticists have accepted the idea without qualification. The once widely held view that the Bible presents history as a unitary structure has become unpopular and often rejected.

## I Chapter 4. The Secondary Literature

Literature relating to medieval illuminated manuscripts is plentiful among secondary texts. L. Delisle, and P. Meyer, *L'Apocalypse en français au XIIIe siècle* (Paris 1901); Montague Rhodes James, *The Apocalypse in Art*, (London 1931), are early definitive accounts, the former on the thirteenth century Anglo-French apocalypse manuscripts which reveal the details of the developing imagery of Antichrist, the latter a comprehensive, but inexhaustive categorised list, with brief notes on image content. In these Apocalypse manuscripts the Antichrist section forms only a part, varying in length, and sometimes non-existent.

In an unpublished thesis, Jessie Poesch, *Antichrist Imagery in Anglo-French Apocalypse Manuscripts* (1966), studies the large group of more than forty manuscripts in each of which there is an Antichrist reference, at least in the accompanying commentary, and in many instances in the imagery itself.<sup>1</sup> On the English Apocalypse there are studies by R. Freyhan, 'Joachism and the English Apocalypse' (1955), and George Henderson, 'Studies in English Manuscript Illumination' (1967 and 1968).<sup>2</sup> Jessie Poesch (1981), in a short study of Apocalypse 11 and 13, analyses the anthropomorphic transitions, an important aspect of iconographic development at that stage.<sup>3</sup> She examines English manuscript depictions of Apocalypse 11, about the Beast of the Bottomless Pit that slays the Two Witnesses. The beast is identified as Antichrist in the text by name, but is variously depicted as a beast with a human face, wearing a crown, who tramples and bites the Two Witnesses; or enthroned, bearing a sword, either slaying the Witnesses himself, or commanding his henchmen to do so. The seven-headed Beast of the Sea (Apocalypse 13. 4), develops from a four-legged prone creature to an upright, seven-headed, crowned monster. Other processes of change - conflation, interpolations and omissions, are also indicated.

Gertrude Bing, 'The Apocalypse block-books and their manuscript models' (1942),<sup>4</sup> examines the *Wellcome* manuscript, its importance recognised some years previously and suspected as the missing link between the thirteenth century manuscripts and the block books, because it was near to the date of the block books and resembled the Bodley-type manuscript, one example of the 'first family' of thirteenth century manuscripts, classified by Delisle (1901).<sup>5</sup> She claims on the basis of her close examination, particularly the text, the influence of an unknown model on all three - the Bodley type, the block books and the *Wellcome* manuscript. Some of the issues relate to the Antichrist section, which in *Wellcome* is more elaborate and extensive.

Bernard McGinn's short chapter, 'Portraying Antichrist in the Middle Ages', in *The Use and Abuse of Eschatology in the Middle Ages*, ed. W. Verbeke (Louvain 1988), presents a succinct account, illustrated with a range of lesser known medieval examples from the tenth to the sixteenth centuries, starting with the earliest portrayal of a human Antichrist in a tenth century Beatus manuscript. He traces in outline medieval traditions with cross-references to Bing and Poesch. They include the Beatus manuscripts, the encyclopedic *Hortus deliciarum*, the mid-thirteenth century moralised bibles, the

Anglo-French apocalypses, the mid-fourteenth century Velislav Bible, pausing to comment briefly on the fifteenth century block books, the last of the narrative view which had developed from the twelfth century. The changing appearance of Antichrist from tyrant, to Christ look-alike, to a personable young man, and an increasing attention to his duplicity, are noted by McGinn (1988). He also gives a brief account, one of the very few, of Master Nicholas of Dresden's, *Tabule veteris et novi coloris seu cortina de antichristo* (c. 1412), concerned with the early stirrings of opposition to the papacy in which comparisons are drawn between its canonical rules, powers and prerogatives, with the humility of Christ. He identifies some of the early sources which form the basis of Antichrist's parodies of the miraculous episodes in Christ's ministry - his mock death, resurrection and ascension, which drew protestant criticism for their fanciful interpretations of Antichrist displays of miraculous powers.<sup>6</sup>

A very detailed and comprehensive account is in Emerson's, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A study of mediaeval apocalypticism, art and literature* (1981). His second chapter concentrates on biblical exegesis, acknowledging the subject's firm rooting in scripture. Antichrist's life and deeds occupy the next two chapters, with references to a wide range of illuminated manuscripts and encyclopedic literature extending into the later Middle Ages. Pictorial illustrations are regrettably very few, limiting the facilities of an otherwise highly informative study. An incursion in the final chapter, 'Antichrist in the Renaissance', is not intended to be exhaustive, but a means of further defining the medieval Antichrist. He draws comparisons between the Catholic and Protestant interpretations, citing principal German and Italian examples, turning finally to the English reformation scene with accounts of polemical dramas, popular at the time, Spencer's *Faerie Queene* (1590), which dramatise features of the two viewpoints. He also draws attention to comments from early protestant critics about fanciful and inapposite interpretations of the Antichrist theme.

Rosemary Wright, *Art and Antichrist in Medieval Europe* (Manchester 1995), covers a wide range of illustrated material: in the Beatus tradition, 12th century illustrated encyclopedias, moralised bibles and the English Apocalypse. The prophetic-historical framework in Daniel 2.4, 7.), within which Antichrist operates by type, then antitype, is followed up in detail in manuscripts of the Beatus tradition and *Liber floridus* manuscript (c.1112-20), drawing out the features which define the relationships that span the period from Nebuchadnezzar to Antichrist. The explanatory details of these ties often seem to be lost sight of in the secondary sources.

Her last chapter, 'The Great Whore of the illustrated Apocalypse cycles', describes the various concepts of the Whore as an evil woman, and, as an evil woman strictly symbolic of the evil city of Babylon, the antitype of the New Jerusalem (p.191). In these interpretations of the Whore image, the fuller message of the relevant chapter (Apocalypse 17), is not realised, where as an adulterous woman (a Jezebel type), she represents the false church, exercising political control over the kings of the earth, typified by the ten crowned horns of the beast she rides.<sup>7</sup> There is a reference to a conflict of opinion about the alleged thinking of the compilers of the Anglo-French apocalypse manuscripts of the Whore as a figure

of Antichrist in female form, about which Wright is hesitant because the Whore imagery stemmed from a different iconographic tradition.<sup>8</sup>

Another interpretation of the Whore of Babylon's affiliations which were tuned to aims not comprehended in the Apocalypse text, are in Wright's chapter on the moralised bibles, where the Whore becomes a warning against the wiles of the adulterous woman for the moral guidance of clergy (pp. 99, 104). A further instance is in *Hortus Deliciarum* (c. 1175-85), where it takes the form of advice to convent sisters not to follow the ways of the adulterous woman and suffer the consequences of being unfaithful to Christ, the one to whom they were betrothed (p.190). One draws from Wright's account that only rarely is the full potential of the Whore of Babylon message achieved during the pre-protestant phase. Wright observes that the Whore is portrayed as a type of female seduction rather than a symbol of Babylon. All these examples advance the traditional Antichrist viewpoint.

Although Wright does not include post fifteenth century Protestant material, she introduces two less familiar manuscripts of the period where some of the imagery anticipates what became a characteristic of Protestant imagery in the sixteenth century. Antichrist appears as a priest preaching from a pulpit to a crowd of worshippers, among whom are priests distributing gifts, as if they were his followers - a warning that he had become, or could become, operative within the church (Plate 30).<sup>9</sup> Wright does not raise the possibility that he could be functioning as the beast of the Earth, which seems likely. He is a creature of deceit, having horns as a lamb, but speaking like a dragon (Apocalypse 13.11). And this is how he is depicted, wearing a halo and preaching from a pulpit, but identified as Antichrist. In the second manuscript, *Livre de la Vigne de Notre Seigneur*, where Antichrist is depicted as a ruler wearing a triple tiara, meeting his death on Mount Olivet, Wright thinks it is possible that the treatise is anti-papal (Plate 28).

In tracing the iconography of the Whore of Babylon, Wright puts forward an early Christian classical formula for the guardian of a city (p.181, 2), with arms outstretched, in frontal pose, sometimes holding a horn of plenty, which 'could be adapted to the details of the Apocalypse text'.

Penelope Mayo's study of the *Liber floridus* manuscript in 'The Crusaders under the Palm ...'<sup>10</sup> reveals the powerful themes in the prophetic-historical framework within which Antichrist is operative - the subordination of the Jews, the devastations of Jerusalem, the ties of cosmic kingship and its links with prototypical Antichrist cosmocrats from Nebuchadnezzar to Antichrist himself (pp. 41,45, 47, 57, 59, 63).

Most secondary texts dealing with the traditional viewpoint usually omit these themes. Cohn's article, 'Biblical Origins of the Apocalyptic Tradition' (1999),<sup>11</sup> is exceptional in these respects, pointing out the significance of this evidence in the Daniel prophecies and their New Testament relationships, especially to the Apocalypse (pp. 29, 31, 37.); also mentioning the four kingdom succession of the imperial powers from Babylon to Rome (Daniel 2), who have ruled over the Jews (p.32).

R W. Scribner, *For the Sake of Simple Folk* (Oxford 1994), focuses on the visual propaganda of the evangelical movement during the first half century of the Reformation in Germany and therefore deals with the Protestant view. His approach is socio-historical, for which pictorial material can be an invaluable source of evidence. One chapter in particular, 'Antichrist and the World Turned Upside-down', looks at crucial Antichrist material on the Protestant point of view in Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), and examples from Luther's September and December Testaments (1522), and *Biblia* (1534), where the papal Antichrist identity is candidly portrayed, including the Babylon-Rome link, introducing Rome's landmarks and the papal Antichrist identity of the Whore of Babylon, which incorporates the fuller details of the relevant chapter (Apocalypse 17), only partially recognised in traditional imagery. Well-informed about national social customs, Scribner is able to enlarge upon the polemical features found in Antichrist imagery of German origin. His account originally drew criticism for its scarce consideration of the response of artists to artistic tradition.<sup>12</sup>

The late 15th century combination of Antichrist's false preaching with teaching from a true source in the same image, is depicted by Wolgemut, *Antichrist preaching and the Two Witnesses*, in the Nuremberg Chronicle, 1493 (Plate 26). Scribner (1994), effectively develops this facet of the subject in his chapter, 'Teaching the Gospel: Propaganda as Instruction' (pp.195-208), which sets Protestant against Catholic preachers, showing the true versus the false. It could also be shown that Antichrist's prophet-preacher role is developed more convincingly than appears in earlier contexts. The same image by Wolgemut, which is regarded by Scribner, and Jonathan Riess, *The Renaissance Antichrist* (Princeton, New Jersey 1995), as a direct source of Cranach's depiction of the fall of Antichrist in the *Passional*, is not strictly borne out by a straight comparison. A longer chain of Antichrist examples would appear to be involved.

Studies of Antichrist imagery have often either been brief and narrowly focussed excursions, or have not covered the period beyond the traditional pre-protestant phase. Jonathan Riess, for instance, is geared to the study of a single Antichrist work - Signorelli's Antichrist fresco in its *Capella Nuova* setting in the south transept of the duomo at Orvieto. This work, *The Rule of Antichrist*, amidst several large apocalypse frescoes, is a major presentation of the subject, which Riess describes as the most ambitious, monumental treatment of the career of Antichrist in Renaissance art (p.5). It supports the traditional Antichrist viewpoint and introduces traditional episodes in the life of Antichrist. Antichrist's preaching mode, hinting at Christ's sermon on the Mount of Olives, promises a new emphasis on Antichrist as prophet-preacher, but is hardly borne out by the imagery, though this issue is not seriously questioned by Riess. Antichrist's imperial stance, more strongly represented, is more appropriate, as Antichrist's tyrannical mode of rule is all too evident, his preaching almost a non-event. The central knot adjacent to the devil's horn, is an important focal-point of *The Rule*. A new slant on its fuller significance, connected with the work of the Spiritual Orders, who operate by the tongue, emerges from an article by J.B. Friedman, 'Antichrist and the Iconography of Dante's Geryon' (1972).<sup>13</sup>

Papal power and conviction is firmly upheld at Orvieto and is a key factor in *The Rule*. Riess's comments on the directional influence of the Temple, orientated towards the viewer's left, if followed,

leads to the *End of the World* over the chapel entrance, then to the adjacent Apocalypse scenes which spell out the ensuing judgements. By rejecting the contrary influence of the temple's orientation, one ends up at the altar end of the chapel, where the focus is upon the Catholic mass, which at Orvieto, as Riess states, is strongly upheld as a guarantor of deliverance from all adverse powers, the deceit of Antichrist in particular (pp. 38,39). The north transept reliquary chapel, the *Cappella di Corporale*, holds the relic of the miracle mass at nearby Bolsena, strengthening convictions about these aspects of belief and the power of the Eucharist administered by the Catholic Church. Riess writes extensively about the wider topological and religio-historical issues of *The Rule's* setting, the history of Orvieto, ties with Rome and the influence of the Dominicans.

The recognition of the equivalence of non-scriptural with biblical sources, pagan particularly, evident in the grisaille scenes of the chapel, are pointed out by Stanley Meltzoff, *Botticelli, Signorelli and Savonarola: 'Theologica poetica' and painting from Bocaccio to Poloziano* (1987), who writes about the concordance of paganism and Christianity ('Poets, Pagans, Prophets', p.317). He draws more extensively upon the *grisaille* murals situated at eye level below the major frescoes in advancing his case for identifying Savonarola as the Antichrist of *The Rule*, an interpretation which Riess does not pursue. Meltzoff recognises the identity of the two lower left-hand figures as the artists, Fra Angelico and Signorelli and he too is aware of the endorsement of the role of the artist in *The Rule*, Signorelli in particular, which is cross-referenced to the work of the prophetic group, also pointed out by Riess (1995), pp.321, 22.

Sarah James, *Signorelli and Fra Angelico at Orvieto, Liturgy, Poetry and a vision of the End Time* (Aldershot 2003), takes a different view of the two artists, Fra Angelico and Signorelli, front left of *The Rule* (Plate 53), rejecting their identities as being based on 'weak evidence'. They are interpreted as the Two Witnesses (p.69). Credible evidence for her conclusions is cited, but they are not in harmony with the treatment of the Witnesses in *The Rule*, who are pushed to the perimeter of the fresco and upstaged by the Spiritual Orders. Furthermore, they do not support the attested role of the artist put forward by Riess (1995) and Meltzoff (1987).

Sarah James goes into some detail on the readings appointed for Advent as an influential source for the imagery and refers in particular to the *Dies Irae*, a hymn for the first Sunday in Advent from which the turbaned figure in the prophet group is identified as David and the female holding the open book as the Cumaean sibyl.

The high priestly figure appearing in the doorway of the hut in the central panel of Hieronymus Bosch's Prado *Epiphany* triptych as a depiction of Antichrist, is discussed at length in an article by Lotte Brand-Philip, 'The Prado *Epiphany* by Jerome Bosch', *The Art Bulletin*, 35, 1953, pp. 267-93. The author argues in support of this identity and sees the underlying evil of the Antichrist theme reiterated in virtually all parts of the altar-piece, including Judas, the traitor, a powerful symbol of evil in the Gregory Mass depicted on the outer doors.

On the basis of this identity, it can be argued that Bosch's integration of the theme of Antichrist within the context of a traditional theological programme was what others were doing at the time. However, Antichrist scenes connected with the traditional medieval view are not introduced.

The author advances explanations of several features based on obscure ancient Jewish traditions, including the Midrash Conen. Reasons for the positioning of the ass in an opening in the hut, though almost as close to Christ as his mother, is attributed to a 'Jewish calumny' (p. 270, notes 15, 16). It could be argued that its more honourable role in Christ's triumph is well supported in scripture and that Sandro Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity* (c.1500), appears to support this aspect of the matter in several respects.

The explanation of the leprous condition of the Messianic, high priestly figure of Antichrist, includes a reference to Isaiah 53.3, to support the alleged leprous condition of Christ himself. Such a notion is not supported by this or any other scriptural text, and Christ, far from being leprous, was able to cure those who were. Alternative explanations more in line with scriptural texts were preferable on these matters. In some instances, however, the author makes very appropriate scriptural references.

The frogs, which are depicted in several places in the triptych, drew little comment, although the converging forces of the three kings in the central landscape were interpreted as gathering for the final battle. Apocalypse 16.13,14), describes three unclean spirits like frogs gathering the kings of the earth to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. Though an unexpected development within the context of an Epiphany scene, its relevance to the Antichrist theme is convincing.

The alchemical aspects of Bosch's thinking in the imagery of the Prado *Epiphany* are discussed in Laurinda Dixon's, *Bosch* (London 2003), chapter 7, 'The Crucible of God: Bosch's Chemical Epiphany.' Alchemical theories based on transmutation, the changing from base to precious, had its human and moral parallels, and the encasement of Antichrist's leg-sores in a crystal bandage, bordered in gold, was recognised as depicting the alchemical process. It would appear therefore to represent the leprous first stage, with the certainty of a cure, the transmutation. Laurinda Dixon is adversely critical of Lotte Brand-Philip's arguments based upon Hebrew legendary sources (pp.211-12).

The significant changes during the 15th century and beyond are presented by Fritz Saxl, 'A Spiritual Encyclopedia of the Later Middle Ages', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 5, 1942, pp.82-142, who discusses the content of some fifteenth century encyclopedic works MS. Casanatensis (c.1420-40), the Wellcome Apocalypse (c.1420-25), and comments on the more persuasive treatment of the theme of Antichrist in the lead up to the case advanced by the Luther-inspired imagery of the 1520s. Saxl unravels the politico-historical phases in the content of MS Casanatensis which identify Antichrist among monarchs and political leaders of the period and examines some obscure references in the imagery of the manuscript. He also appraises the work of the 13th century illustrators and their influence upon the 15th century block books (p.129), and briefly mentions the woodcut medium, the

inexpensive printed image, correspondingly wider in distribution (pp.123,129), and carrying a more stimulating, compulsive message, which moved nearer to the more revolutionary aims and increasingly urgent message of the reformists (p.134).

Secondary literature is abundant on Albrecht Dürer's artistic achievements in the depiction of Apocalypse scenes:- Erwin Panofsky, *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer* (Princeton 1955); Walter Strauss, *Albrecht Dürer: Woodcuts and Woodblocks* (New York 1980); H. Wölfflin, *The Art of Albrecht Dürer*, translated by A. and H. Grieve (New York 1971). His apocalypse woodcuts (1498), are influential, and highly appraised for their new landmarks in dynamism, technical skill and connotations of the *Apocalypse* visions, creating a sense of imminence regarding the apocalyptic events expected soon to change the *status quo* on earth. However, what he has contributed to the theme of Antichrist is limited and inconclusive. While some have addressed the subject in larger contexts, he plays very little part in literature which focuses on the Antichrist theme. Sarah James (2003), does not mention him at all, and Jonathan Riess (1995), describes his Antichrist contribution as 'puzzling' (p.106). *The Whore of Babylon* (Apocalypse 17), and the Earth and Sea beasts and 666 (Apocalypse 13), in Dürer's woodcut series, have received attention in this respect, it being easier according to Riess (1995), p.106, to be certain about the identity of Antichrist in the latter. Jane Hutchinson, *Albrecht Dürer, a Biography* (Princeton 1990), pp.63-64, is about Nicholas of Cusa's belief that Antichrist is identified with Islam and that this notion was influential upon the Dürer series.

Until the 1990s many of the Gerung's images were familiar, but their placing and pairing in Meyer's *Commentary* were not. Petra Roettig, *Reformation als Apokalypse. Die Holzschnitte von Mathias Gerung im Codex germanicus 6592 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München* (Munich 1991), shows the correct pairing of Gerung's woodcuts. This publication fulfilled a need. There is a wealth of content in the twenty-six pairs of woodcuts for Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary* which, on account of their 1540s datings, allow comparison with earlier reformist material. In the chapters in Roettig, influential imagery is identified and there is also a comprehensive collection of visual material, some of which could be put into this category. Scribner (1994), remarks upon the many appearances of the Turk and those where the Turk and the Pope share some of the scenes.

An opportunity to scan a wide range of imagery falling within the scope of the research was provided by J.Miller, *Religion in the Popular Prints, 1600 -1832* (Cambridge 1986), and by Walter Strauss, editor. *The German Single-Leaf Woodcut, 1550 -1600: A Pictorial Catalogue* (New York 1975). John N.King, *English Reformation Literature* (Princeton 1982), who discusses the emergence of the English literary tradition and its protestant defence, discusses pictorial material and royal iconography. Illustrations from different sources set in a variety of texts, include examples from John Foxe's, *Acts and Monuments*, Coverdale's 1535 translation of the Bible, title-page by Hans Holbein, which sets the monarch above the pope and surrounds him with Old Testament archetypes. Some of the illustrations are not images of Antichrist and are of limited use in the context of the research. The title-page of the Coverdale Bible is one such example, which depicts all the apostles holding keys, a denial of the papal

claim to Peter's primacy, and an issue of general importance to the Protestant viewpoint on the authority of the papal claim.

Antichrist elements in English protestant art and literature are about the identity of Antichrist and the false church, and the consequent need to break with Rome. Paul Christianson , *Reformers and Babylon: English Apocalyptic Visions from the Reformation to the Eve of the Civil War* (Toronto 1978), and Katharine Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-1645* (Oxford 1979), whose contents have much in common, write about the break with the beliefs of the medieval past and the new framework of explanation based upon the prophecies of the Apocalypse, which the history of the Christian church had fulfilled, a statement initially describing the efforts of John Bale (1495-1563), Christianson (1978), p.14. Both texts take up the theme of England as the 'elect nation', a strong conviction held by many, which found its way into contemporary imagery. The papal Antichrist and papal falsity and the scriptural evidence, adduced by English theologians mainly from the Apocalypse, are recurring items in these texts.

The English monarchy and Elizabeth's role in the defence of the true faith against the onslaught of 'papal darkness', are among many themes in Frances Yates, 'Queen Elizabeth I as Astraea', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, X 1947,<sup>14</sup> Yates's *forte*, the imperial principle, is discussed relevant to the English Reformation in relation to the role and authority of the monarch and the church (pp.38 *et seq.*). She cites the scriptural arguments relating to the papal Antichrist, with quotations from their original, including biblical, sources (pp. 40, 41, 46). The English Church's professed Constantine links, and the high esteem in which he was held, is compared with the esteemed Elizabeth I (p.42). Queen Elizabeth and the Pope as Diana and Callisto - an Antichrist image, and images from John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, where the triumph of the monarchy over the papacy is paramount, are among selected illustrations.

René Graziani, 'The *Rainbow Portrait* of Elizabeth I and its Religious Symbolism', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 35, 1972, pp. 247-59, discussing its religious symbolism, identifies Elizabeth's many attributes in which she is presented as a champion of Bible truth and as a monarch who trusted in God.<sup>15</sup>

Roy Strong, 'The Popular Celebration of the Accession Day of Queen Elizabeth I', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 21, 1958, pp.86-103, describes the day when 'deliverance from the powers of darkness' and Elizabeth's part in holding the 'Antichrist of Rome' at bay were remembered (pp. 91, 95, 97, 98, 102). Sheila Williams, in the same year, 'The Pope Burning Processions of 1679, 1680 and 1681', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 21, 1958, pp. 104-18, takes up the same theme. She gives a lively account of Accession Day events, with numerous references and quotations which bring to life popular attitudes and reactions of the English public against the papacy and its associates under the impact made upon them by 'Plots, Papists, Jesuits and the Inquisition', and the further intrigues of all parties, themes encountered in English Reformation imagery.

The secondary literature rarely covers both the traditional Catholic and the Protestant points of view in any detail. There appears therefore to be scope for an integrated comparative study, discussing sources, inter-relationships, the impact on typology and on imagery and the convictions that underlie them. One's knowledge of the subject of Antichrist could hardly be said to be complete without an understanding of these interrelated aspects.

## NOTES Part I

### Chapter 1. The Antichrist Tradition

1. '... whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming.' This chapter became widely associated with Antichrist from the early Middle Ages. Tertullian (c.160-220), in his *De carnis resurrectione* identified 'the son of perdition' ('*filius perditionis*'), verse 3, as Antichrist ('*id est antichristus*'): CSEL 47:60. The *Glossa Ordinaria*, the influential compendium of medieval exegesis, makes frequent references by which the tradition spread into later Bibles and commentaries. The *Glossa* was the work of compilers working with Anselm of Laon and incorporating the *Postilla* of Nicholas of Lyra (1270-1340), and became invaluable in the study of the medieval Antichrist. Richard K. Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: a study of mediaeval apocalypticism, art and literature* (Manchester 1981), p.37.
2. Variety of viewpoint, speculative elements concerning the time of Antichrist's coming and his identity were no doubt contributory, not to mention uncertainties about the status of the Apocalypse and whether to be viewed as historical or analogical. (See chapter 3, n.7.) The Apostle John's authorship of the Apocalypse was challenged by Erasmus who cited Jerome and Chrysostom. His Greek New Testament (1516), presented the case. So far as the authorship and canonicity of the Apocalypse was concerned, the Council of Trent (which met in the years 1545-63), was supportive. B. F. Westcott, *A General Survey of the Canon of the New Testament* (London 1896), p.480.
3. Epistles I John 2. 18, 22; 4. 3; John II, verse 7.
4. See Jessie Poesch, *Antichrist Imagery in Anglo-French Apocalypse Manuscripts* (PhD thesis, University of Pennsylvania 1966), pp. 15, 16 and notes 3 and 4.
5. Antichrist was a developing concept, and the traditional interpretation took shape over a period of many years, extending beyond the date of Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo* (953 ), which summarised and collected the many and various beliefs about Antichrist up to that time. It provided a *vita*, which was much referred to and continued to be an influence upon the traditional view in the years that followed. Adso of Montier-en-Der, D.Verhelst ed, *Adso Dervensis, De ortu et tempore Antichristi. Corpus Christianorum, Continuatio Mediaevali*, 45 (Turnholtm Brepols 1976).
6. Adso content is found for example in Hugh Ripelin of Strassburg's *Compendium theologiae veritatis* (c.1265), and Hugh of Newcastle's *Tractatus de victoria Christi contra Antichristum* (1319).
7. Following the death of Antichrist, two periods, one of forty-five and one of forty days, are identified as providing an opportunity for repentance and re-conversion for those deceived by Antichrist. Forty-five days was an early development by Hippolytus and Jerome based upon Daniel 12, arrived at by subtracting the 1290 days (v.11) from the 1335 days (v.12), a period of testing and reward for believers. The forty-day period stated in Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo* has been thought by some to have been an error. Though the longer period was the most favoured, both continued to be mentioned, the shorter one indicative of Adso's influence upon later medieval writings. Emmerson (1981), pp.104,5.
8. The references to the dragon relate to Joachim's *figurae*. Marjorie Reeves and B. Hirsch-Reich, *The Figurae of Joachim of Fiore* (Oxford 1972), p. 109f; Marjorie Reeves, 'The Originality and Influence of Joachim de Fiore', *Traditio*, 36, 1980, 269-313.
9. On Babylon, Joachim de Fiore recognised its application to Rome, in relation to the conflict between the Church of Rome and Imperial Rome, and of imperial Rome as another Babylon. It is not clear whether he envisaged the term as having an application to a false church of Rome, though he recognised the need for *renovatio* in the Church of Rome. Reeves (1972), pp.109-25.
10. The link with the Alexander legend occurred in the fifth century. For a translation of Jacob Sarug's (c.451-521), account of the legend, see Wallis Budge, *The history of Alexander the Great*, ii pp.186-188,193,196-198. Andrew Anderson, *Alexander's Gate, Gog and Magog, and the Inclosed Nations* (Cambridge, Mass. 1932).
11. Of the twenty-two nations, including the lost ten tribes, see E. Sackur, ed., *Pseudo-Methodius, Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen*, (Halle 1898), pp. 73, 74, 91, 93.

12. There were various opinions as to when Antichrist would come in relation to Gog and Magog:- after their defeat: Pseudo-Methodius, ed. Sackur (1898), pp.91-93; Tiburtine Oracle, ed. Sackur, pp.185-86; at the same time as he comes, because they are his armies (see note 13); after the millennial reign of peace during which Satan is bound. The latter is an early Christian interpretation which accords with Apocalypse 20. 7, 8.

13. John Friedman, 'Antichrist and the Iconography of Date's Geryon', *JWCI*, 18, 1955, p.110 n.10. Jacob of Sarug, *Homily*, ed. and translator Wallis Budge, *The History of Alexander the Great*, II. pp.429-30; 654-5.

14. *Pseudo-Methodius Revelations*, a collection of apocalyptic issues includes observations on the rise of Islam, whom he identified as an evil and serious threat that needed to be resisted. *Pseudo-Methodius*, ed. Ernst Sackur, *Sibyllinische Texte und Forschungen* (Halle 1898). Pope Paul III summoned a general council under Jesuit guidance (November 19, 1544), 'to establish peace among European princes so that they might make common cause against the Turks'. N.Williams, ed., 'Reform and Revolt', *Milestones of History*, vol. 5. (1974), p.73, paragraph 1.

15. Prophetic literature, including astrological-based material, was plentiful. See D. Kurze, 'Prophecy and History: Lichtenberger's forecasts of events to come, from the fifteenth to the twentieth century; their reception and diffusion', *JWCI*, XX1, 1958, pp. 63-85.

16. Richard Emmerson, *Antichrist in the Middle Ages: A study of mediaeval apocalypticism in art and literature* (Manchester 1981), p.8.

## Chapter 2. The Protestant Interpretation of Antichrist

1. Gerolamo Savonarola's Ezekiel sermons on judgment and renewal were preached at the duomo in Florence in Advent, 1496, and Lent, 1497; R. Ridolfi (ed), *Prediche sopra Ezechiele* (Rome 1952), contains forty-eight of them. In these sermons he censures the Church of Rome for its many failures, even calling it the harlot church, but promises that after the *flagello* will come a great *renovatio* of the Catholic Church.

2. H. Kaminsky ed., *et al*, Master Nicholas of Dresden, *Tables of the Old Colour and the New*, transactions of the American Philosophical Society (Washington 1965), p27, column 2, the first treatise, numbers 1-21. Also p.12, column 1, regarding communion to the laity in both kinds.

3. *Ibid.*, p.52. The Sixth Table, 3. Constantine crowning the pope says: 'The Emperor Constantine put the crown...from his own head on the pontiff of the Roman Church ... and all the imperial garments on him, performing for him the office of strator' (XCV1, *dist.*, c. 14 ).

4. Images which were then being used by the Dresdeners to spread the message in telling antithetical format, had earlier been part of Wycliffe's programme differentiating between Christ and the Pope. John Wycliffe, *De Christo et suo adversario Antichristo*, R. Buddensieg, ed. (Gotha 1880), pp. 47, 58. Kaminsky (1965) p.10, n.37.'

5. Fritz Saxl, 'A Spiritual encyclopaedia of the Later Middle Ages', *JWCI*, V, 1942, p.132.

6. *The Baptism of Antichrist* (c.1550), a protestant, anti-papal depiction by Gerung, is conducted by devils, the infant wearing a papal tiara. London, British Museum 1976-1-31-2.

7. At the last session of the Council of Trent, January 1562 - January 1563, under Pope Pius IV, all previous 'enactments' were firmly endorsed, including those beliefs and practices which Protestants rejected. Williams (1974), p.79.

8. Isaiah 5.20, 'Woe to them that call evil good and good evil', conveys the notion of the approval of the vices. See Emmerson (1981), p.53.

9. The iconography of the synagogue depicts blindness, the broken lance and the two tablets of Law. S. Lewis, 'Tractatus Adversus Judaeos in the Gulbenkian Apocalypse', *The Art Bulletin* (1986), p.547- 48, figs. 3, 4.

10. Hans Holbein, the Younger, in *Christ the Light of the World* (B M, Hollstein XIV, 140, no.3), depicts the pope and other senior clerics with their backs towards Christ and the burning candle, following Aristotle and Plato into the pit of darkness.

11. Stanley Meltzoff, *Botticelli, Signorelli and Savonarola*, *Theologica poetica* and painting from Boccaccio to Poliziano (Florence 1986), pp.316, 317, 310.

12. *Lateinos* was naturally favoured by the protestants because of its Latium and Latin language associations, including Rome, the Church of Rome's use of Latin, and the papacy's alleged Antichrist identity.

13. The Council of Trent and the Counter Reformation, Williams (1947), p.77.

14. Holbein, title-page of the Coverdale Bible (1535), where all the apostles carry a key and therefore all are endowed with equal status. Thus the primacy of Peter is repudiated and with it the pontiff's claim to apostolic succession from Peter and his alleged sole right to sit on Peter's throne.

15. Ephesians 2.8, 9, 10. Law and Grace, subjects of much discussion and controversy, in the *Tabule*, for example, is considered at length in chapter 15a.

### Chapter 3. The Apocalypse

1. Apocalypse 1.1.

2. Daniel 2, Nebuchadnezzar's dream image. Daniel 7, the four beasts. Ezekiel 38, Gog and Magog. Matthew 24, Christ's coming and final judgments. II Thessalonians 2, the man of sin. The 'antichrist' references of I John 4.3 and II John 7.

3. Babylon (Apocalypse 17.5; 18.2), the New Jerusalem and the tabernacle (Apocalypse 21. 2, 3). The bride, the lamb's wife (Apocalypse 19.7), identifies the bride of Christ, the lamb being Christ. The fourth beast of Daniel 7 with the beast (Apocalypse 3.2; 17.12), and with the fourth kingdom of Daniel 2.40. The ten kings, ten horns and ten toes: Apocalypse 17.12 and Daniel 2.41, 42, 44.

4. All the following reveal heptadic structuring:- the series of letters to the seven ecclesias, chaps. 2 and 3; the seven seals, chaps. 6 and 7; the seven trumpets, chaps.8-11; the seven vials, chaps 15 and 16. They are expanded successively like the sections of a telescope, each focussing on the End. It has also been described an upward spiral moving to its apex.

5. Key Apocalypse chapters with long-established associations with various aspects of the Antichrist theme are 11,13,17,18,19,20. All these chapters are discussed in Part IV, chapter 14.

6. Genesis 3.24, the way to the tree of life in Eden is 'kept open'. Apocalypse, 22.14, 'Blessed are they that have right to the tree of life'.

7. Lactantius was moderately favourable, Eusebius, Augustine and Jerome strongly opposed. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, book 7. J. O'Connell, *The Eschatology of Jerome* (1948). The expectation of key events remained, but emphasis was placed upon moralised, allegorical and non-literal forms of interpretation of the Apocalypse; predictive and chronological were rejected. B. McGinn, editor and translator. 'Tis not for you to know ...' (Acts 1.7), was an oft-quoted expression to discourage time-consuming efforts to work out the time when prophetic events would be fulfilled. M.Reeves, ed. *Prophetic Rome in the High Renaissance Period* (Oxford 1992), pp. 94, 95.

8. Apocalypse 17.5, 7, 18; 18.10, 21. Rome is given a Babylon identity, the latter-day Babylon, and the city on seven hills is identified as Rome (imperial Rome and the Church of Rome). Babylon relates to Nebuchadnezzar, a prototype of Antichrist and the judgments upon Babylon (Apocalypse 18.21), are like those reserved for Antichrist.

9. Of the numerous apocalyptic writings in the Old and New Testaments, only the Apocalypse is so labelled, and the even greater number of non-canonic writings seriously regarded as apocalyptic have a

wide range of other titles. Probably the majority by far do not carry the title 'apocalypse'. Examples: Lichtenberger, *Pronosticatio* (1488); Aytinger, *Commentary on Methodius*. Wolfgang Lazius, *Fragmentum vaticinii cuiusdam (ut coniiicitur) Methodii* (Vienna 1547), embodies a wide range of authors of prophetic literature, including astrological material - Joachim, Cyril, Merlin, Telesphorus, Rupescissa, Carion, Lichtenberger, among others.

10. The influence of Wycliff on Huss produced in turn a radical revolutionary movement in the early fifteenth century in Bohemia, by which the apocalyptic tradition for the first time embraced the use of force to achieve its objectives. These came to a head in the activities of the Taborites, whose priests warned of coming judgments which would slay the wicked, save the elect and institute the millennial rule of Christ. (H. Kaminsky, *A History of the Hussite Revolution* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967), pp. 340-4.)

#### Chapter 4. Secondary Literature

1. Poesch (1966).

2. R. Freyhan, 'Joachism and the English Apocalypse', *JWCI*, 18 (1955), pp. 211- 44. George Henderson, 'Studies in English Manuscript Illumination. Part II, 'The English Apocalypse', I, *JWCI*, 30 (1967), pp.71-137. Part III, 'The English Apocalypse', II, *JWCI*, 31 (1968), pp.103-47.

3. Jessie Poesch, 'Revelation 11. 7 and Revelation 13.1-10: Interrelated Antichrist Imagery in some English Apocalypse manuscripts', in M. Barasch and L. Sandler, eds, *Art the Ape of Nature: Studies in Honour of H.W. Janson* (New York 1981), pp.15-33.

4. Gertrude Bing, 'The Apocalypse block-books and their manuscript models', *JWCI*, V, 1942, pp. 143-58.

5. Bing (1942), p.144, n. 1.

6. Egner (1981), p. 8.

7. The relationship is with the ten toes of Daniel 2.41, 42, 44 and the ten horns of the terrible Fourth Beast of Daniel 7.20, 24.

8. Wright (1995), p.215 n. 14.

9. Madrid, Biblioteca del Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial, Cod.MS Vitrina I, f. 17v.

10. Penelope Mayo, 'The Crusaders under the Palm: allegorical plants and cosmic kingship in the *Liber floridus*', Center for Byzantine Studies, *Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, 27 (1973), 31-67.

11. F. Carey, ed., *The Apocalypse and the Shape of things to Com*, BM, 1999, pp. 28-42. . (Published to accompany an exhibition at the British Museum, December 1999-April 2000)

12. I. Gaskell, 'The Imagery of Incitement', *Art History*, vol. 3 (September 1982), p.369.

13. John Friedman, 'Antichrist and the Iconography of Dante's Geryon', *JWCI*, 35 (1972), pp.108-22.

14. Frances Yates, 'Queen Elizabeth I as Astraea', X (1947), pp. 27-82.

15. René Graziani, 'The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I and its Religious Symbolism', *JWCI* XXI (1972), p.247-59.

## Part II Antichrist's Typological Ancestry

### Chapter 5. Human, Semitic and Evil

Antichrist was written about and depicted long before he was given a human form in art.<sup>1</sup> It is generally agreed that the earliest unequivocal depiction of a human Antichrist was in a 10th century *Beatus* manuscript, although earlier instances have been cited.<sup>2</sup> The *Beatus* depiction of a human Antichrist is sustained in later manuscripts of the *Beatus* group (Plates 4, 5, 6), even though he may at times be represented by beastly prototypes (Plates 5, 6). In other manuscripts the process was one of evolution and development from beastly forms with hybrids, reversions and confluations.<sup>3</sup>

The Antichrist legend identifies him as a Jew, belonging to the Jewish tribe of Dan on account of its evil reputation. Details of his origins in Adso, *Libellus de Antichristo*,<sup>4</sup> names Chorazin as his birthplace and associates him with the Jewish towns of Bethsaida and Capernaum. In the depiction of Antichrist seated upon Leviathan, *Liber floridus*, f.62v (Plate 1), he points to the details of his Jewish origins in the surrounding inscription. As Christ was a Jew, being a Jew would be a claim that Antichrist would wish to make.<sup>5</sup> His Jewish links and his repudiation of Christ identify him with the Old Order and the Jewish Law, which the synagogue, the hut and the temple of Solomon traditionally represent.<sup>6</sup> The iconography of Synagoga shows her blindfold, signifying her limitations in these matters.<sup>7</sup> Antichrist is often depicted within or in front of the temple of Solomon (Plate 11), and the hut comes particularly into its own in Bosch's *Prado Epiphany* (Part III, chapter 12). Attempting to prove his Jewish loyalties, he submits to the rite of circumcision<sup>8</sup> and his efforts to persuade the Jews that he is the long-awaited Messiah is in harmony with his alleged Jewish identity. A consequential point made by Pope Gregory the Great (540-604) was that as the Jews still await Messiah, they await Antichrist, which in turn is consistent with unconverted Jews being regarded as his followers.<sup>9</sup> Jewish identity is by means of facial characteristics - dark beard, hooked nose, often in profile for clarity, though a profile depiction can also carry evil implications. Some Jewish depictions were crudely satirical. Antichrist's appearance does not always have traditional facial characteristics. Sometimes he is depicted wearing a pointed hat, the *pilas cornutum* (Plate 12), an imposed mode of identity for Jews.<sup>10</sup> A yellow badge and one resembling the two tablets of the Jewish Law were other mandated items of identity.<sup>11</sup>

Particularly noticeable in *The Witnesses Confront Antichrist* (Plate 12), is that even Enoch and Elias, his opponents, and Antichrist's henchman, look more obviously Jewish than Antichrist himself. There are however instances where his Jewish features are very positively rendered, particularly when the theme being pursued requires it. Hieronymus Bosch's *Prado Epiphany* and Luca Signorelli's, *The Rule of Antichrist*, each of which forms a later sub-chapter, are important cases in point (Plates 32 and 46). The Two Witnesses, Enoch and Elias, though Jews, Antichrist opposes and kills. This is explained by some Jews being genuine believers in Christ as the Jewish Messiah who could not be persuaded otherwise. The Two Witnesses obviously came into this category and were believed to return with the express object of opposing Antichrist. Protestant expectations did not include a Jewish Antichrist, his

alleged semitic origins were not an issue in protestant polemics and had no relevance so far as the papal Antichrist was concerned. Furthermore, the fact that Antichrist was traditionally associated with Old Testament Jewish law and the temple of Solomon, his attempts to prove his Jewish origin amount to an absurdity.

Evil forces in the world, especially those connected with man's fall and the serpent's deceit (Genesis 3.1, 5), are what have been recognised as ultimately being apotheosised in the Antichrist. This is basically why he has been identified with the devil and satan, and various beast-like manifestations, including the serpent, and the dragon, which have become embedded in the iconographical language of the subject. His association with evil is fundamental to his make-up and is a constant iconographical feature, taking many forms.

Antichrist's Jewish links, mentioned previously, had connotations with evil. His alleged descent from the Jewish tribe of Dan was on account of its evil associations based to some extent upon interpretations of Bible texts (Judges 18.30, 31 and Genesis 49.17). In the former a graven image was set up by the Danites, and in the latter it prophesied that Dan would be a serpent in the way, an adder in the path, that would bite the horses' heels, so that the rider would fall backward. The medieval tradition of Antichrist's Danite origin arises from biblical exegeses relating to these and other texts. In the depiction of Leviathan, *Liber floridus* (c.1110-20), f.62v (Plate 1), Antichrist points to his origins and his association with Chorazin as his birthplace, and his early years in Bethsaida and Capernaum. They are linked with reprehensible episodes in Jewish history and their ensuing punishments are on account of the failure of the inhabitants to respond acceptably to the teaching of Christ.<sup>12</sup> Another tradition alleges that Babylon was his birthplace. Its opposition to God, God's city (Jerusalem), and God's people, and its conquest of Israel and the Jewish captivity under King Nebuchadnezzar, provide the historical background to which the allegation of his birth in Babylon would appear to be related. The city's connotation with evil was acknowledged and is sustained in Apocalypse 17 and 18. In *The City Babylon* (Plate 2), serpents frame the city gateway. Its evil associations are further indicated by the shrines of the Jewish companions of Daniel (Ananias, Azaria and Misael), who were cast into the 'fiery furnace' for not worshipping the golden image which Nebuchadnezzar had set up (Daniel 3).

An aspect of Antichrist's link with evil is his leadership of the vices (Plate 13), which he promotes and manifests contrary to Christ's upholding of the virtues. Albrecht Dürer's, *Dr Brant's Narrenschiff* (1499), Plate 93, depicts a devil with bellows injecting the vices into his ear, one of numerous depictions of him as devil-inspired, devil-influenced and devil-controlled.

Antichrist's links with Behemoth and Leviathan, two biblical figures of evil, written about in the book of Job, are depicted in Lambert's *Liber floridus*.<sup>13</sup> Behemoth (Plate 3), on which the Devil rides, fol. 62r, is manifestly a fearsome beast with an equally fearsome rider, whom the text within the frame associates with Antichrist.<sup>14</sup> These depictions present Antichrist not merely as an evil character, but as a manifestation of an evil force. On the *verso* of *Antichrist Seated on Leviathan*, fol. 62 (Plate 1),

Antichrist himself is enthroned on the evil Leviathan who is depicted dragon-like, standing in water, a bloodthirsty creature breathing fire, with clawed feet, enormous horns and four huge tusks. Inscriptions above identify the two as Leviathan and Antichrist. The beast is contrasted with his human rider's youthful appearance and the implied message is that Antichrist, who is indeed evil, may appear otherwise, being a man of deceit, a matter needing to be borne in mind by the readers of Lambert's Chronicle. Antichrist's deceit is more frequently addressed in the imagery of the 15th century. His evil features, similar to those of Leviathan, are visually suppressed by reducing the size of the horns on his headgear, and disguising the long, tusk-like extensions to his footwear by projecting them across the body of the beast he rides. These modifications aid his deceit.

Pictured as a human, Antichrist's evil links are almost invariably indicated by the presence of one or more diabolic figures, on his shoulder, behind him, or nearby, impliedly an influential assistant and adviser. In the *Velislav Bible* (c.1340), where he usually outwardly resembles Christ, his diabolical supporters are normally present. Depictions of Antichrist were perceived as embodiments of evil and his facial features, particularly his eyes, were often defaced by readers, as in the *Beatus* manuscripts in Plates 4, 5 and 6.

There are instances where he is depicted in hell sitting on satan's lap.<sup>15</sup> They would appear to function as parallels to the infant Christ seated on the lap of Mary. His attempted ascension may show devils supporting him as in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber Chronicarum*, Nuremberg 1493. (Plate 26); some only too clearly show them opposing him with vigour, Lucas Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Plate 78), for example. This is one of the anomalies of Antichrist imagery. Later viewpoint appears to abandon the notion that satan was his father and fixes upon his birth resulting from an incestuous union between evil persons attended by devils.<sup>16</sup>

## II Chapter 6. Tyrant King, Warrior, False Priest

The scriptural ideal of rulership is instructive in the present context. It has prophet, priestly and kingly constituents. Christ was prophet, priest and king, and these elements are significant in the work of the prototypes too - Samuel, David, Solomon.<sup>1</sup> The 'prophet' element, while it may include the power to reveal the future, was essentially a telling forth of the Word corresponding to the work of teaching and preaching, which were also priestly obligations and in which Christ himself engaged.<sup>2</sup> These types appear among images of Antichrist, though his mode of rule is a travesty of them all. Joachim de Fiore (c.1155-1202), acknowledged these typological principles:

*Just as many pious kings or priests or prophets preceded one Christ, who was king and priest and prophet, so many impious kings and false prophets and Antichrists precede one Antichrist, who will pretend to be king and priest and prophet.*<sup>3</sup>

Antichrist's ambition to rule put political issues and kingship first. With Christ, priestly duties took priority. He repudiated the efforts of those who during his ministry tried to make him king. Christ is a true Priest-King. Antichrist is at best a king of a fierce and tyrannical kind seeking political power from the start, whose priestly claims were false, and whose preaching and teaching promoted untruth.

Antichrist is presented in the roles of tyrant, king and priest in the manuscripts of the Beatus tradition.<sup>4</sup> In the Morgan Beatus MS 644 (c.940), f.151r (Plate 4), he and his followers are depicted destroying the city of Jerusalem. Both Antichrist and Jerusalem are identified in the inscription. The association of killing the Witnesses with an attack on Jerusalem is explicit and unusual. The attack on Jerusalem in f.215v (Plates 5 and 6), are in a different context and discussed later. The lower register shows Antichrist slaying the Two Witnesses, grabbing Enoch by the locks as he is about to decapitate him, Elias lying headless alongside. His henchmen accompany him in both registers also brandishing swords. This mode of savagery has its origins in battle scenes of Roman art and is replicated in several Beatus manuscripts, as indeed it is in other manuscripts introduced later.<sup>5</sup> Antichrist appears as a giant figure with a noticeably large sword, wearing distinctive headgear. As the prime figure of evil he is necessarily differentiated from the accompanying figures, and these features are all found in several other manuscripts of the Beatus group. In these there are variations in comparative size, the number of subsidiary figures, headgear and facial features, such as prominence of the eyes, and protruding lips.<sup>6</sup> In f.151r (Plate 4), Antichrist destroys Jerusalem, acknowledged in the top inscription. He is dressed for war, wearing boots and breeches to the knee and a shortish tunic and is clearly a tyrannical ruler, a conqueror and a ruthless slayer of his opponents. The Witnesses' defence of the Word render their slayer as the violent opponent of the Church at the time of the end of whom it needed to be forewarned.

The Beatus Facundus, f.268v (Plate 7), depicts Nebuchadnezzar attacking Jerusalem. In the adjacent folio with two registers, Nebuchadnezzar's warriors at the top, three on horseback, three on foot, all carry shields and brandish weapons which correspond in type to those of Jerusalem's defenders. Nebuchadnezzar's soldiers wear leggings and breeches with an upper garment reaching the thighs; those

worn by the Jerusalem soldiery are longer and appear to reach to the feet. Outside the walls, a diminutive figure of the prophet Jeremiah, laments at the prospect of suffering, the alphabet referring to the structure of the Lament.<sup>7</sup> In the accompanying register, Nebuchadnezzar, richly attired, wears a large crown and holds a long, upright spear. He sits on a throne raised on a shallow dais, a giant figure, twice the girth and height of his warriors on either side who torture and execute captives. One with his ankles clamped has his eyes put out; of the other two, one lies decapitated as the other is being grabbed by the hair prior to his being beheaded. The savagery is consistent with Nebuchadnezzar's mode of rule, which is noticeably like Antichrist's treatment of the Two Witnesses in a similar context and like Antichrist he is larger and wears distinctive headgear. Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jerusalem was a historical event and recorded by Daniel, the contemporary prophet, a Daniel commentary forming part of the Beatus manuscript.<sup>8</sup> Antichrist's attack is a latter-day event, so the two attacks on Jerusalem (Plates 4 and 7) are ages apart. These references must have made the readership aware that Antichrist would at the end, which was thought to be fast approaching, behave as Nebuchadnezzar had done centuries before, indicating that Nebuchadnezzar was a type of Antichrist.

The idea of his being a prototype of Antichrist can be amply supported. His pride, very much an issue in the biblical record, led to the loss of his kingdom and rule for a symbolic period of seven times (Daniel 4.32), and his instant 'fall' came when the words, 'is not this great Babylon which I have builded?' were on his lips (Daniel 4,30-32). Nebuchadnezzar's absolute rule also included a customary priestly element, supported by episodes in his reign such as his demand for worship, particularly of the image of gold of Daniel 3.1-11. His pursuit of wealth, luxury and his 'fall' spell out the vices of *Avaricia*, *Luxuria* and *Superbia*. His exploitation of the miraculous (i.e. as a miracle worker), was represented by his magicians and soothsayers upon whom he called (Daniel 4.7). However, he was not a Jew. The alleged semitic origin of Antichrist of the traditional view of Antichrist was a deduction by the fathers of the Catholic Church.

Daniel 2, at this time of Israel's conquest and captivity by Babylon, explains the long term purpose of God. Israel would in due course return to their land, but gentile rule would continue for four gentile kingdoms, starting with Babylon, ending with Rome (Daniel 2.36- 45). This phase would be terminated by the intervention of God, who would (v.44), establish His own world-wide kingdom. This is significant in that it places the activities of Antichrist within a historical framework of events. Some aspects, at least, of this prophecy were perceived by both Beatus and Lambert.

Beatus manuscripts, which depict a human Antichrist as a tyrant king, a giant wearing a large hat, slaying and torturing the Two Witnesses (fol. 151r), and attacking Jerusalem, also depict him as a priest, similarly attacking Jerusalem in f. 215 v (Plate 5). Plate 6 is another, clearer Beatus depiction of the same episode. Antichrist is still a giant figure and wears a large hat, but his military garb has been replaced by a garment down to the feet, a shorter, chasuble-type garment on top, and he carries a book instead of a sword, which implies false teaching and preaching, and the vice of deceit.<sup>9</sup> He is up close to the city wall, seemingly bent on both conquest and conversion. As in f.151r, the Jerusalem attack is

acknowledged in the top register. The setting of f.215v is different and based upon Apocalypse 20.7-15, about the satanic forces of Gog and Magog at the time of the end when Satan, loosed from his prison after a thousand years, comes forth and deceives the nations, encompassing Jerusalem, the beloved city, and being visited by God's final judgments (...and fire came down from God ...and devoured them' (v.9)). Fire rains down on the city's attackers in f.215v, a feature in several later depictions of Antichrist's end and sometimes that of his followers. In this folio, top register, he is backed up by a human force, as the seven-headed Beast, representative of the confederacy of rebellious nations who follow him at the time of the attack (Plates 5 and 6). The figure adjacent to the city wearing the large hat is identified as Antichrist in the inscription above him, and the Beast is also identified with Antichrist in the inscription at the top. He is therefore depicted in his double role as warrior-ruler and false priest.<sup>10</sup> His tall hat with circular projections at the base is similar in f.131r and in 215v, whether portrayed as a warrior or a priest. Depictions in other Beatus versions follow a similar pattern when illustrating the themes associated with folios 151r and 215v. Beatus at this early stage is using the term Antichrist, as here, in reference to his depiction as a man and as apocalyptic beast. These double manifestations are found in other manuscripts, particularly during these early stages of development, and part beastly forms are also used.

Lambert too reveals this insight into the age-long span of Antichrist typological appearances, recognising that Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Jerusalem was a precursor of future attacks on Jerusalem by evil forces, of which Antichrist was the antitype. He identifies a chain of eight cosmocrators whom he names Solomon, Nebuchadnezzar, Alexander the Great, Augustus, Charles the Bald, the King of Crusader Jerusalem, Antichrist and Christ on Mount Olivet. Not all attacked Jerusalem but were linked with it in some way. Lambert regards Jerusalem as the focal point of man's destiny in a theocentric universe.<sup>11</sup>

In Lambert's *Liber floridus* (ca.1120), f. 62v (Plate 1), Leviathan's stylised tail encircles Antichrist and seated within it he resembles an enthroned Ruler, one of his acknowledged types. The depiction of the Emperor Augustus (63 BC-14 AD), f.138 v. (Plate 8), corresponds to Lambert's image of the seated Antichrist in dress, the positioning of the feet, the weapon in the right hand, and the circular enclosure. As Antichrist, seated on Leviathan, points to his origins and territorial associations with his left hand, so Augustus holds the orb of world rule bearing the names of Asia, Europe and Africa. These similarities raise important issues. Antichrist's usurpation of the rule of kings in order to reign supreme, has imperial implications which are the subject of more extended consideration in later chapters. By Lambert's time, a connection had already been made between the three gentile kings, the magi, who visit the infant Christ, and the three territories named on the orb held by Emperor Augustus. In the 10th century, the three magi began to be identified as three kings and in the previous century had become associated with the three territories in question - Balthasar with Asia, Caspar with Europe, Melchior, who was black, with Africa.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps the most convincing warrior portrayal of Antichrist is in Lambert's *Liber floridus*, f.14r (Plate 9), in which Abaddon, another Antichrist type, is portrayed mounted on a beast which resembles the 'locust' type creature of Apocalypse 9. It is identified in the inscription as the Beast of the Abyss, the identity of the beast named in Apocalypse 11, which slays the Two Witnesses. He thrusts his elongated lance between their heads as he rides down the Witnesses. The horse is winged, has a human face, wears a crown, and its tail ends in a snake's head. Strongly fortified, he is protected by chain armour down to the foot, wears a peaked helmet with a protective neck-piece and spurs, and carries a shield bearing a cross of St. Andrew. The latter imputes saintly motives which promise better standards than are being displayed and could be with the object of indicating the outrageous nature of his deceit. The identity of the rider, Abaddon, as Antichrist is in the inscription above him, and the Antichrist identity is associated with the Beast of the Abyss.<sup>13</sup> Again, the Antichrist epithet applies to the man and the beast, both shown.

Several aspects of the episode described in Apocalypse 11 occupy the two registers of f.14r. The preaching and slaying of the Two Witnesses, the episodes invariably illustrated in the life of Antichrist section in medieval Apocalypse manuscripts. Chapter 11.8 says the Witnesses will be killed by the Beast from the Abyss, their bodies will lie in the street, the people will look on their bodies three-and-half days, whom they will not allow to be buried (v.10), and will be accompanied by the sending of gifts and rejoicing with one another because they had tormented the whole earth. After three and a half days they revive and ascend into heaven (vv. 11, 12), depicted in the mandorla of f.14r. At that time a great earthquake occurs (vv. 11-14), indicated by the falling masonry. The second Woe having passed, the third one comes quickly; the seventh trumpet angel sounds (Apocalypse 11.15), who is represented in the lower register; loud voices are heard for one hour, and the kingdoms of the world become the kingdom of the Lord and of His Christ. Christ is represented seated on the rainbow with sword and book; the resurrected (v. 18), standing and naked, are also included. It is the time of the dead to be judged and the giving of reward; the righteous then reign for ever. This chapter mentions the measuring of the temple, the altar and the court and the beloved city trodden underfoot, which establishes a link with Jerusalem, like the confirmatory witness about the city mentioned above. These episodes served as a warning to the contemporary reader about the fearful threat of Antichrist's rule, but give encouragement of deliverance to those who would hold fast; thus the ultimate triumph of good over evil is upheld. Lambert thought they were relevant to his day and with both faithful and unfaithful in mind, tailored the message to the needs of his readers at a time of anticipation, hope and fear.

Herrad of Hohenberg's *Hortus Deliciarum*, an encyclopedic document belonging to the latter half of the twelfth century, contains among its varied contents moral teaching for the nuns in her care and an Antichrist life-cycle which includes his death at the hands of St. Michael and what then happens to some of his followers. While it conforms to Adso's summary of Antichrist *vitae*, a wider range of medieval sources has been observed.<sup>14</sup> It reiterates the types and issues of the present chapter in expressive, informative sketches. Antichrist is depicted as an authoritative royal figure of tyrannical disposition, a slayer of the Witnesses, a briber and usurper of the kings of the earth. He is seen to have a

Jewish following, and the ability to display persuasive miraculous powers over nature. His success at recruitment is undone by events following his death in the time allowed for them to recant, an aspect which is taken up in f.242v. In *Hortus Deliciarum*, f.241v (Plate 10), he is depicted in the top register as a young bearded warrior-ruler, wearing a crown and a short garment, appropriate for the task he performs. He wields a huge sword drawn from the scabbard hanging from a belt and kills the Witnesses himself, grabbing Enoch by the hair. Both are also shown lying dead alongside. The format is familiar, including the large sword held horizontal above his head. Figures on the left, the front one pointing, are labelled 'Gog and Magog'. They form the army of Satan who attack the Holy City in Apocalypse 20. 8, which are described in earlier medieval writings, connecting them with the Caucasus region, Alexander the Great and the twelve tribes.<sup>15</sup> In the register below, he rewards supporting monarchs, whose powers he usurps, with precious vessels. These three figures on the left, like Antichrist himself, are all richly attired in long robes with decorated hems. A small group including two monks witness the event and applaud it. The group inscribed as Jews in the register below, identified by their beards and pointed hats, likewise applaud. A female figure standing at the rear, is most probably Synagoga, appropriate in the context, as Antichrist and his Jewish followers are associated with the Old Order, as distinct from the Ecclesia. Antichrist's miracles cause roots of trees to bloom, rain to fall and change the movement of water by means of a windhead. They parody powers over nature seen in Christ's miracles. The succeeding, f.242v, depicts the death of Antichrist, the reaction of his followers and a baptismal scene of those amenable to conversion.<sup>16</sup>

*Antichrist in Hell* (f.255r), is a small figure in hell depicted as Satan's bosom. This distinctive illustration, covered by an overall pattern of flickering flames and crammed with descriptive detail, depicts on four levels a range of horrendous tortures. Satan's throne is 'alive', with human heads held in the bird-claws of its feet and victims being consumed by the beast-heads of its arm.

The Whore, f.258v, is held up as an example of one who has corrupted her integrity and falls like Superbia from her seven-headed mount into the flames of hell, mourned by a king, a bishop, tonsured monks and many others. Prevailing tradition would construe her as an evil woman, not as later depictions where she is given an Antichrist identity and her adulterous conduct is with the kings of the earth appropriate to the context of Apocalypse 17.2.<sup>17</sup>

The *Hortus* message is eschatological and attains a high spiritual tone of moral exhortation for the sisters, who awaited the consummation of their marriage to Christ, the Bridegroom, lest lifted up in pride they themselves should be rejected. The wider range partly in response to the perceived needs of the community of sisters, also reflects the increasing interest and thirst for detail of 12th century society in the approaching *fin-de-siècle*.<sup>18</sup>

The remaining pre-15th century examples are important representatives of the Anglo-French illustrated manuscripts from the mid-13th century, Pierpont Morgan MS 524 and Paris MS Fr. 403 and the *Velislav Biblia Picta*.

In Pierpont Morgan, MS 524, f.7v (Plate 11), Antichrist sits in the Temple of Solomon, both identified in the inscriptions. He is presented sitting within a mandorla, which has implications of Christ seated in glory and therefore a lifting up of himself in pride in the Temple of God (II Thessalonians 2.4). The 'fiery breath' coming from the lion-head (lower register), echoes 'consume with the spirit of his mouth' (verse 8), which identifies Christ as the judge 'at his coming'. The commentary however refers to God as the one who 'descends' to pour out his wrath.<sup>19</sup>

Antichrist's appearance does not betray his evil character. His face is young and beardless, his dress elegant, a large jewel hangs round his neck and he sits on a decorated throne. He is an assured and commanding religious figure; his legs crossed and right arm angled, holding a sceptre. The opulence of his court and prideful display, attributes of the vices of *Luxuria* and *Superbia*, are typical of the mode of rule he craves. With his left hand he commands a finely dressed courtier, and further to the left his servants reward those who follow him. One is being given a bag of money, another who holds a lidded vessel prostrates himself in adulation and there are more gifts available for further distribution still in the chest. His agreeable appearance is more of a test for the viewer, who needs to remember that Antichrist is a man of deceit and that one needs to discern what he is like by the ruthless conduct of his henchmen.

A lion's head breathing out flames, held by the nimbed figure of the Father in the heavens, administers judgment. Antichrist's pointed soft Jewish hat falls off and, aided by two devils (the only diabolical presence in the folio), one prodding him forward, the other pulling him down, he falls into the hellmouth only just perceivable below. The devil standing on the throne is beast-like and has another face, no less evil, on his posterior, a reiteration of his evil make-up, seen in other depictions of evil characters. Antichrist's posterior face in *Liber chronicarum* (Plate 26), is quite unlike his other face and the subject of special comment in chapter 9 f.

On the far left, two soldiers in chain mail, their swords now sheathed, are standing on a heap of corpses, the two at the front being the bishop and the king in the scene above, now dead. The link with the episode on the right is the observer of Antichrist's death who looks through the *ostium apertum* and draws the attention of the tall central figure. Gestures of sorrow and concern are shared by the other parties, indicating perhaps a heart-searching among his followers, an anticipation of the repentance to come, rather than a reaction to the news of Antichrist's death. An important element of the folio is its enhancement of Antichrist as a person, his opulent mode of life, generosity and pleasant, youthful appearance, quite unlike the warrior exploits in the earlier *Beatus* and *Liber floridus* episodes.

The top image, Paris MS Fr. 403 17r, 17v, 18r (Plate 12), mid-13th century, shows the Two Witnesses confronting Antichrist, who jointly hold a scroll minus text, one Witness pointing heavenwards. The Beast of the Bottomless Pit emerges and starts to attack them. Antichrist, whom the beast personifies (Apocalypse.11.), is seated with an accomplice and mentor at his shoulder whispering in his ear. This trinity of evil is constituted in the beast as its focus, the accomplice who facially resembles it, and

Antichrist as its human embodiment. One upright sword in Antichrist's hand, the other held by the accomplice, and the scabbard grasped by Antichrist confirms the reality of the threat. All the surrounding figures are Jewish, shown by their pointed headgear and black beards, not so with Antichrist, whose long robe is gathered at the waist and fastened at the neck by a jewelled brooch. He is not obviously cross-legged, but his angled left arm repeats an autocratic gesture, often present.

In the lower register, 17v, which depicts him enthroned in the Temple of Solomon, the devil by his shoulder has a snaky projection on his head, and more closely resembles the Beast of the Bottomless Pit in f.17r above. Antichrist makes a gesture of command as he confronts the murderer of the first Witness, who wipes the blade of his sword, as the other one raises an axe and grasps the hair of the second Witness prior to decapitation. Again, all the surrounding figures are Jewish.

The lowest register, folio 18r, combines three scenes. The episode in Solomon's Temple is now central and very close to the corresponding episode in Plate 11, Pierpont Morgan, MS 524 f.7v. On the left in 17v, the artist compresses the figures and adds one more, a kneeling figure, who is the one now pulled towards the *ostium apertum*. All those depicted are sorrowing. The circumstances having changed with Antichrist *en route* for hell, the Witnesses to heaven and the towers falling. Antichrist's now sorrowing followers are again the prelude to their repentance and conversion. The decorated, curvilinear style of the manuscript is typically congested in its bottom register, where figures are pulled close together and vacant areas filled up. This mode of representation is in marked contrast to the later simpler, essential content of the block books.

The *Velislav Bible*, a preachers' Bible (*Biblia Picta*), of the mid 14th century, is fully informative on the subject of Antichrist, containing a full *vita*, with additional gospel scenes of Christ's life and more scenes of Antichrist's life. It relies on details presented in Adso's *Libellus de Antichristo* and in Hugh of Strassburg's 13th century *Compendium theologiae veritatis*, summarising and influential works on Antichrist *vitae* in the later middle ages.

Changes in the presentation of Antichrist turn on his more Christ-like appearance which takes away the earlier emphasis on tyranny, making him harder to identify by reason of his deceit. Though his appearance in the *Velislav Bible* is Christ-like; the diabolical links are frequent and usually represented by the close presence of long-eared devilish humans and hovering devilish figures with wings.

*Antichrist Preaching* (Plate 14), top and bottom registers (MS XXIII C. 124, vol 132r), depict these characteristics. Antichrist is a Christ look-alike and the devilish presence is seen in the long-eared figure standing nearby in both registers, the devil also spreading his wings behind his head in the lower register. He is preaching from a pedestal, his Jewish audience, all wearing pointed hats, bending the knee in acceptance and conversion. Confirmation of this lies in the subject of the lower register, where customarily, following conversion, they are being 'signed', receiving his mark. Here it is given on the right hand, though often the mark is placed on the forehead. The genuflecting Jews give the appearance of worshipping Antichrist as an idol.

## II Chapter 7. Leader of the Vices

In the *Gulbenkian Apocalypse* (c.1256-65), folio 40v., Antichrist is depicted presiding over the vices (Plate 13).<sup>1</sup> He sits elevated as leader, commending the vices with an approving right-hand gesture to four supporters standing in front of him. The one at the front holds her hands together in humble submission; the second person behind her, wearing a gown with slit sleeves, appears to be doing the same. Two Jewish members of this group wear pointed hats. As leader, Antichrist is both approving and facilitating indulgence in the vices. His two devil assistants cling with their bird-claws to the rolled edge of the coverlet which screens the bodies of the fornicating couple. One attends them while the other advances towards the group of four, carrying a bag filled with coins intended as gifts. They signify avarice, the vice which attracts Antichrist and his followers, whom he bribes with money gifts. The rolled edge of the coverlet links the two in bed with the three who sit behind the low table at the front. On the right, a philandering couple look towards each other and touch, the one to the left has a hand on the table set with food, signifying gluttony (*Gula*), and identifiable at the centre is a piscatorial dish. Four vices are clearly to the fore - greed (*Avaritia*), sexual license (*Libido*), gluttony (*Gula*), and luxury (*Luxuria*). Most are dressed in fine clothes, obviously people of rank; women are present and one or two Jewish persons who wear pointed hats.

Antichrist is a two-horned, bearded figure, whose face, almost in profile, is evil-looking and beastlike. He wears a crown and holds a long sceptre, the point rising above the frame, indicative of his supreme power. Over to the left, the tip of the devil's wing does the same, endorsing Antichrist's connotations with evil rule. He sits crossed-legged in an authoritative pose, richly dressed in a long loose robe thrown over the shoulders, his undergarment with turned-back sleeves held together with jewelled fasteners indicative of the vice of *Luxuria*.

His special relationship to the vices derives basically from his being evil and opposite to Christ in every way. As Christ manifests all the virtues, so Antichrist commends and indulges the vices, and where and when he rules, the vices flourish. His reign was believed to be a time when evil climaxed, the vices were rampant and when vices became 'virtues'.<sup>2</sup> As Antichrist's rule was an eschatological phase, a decline in morality and an increase in the manifestation of the vices was interpreted as a sign that the last days were imminent and that Antichrist was either already reigning, or would very soon do so.<sup>3</sup> The thrust towards the explicit association of the vices with Antichrist appears to have been influenced by the identification of the Seven-Headed Beast of the Sea (Apocalypse 13.1), as Antichrist, and a statement attributed to Berengaudus that his seven-heads represent the seven vices.<sup>4</sup> Antichrist's followers often depicted as Jewish, sometimes carry a money-bag, which was associated with the vice of avarice.

In early Christian times the influence of the vices and virtues was much discussed and much to the fore in the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius (c. 348-410). In this poem the confrontation is described as a battle between the two groups.<sup>5</sup> The final outcome determined salvation, or damnation. It was a battle that the

individual Christian needed to fight continually. Coming under the sway of the vices was a spiritual hazard to be avoided at all costs. Antichrist as leader of the vices used them to tempt and bribe his converts, appealing to inherent human weaknesses. He had to be identified and his influence resisted. As Antichrist was a deceiver, a false Christ, his commendation of the vices could be a means of identifying him.

## II Chapter 8. Miracle Worker

Antichrist's power to perform miracles conforms to medieval expectations of him. It was arguably the most persuasive of Antichrist's means of conversion and recruitment which could deceive the very elect.<sup>1</sup> His other methods included false teaching, bribes and material rewards and the threat of torture and death. Ease of deception was rooted in the gullibility of human nature and the susceptibilities of the flesh to the appeal of the vices. Miracles had persuasive power, especially in the Middle Ages, which could induce others to become his followers because they demonstrated the power that Christ had. There was however a conflict of views about the basis of Antichrist's miraculous power, whether it was by deceit, or pretence, and therefore false; or by devil assistance, or Antichrist's use of inherent diabolical powers.

The Legend of Antichrist explained that he would parody the events and actions of Christ's ministry and therefore the sorts of miracles he allegedly performed included healing the sick and the lame, raising the dead; demonstrating Christ's power over human nature. He allegedly influenced the weather, plants and trees, making a tree blossom from its roots and changing the direction of the flow of water (Plate 10).

By pretending to die, rise from the dead and ascend into heaven he staged the final events of Christ's ministry, and by calling down fire from heaven, he imitated the events of Pentecost. More attention is given to his miraculous displays in 15th century imagery and the range is extended to include some bizarre examples. Medieval contexts of his miracles were the 'life of Antichrist' sequences in illustrated Apocalypses. They also provided the element of fascination and spectacle in the performances of mystery plays. The Chester Miracle Play of the 14th century is illustrative in several respects, attesting, for example, to Antichrist's proof of his power to rise from the dead. When Antichrist demonstrates his 'resurrection' and lifts his head; those convinced 'cross over' and join his supporters.<sup>2</sup>

## NOTES on Part II

### Chapter 5. Human, Semitic and Evil

1. Writings in early Christian times by Irenaeus (*Early Heresies*), and Hippolytus (*Christ and Antichrist*), go back to the early third century and bring together texts from the Old and New Testaments, in particular the Daniel prophecies, Paul's II Thessalonians 2, and various Apocalypse chapters, all of which continued to influence developing concepts. The church fathers, exegetes, the sibylline oracles and Commentaria were the chief contributory sources. Adso's 954 compilation of Antichrist beliefs, Adso (1976), provided a much used summary. Manuscript illustrations were mainly literal representations of biblical accounts which employed beastly as distinct from human forms for Antichrist till the 12th century.
2. The earliest unequivocal instances were in mid-10th century Beatus manuscript (see Plates 4 and 5), though earlier possible instances have been cited - McGinn (1988), p.14, n.58.
3. Poesch (1966) and (1981), traces this process of iconographical development in a group of mid-13th century manuscripts.
4. The various Bible accounts of Babylon and subsequent judgments upon it, establish its evil reputation, and result in commentators identifying it as the place of Antichrist's birth. Jerome makes this assertion: *De Antichristo in Daniele*, CCL 75a: 918. Pseudo-Methodius advanced the sibylline view that Antichrist's birthplace was Chorazin, based upon Luke 10.13,15. Adso sought to reconcile the two. Hugh of Newcastle resolved the conflict by claiming conception in Chorazin and birth in Babylon. See Emmerson (1981), p.81; Adso (1976), pp. 106-7.
5. Christ's semitic descent is recorded in the genealogical list of Matthew 1.1-16.
6. Abingdon Apocalypses and the *bibles moralisées* depict the Old and the New Law according to 13th century convention. One such example, Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian MS L.A.139, f.4, shows Synagoga beneath a dome, Ecclesia enthroned and triumphant beneath Gothic pinnacles.
7. Ibid.f.4, Ecclesia crowned holds a victorious cross and banner, whereas Synagoga is blindfold, holding a broken lance, and letting fall the two tablets of the Law, a subdued figure in a diminished setting. The falling tablets refer to Moses, who let fall the tablets inscribed with the Law upon his discovery of Israel's sins in making and worshipping the golden calf (Exodus 32.19). The hut, a reference to the fallen temple of Solomon, occupies a similar position; and is relevant to the central scene of Bosch's Prado *Epiphany*, Part III, chapter 10 and Plate 31.
8. His circumcision is an aspect of Antichrist's loyalty to the Old Law and is associated with his visit to Jerusalem and his rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon, before which, in *Antichristus*, Vicenza, c. 1496, f. liv, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana-Reichling 23, he conducts a sham Mass and performs the act of circumcision before kneeling worshippers. The Velislav Bible (f.131r), the block books, the *Endkrist* (1472), for example, also contain depictions of the theme.
9. As the Jews had not accepted Christ and still awaited the coming of Messiah, they awaited Antichrist, a statement attributed to Gregory the Great. Gregory: *Moralium*, 36. 24. 43, *Pat. Lat.* 76: p. 597.
10. The pointed hat, previously worn, became compulsory for Jews in accordance with canon 68 of Lateran Council IV. See H. Rothwell, ed., *English Historical Documents, 1189-1327* (London, 1975), p. 672
11. A linen or parchment badge in the shape of the two tablets of the Law (see n.7 above), was ordered to be worn by Henry III in 1217. F.M. Powicke and C.R. Cheney, *Councils and Synods with other documents relating to the English Church*, II Part 1, (Oxford 1964), 473, No. 31. 9. A badge, consisting of a yellow circle and the wearing of a yellow hat (a measure introduced by Pope Paul IV, c.1550, consistent with other restrictive measures of his reign), Martin Gilbert ed., *The Illustrated Atlas of Jewish Civilisation: 4000 Years of History* (London 1998), pp.129, 31.

12. Luke 10.10-16; Matthew 11.20 - 25, are the relevant texts which describe the nature of their inadequate responses to Christ's witness and cite instances of the earlier judgment against Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18.19.24, 25).

13. Behemoth, mentioned in the Bible in Job 40.15, is a proud (v.23) and powerful land beast; God who made him has dominion over him. (v.19). Leviathan, essentially the same, has the whole of chapter 41 devoted to him. He is a creature of the waters, and the last verse is specific about his pride: 'He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride'. It is clear why these two creatures have been identified as representations of Antichrist, and it is significant that the two Antichrist figures of Apocalypse 13 appear as a Sea Beast and a Land Beast. Isaiah 27.1 is prophetic of God's punishment of the land beast Leviathan and the dragon that is in the sea. In depicting these beasts, Lambert would appear to have followed to some extent the Job descriptions. An illustrated *Moralia* of the book of Job, carved capitals, or floor mosaics, from classical sources are named as the probable iconographical origins. See Wright (1995), pp. 67, 68 and p. 88. nn. 11, 12.

14. Both the devil and Antichrist are named in the inscription of each of the two beasts. Leviathan is identified as Antichrist and rides the devil's serpent; Behemoth is ridden by the devil, the same is Antichrist (*id est Antichristum*). Antichrist's diabolical connotations are clearly acknowledged.

15. A detail in a 12th century mosaic of the Last Judgment in the Basilica of Torcello, shows Antichrist in Satan's bosom, sitting on his knee. The arms of Satan's throne (two beast heads), consume victims and the image is animated with flame-like forms. Hell, its inhabitants and Satan enthroned with Antichrist on his knee are also depicted. *Hortus Deliciarum*, Paris, BN Facs. f8 (XI), f 255r. *The Torments of the Damned*, Paris BN, MS Fr.13096 f. 86v, depicts the child holding a bag of coins from which his Jewish origin and the vice of avarice can be inferred.

16. One of the main differences was whether the parents of Antichrist were devil-possessed or not. They would at least be wicked parents; the Devil would not be his father. The general medieval view was that Antichrist was a man, devil-possessed and would acquire his miraculous powers in this way. See Emerson (1981), p.81 and Adso (1976), pp.106-7.

## Chapter 6. Tyrant King, Warrior, False Priest

1. All three functions together are not present in the prototypes; they come together ultimately only in Christ, the antitype. David and Solomon were not priests, though David's occasional pseudo-priestly acts were not rebuked. Samuel came nearest, though he was a judge, not a king; nevertheless his rule was of a kingly nature as I Samuel 8.6,7 imply.

2. Malachi 2.7. Also Leviticus 20.11, Deuteronomy 17.9, Jeremiah 15.18, Ezekiel 7.26.

3. Reeves (1972), p.150.

4. See note 10 below.

5. *The triumphs of Christ and of Humilitas*, Ratisbon MS., c.1170-85. Munich Bayer. Staatsbibliothek, Cod. lat.14159.f.5r, illustration 16, Adolf Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and the Vices in Medieval Art from early Christian times to the Thirteenth Century* (Warburg Institute, London 1939). The illustration shows Humilitas with her foot on Superbia's neck, grabbing her by the hair as she kills her with a sword-thrust. Such images have their origins in battle scenes from Roman art. This mode of slaying is seen in several Antichrist images.

6. While close correspondences exist between Beatus manuscripts, variations of a subsidiary nature occur, which may not be inconsequential, viz. Antichrist's servants may do the killing at his command and details of clothing and headgear may change. See Wright (1995), p.42.

7. 'By the alphabet' refers to Jeremiah, the small figure below the gate of Jerusalem in Plate 7, whose book of Lamentations is written in acrostic form. They refer to the suffering of the Jews and point to further woes (1.1-3). The climax of suffering is described in Lamentations, chap. 5.

8. Daniel was a contemporary Jewish prophet, taken captive and carried away to Babylon. His God-given prophetic powers (Daniel 2.23), were used to explain Nebuchadnezzar's dreams which detail God's long-term future purposes, Daniel 2.28-44, for example. The Apocalypse Commentary by Beatus of Liebana was written about 780; it includes a Daniel Commentary by Jerome added in the 10th century; both commentaries are illustrated. Pre-Vulgate Latin Apocalypse text is used and Beatus quotes from a previous commentary by Tyconius written in North Africa. They followed passages from the Fathers interpreting John's visions of the *Apocalypse*, for which miniatures were also available; each was followed by an *explanatio*. For an expansion of these and further details, see Georgianna Goddard King, 'Divigations on the Beatus', *Art Studies* 8, 1, (1930), pp. 3-58. Beatus, MS 644, f.22, makes early reference to Antichrist, beginning, '... the treatise on the Apocalypse...where one may learn much of Christ and the church and of Antichrist and his signs...', thus indicating the importance of the subject of Antichrist, long recognised as posing a threat. The precise reasons and objectives for the introduction of the Antichrist theme at this time have been debated. Maius, c.945, in the colophon of Morgan Beatus, MS. 644, says that he has illustrated the words of the *Storiae* (the Apocalypse account), in series, so that the wise may fear the future judgment of the world's end (fol. 293). John Williams, *The Illustrated Beatus: A corpus of the illustrations of the Commentary on the Apocalypse* (London 1994), Vol. 1.

9. Antichrist holds a manuscript in book form, a codex as distinct from a scroll, which in itself may be intended to suggest his deceit, implying an ecclesial connotation, avoiding the scrolled document of the Jewish Law and the synagogue with which Antichrist was associated. In the *bibles moralisées* (thirteenth century), which give warnings and moral guidance to clerics, there are depictions of Antichrist's followers approaching clerics, book in hand, in an attempt to subvert the teaching of the Church. Moralised Bible, London, British Library, MS Harley 1527, f. 138v, a case in point, depicts two veiled Jewish figures, one holding an open book, the other a money-bag, attempting to convert a tonsured friar, also holding an open book. They are adjacent to a seated, three-faced Antichrist; all three confront the friar and below the two false teachers is a hellmouth, also confirming the falsity of their message.

10. The two inscriptions correspond to Antichrist's double role of warrior and false priest in Apocalypse 20.8,9, which identifies the warrior who attacks Jerusalem and his deceit against the nations, i.e. by false teaching, by which he draws them to battle there against the saints.

11. These are Mayo's words as she observes that Lambert has interpreted the whole history of Jerusalem as a progression towards the fulfilment of God's universal plan in relation to that place. It is the unifying factor of Lambert's many themes which by and large approach their climax there. The ultimate stage, the eighth age, is identified as the 'Celestial Paradise'. Mayo (1973), p.63.

12. Augustine's Epiphany sermons (*Sermones* 200. 1; 119.1; 202. 2), identify the Magi as the first-fruits of the gentiles, not the shepherds, to whom the birth was announced. Leo the Great explains (*Sermo* 35), that it illustrates the illumination of the pagans and the blindness of the Jews.

13. Lambert depicts Abaddon, who was leader of the locust army, as Antichrist. The episode is linked with Jerusalem, though not as obviously as in Beatus (Plates 4, 5, 6, 7). Abaddon, as Antichrist, is by implication, according to Lambert's estimates, attacked by the Crusading armies who oust the evil occupant of the city. The operations of the Crusading armies in *Liber Floridus* are linked with Lambert's own time and associations (S. Omer), and he goes into some detail in the *Liber floridus* about the support of the Netherlands for the first Crusade. Wright (1995), p.77, comments on the immediacy it gives to Lambert's text and imagery. In the early 15th century *Apocalypse of the Low Countries*, c.1400, (*apoc. néerlande*, Paris, B.N, No 156 ), the link with the Crusades is again made, this time in the depiction of the prophecy concerning the Babylonian whore riding the Beast (Apocalypse.17.1-5,16). The ten armoured kings (v.16), are identified with the cause, two of them holding a Crusader's banner. One receives his banner from the two-horned lamb, who reaches down from the direction of Christ's head, as if carrying out his command; the other king uses the staff of his banner to propel the scarlet woman into the flames (v.16).

14. McGinn, B. (1988), p.16, comments on the variety of sources, notes the relationships between the scenes and their glosses and Adso's work, the citations from Adso in the accompanying texts, and Honorius Augusto-dunensis on the Antichrist. The latter were in agreement on the length of the period following Antichrist's death, 40 as distinct from 45 days, a period of grace allowing time for repentance and reconversion for those deceived by Antichrist. McGinn mentions the eclectic nature of the range of

illustrations and points out that changes in European society in the 12th century led to a concern for more accurate knowledge of the last things. (McGinn (1988), p. 15, note 67.)

15. The Gog and Magog association arises from the labelling of a group of five figures, one of whom points at the execution of the Witnesses. There are several variations of the Alexander legend attributable to various sources - Gog and Magog precede Antichrist's rule, are contemporary with it, or follow it. Here Antichrist and Gog and Magog appear together during Antichrist's reign. For versions of legend, see Emmerson (1981), p.85 *et seq.*

16. The top register of f 242v shows Antichrist on Mount Olivet being struck by Michael's sword, identified as the Word of God, and witnessed by his Jewish followers. Below, in disarray, they are approached by a figure carrying a book as the process of attempted conversion begins. The bottom register shows a convert in a baptismal tub with five figures in attendance. Rosalie Green *et al.*, *Herrad of Hohenbourg Hortus Deliciarum* (London-Leiden 1979). Text and Commentary volumes, are pp 405-412 and 211-213, 220 respectively. The Word of God as a 'two-edged sword' (Hebrews 4.12), is the reasoning behind its association here with 'the spirit of his mouth' by which Antichrist is destroyed (II Thessalonians 2.8), Michael being a stand-in for Christ himself. See also Apocalypse 1.16.

17. Apocalypse 17.2, and verse 18, where the woman is identified with Rome, the latter-day Babylon - 'And the woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth.' No anti-papal message would have been intended, but a warning to the sisters about the consequences of following Superbia, a woman of pride, which would mar their prospects of becoming the Bride of Christ, the spiritual Bridegroom whom they served.

18. The Hortus manuscript's concern with moral issues and consequential retribution resulting from failure, points to *fin de siècle* anxieties and expectations that final judgments were imminent. These fears could intensify following disturbing political events; the 12th century, to which *Hortus* belonged, had its share of politico-religious conflict - the beginning of the Crusades, and the pressing need for church reform. The 12th century was not too early. *Hortus* was written between two dates which anticipated Antichrist's coming, a thousand plus years after the birth, or ascension of Christ, and 1260, a prophetic period given in days (Apocalypse 11.3; 12.6).

19. The commentary is specific about the wrath of God descending from heaven to kill Antichrist, which can hardly be construed as being inconsistent with the words of II Thessalonians 2.8, though the usual construction is that it proceeds from Christ, the one he opposes. Wright (1995), pp. 118, 119, points in this connection to the significance of the lion-mask and the desire of Antichrist to be as God, a feature of the early Anglo-Norman apocalypse tradition.

## CHAPTER 7. Leader of the Vices

1. Berengaudus interpreted the Sea Beast of Apocalypse 13.1 as Antichrist, and his seven heads the seven vices (*Expositio super septem visiones libri Apocalypsis*, PL 17: 965). Emmerson (1981), p.23. It was apparently this interpretation which fostered the close association between Antichrist and the vices. *Tournoiement de l'Antecrist* (1234-37), and *Piers Plowman* (c. 1377-90), characterise Antichrist as leader of the vices'. Emmerson (1981), p.53.

2. Isaiah 5:20, 'Woe to them that call evil good and good evil ...' conveys the same notion, the approval of the vices, the disapproval of the virtues. This *topos* of virtues turning into vices is encountered in late medieval literature. These developments are the consequence of the Berengaudus interpretation. John Gower and Wycliffe are mentioned in this connection. (Emmerson (1981), p.53, n. 47, n. 48.

3. Antichrist being an evil, eschatological figure, whose reign would be marked by a serious decline in morality, the prevalence of evil and an increase in the vices, could mean that Antichrist was reigning, or his reign was imminent. Tertullian and Lactantius described the last days much in these terms: *Institutiones divinae*, 7.15 CSEL, 19: 632.

4. The link between Antichrist and the vices came not with the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius, early 5th century, but with Berengaudus, the seven heads of the beast named *idolorum*, *libidinem*, *iram*, *superbiam*, *luxuriam*, *avaritiam*, *blasphemiam*, 'which influenced later pictorial and literary treatments of Antichrist'. Emmerson (1981), p.247, n.30.

5. The New Testament writings exhorted believers to put off the vices and put on the virtues (Colossians 3.8, 12, for example). In the *Psychomachia*, adverse forces were depicted as women and the effect of giving them a human identity helped to lessen the fear of mysterious evil powers. Katzenellenbogen (1964), p.1, describes the classical motivations behind the imagery, the praise of classical heroes, and their depictions in Roman battle scenes.

#### **CHAPTER 8. Miracle Worker**

1. Fears were expressed that after a long period when no miracles were performed, Antichrist's would make a powerful impact, human nature would not fail to respond and even faithful believers would be convinced that they were witnessing the miraculous powers of Christ. Aelfric (c.955 -1020), expresses these fears: John C. Pope, ed. 'Sermo de die iudicii', *Homilies of Aelfric, A Supplementary Collection*, Early English Text Society 259, 260 (1967-68), 2: 605-6. Thomas Aquinas, *Summus theologiae*, pars prima Q.114, Art 4, *Opera omnia*, 1: 438, notes that the moral senses are easily deceived.

2. M.Twycross, ed., *The Chester Antichrist'* (1983), pp. 8, 9.

### Part III The FIFTEENTH CENTURY: Depictions of Antichrist

#### Chapter 9. Apocalypse Manuscripts and Block-Books:

- a. Nicholas of Dresden: *The Old Colour and the New*
- b. MS Casanatensis
- c. The Wellcome MS
- d. The Block Books
- e. The Netherland manuscript: Antichrist scenes
- f. Wolgemut: The Preaching of Antichrist and Enoch and Elias
- g. *Livre de la Vigne de nostre Seigneur*
- h. MS Vitrina: Antichrist Preaching

#### a. Nicholas of Dresden, *The Old Colour and the New*

The traditional concept of Antichrist, defined in medieval *vitae*, was as a pseudo-religious figure, with an end-of-time reign of three and a half years, which parallels the life of Christ, but contrary to it in its manifestation of evil, tyranny and deceit. A new concept was however emerging in the late 14th century based on criticisms of the papacy which developed from Wyclif and his writings. These in turn influenced Huss and his associates who shared similar convictions.<sup>1</sup> The Bethlehem chapel in Prague, centre of Czech national religious resistance, where Huss preached, was an influential constituent of the movement.

Details of these developments are to be found in Nicholas of Dresden's, *Tables of the Old Colour and the New*, c.1414. Nicholas of Dresden (1965). Comparisons are drawn between the Roman Church and the Primitive Church, showing the conflicting nature of their respective authorities, the Canon Law and the Bible. A summarising list of doctrinal differences and practices, criticisms of the Roman Church, the pope, the clergy, and confessions of martyrs before the Inquisition, is included. Themes in the *Tabule* were illustrated by banners, or placards, which were displayed in public, carried in procession and hung on chapel walls. Although these pictures have not survived and there are no illustrations in Nicholas's Latin work, several sources mention the pictures and two later manuscripts, one from Göttingen and a Jena manuscript now in Prague, contain Czech text based on Nicholas and have pictures showing the pope as Antichrist.<sup>2</sup> Crisp verbal comparisons, tied to illustrations in antithetical format, anticipate the Luther-inspired polemics of over a century later, seen especially in Lucas Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), the subject of a later chapter.<sup>3</sup> This conclusion was not based upon the personal character of individual popes, but upon papal conduct, doctrine and practice, the Catholic Church itself being implicated. Upon these hypotheses the conclusions about the papal Antichrist and the false church were founded.

Wyclif had also presented imagery in antithetical format and his influence upon the *Tabule* is quite marked. Texts quoted in it had been previously singled out by Wyclif. Christ washing his disciples feet, the pope having his feet kissed, the pope riding a horse, are the first items in Table III of the *Tabule*.

The implications and generalisations advanced by Wyclif became an explicit and well-supported case in the *Tabule*.

#### **b. MS Casanatensis**

There are frequent references to Antichrist in the Casanatensis manuscript (Biblioteca Casanatensis, Rome, 1420-1440). Relevant prophecies from various sources are taken up. Old and New Testament items come from Daniel and the Apocalypse and references to patristic and post-patristic literature, Joachimist theories and various sibylline prophecies are also included.<sup>4</sup> Antichrist is identified with Antiochus Epiphanes and the Emperor Sigismund, whom the Hussites regarded as Antichrist.<sup>5</sup> Dated forecasts of Antichrist's coming and other prophetic pronouncements made at times of eschatological euphoria, which often failed to materialise, account for numerous references. Part of the imagery depicts the comet of 1402 seen in England, Germany, Belgium and Italy to which a cryptic warning to scholars was attached in f.32r, thought to be a warning to those associated with the aforementioned university of Prague, a centre of debate on religious reform, where Huss held appointments.<sup>6</sup> The destruction of Jerusalem (1390), the Crusades and the Hussite wars of the early 15th century, are some of the political events considered to be of eschatological significance mentioned directly, or by implication.<sup>7</sup> The stand taken in the manuscript, unlike Nicholas' *Tabule*, upholds the Catholic Church, but is pointedly critical of its practices.

In Plate 15, f. 30v and 31r, concerning Antichrist and other prophecies, evil is on the sinister side and good and evil are in antithesis. The illustrations run across from 30v to 31r, register by register down the two pages. At the top, the King of the North and the King of the South, a theme developed in Daniel 11, where they appear as opponents at the time of the end (v.40), occupy the extreme left and right positions representing Antichrist and Christ. Antichrist is presented by type as Antiochus Epiphanes,<sup>8</sup> enthroned, holding a sceptre in his right hand, and pointing authoritatively with his left. He has a long, beak-like nose and wears a large crown. On the extreme right is a depiction of Christ, enthroned, holding a sceptre in his left hand and blessing with his right. Between these two figures are two mountains; the one on Christ's side represents Pope Gregory IX (1224-91), the other on the side of Antichrist, the Holy Roman Emperor, Frederick II (1194-1250). These two historical figures refer to a period of politico-religious conflict.<sup>9</sup> In this register reliance is placed on types and analogies which, while being eminently appropriate for the subject of Antichrist, are involved and more suited to the informed viewer than the ordinary believer.

In the 3rd register there is a brief summary of the lives of Antichrist and Christ across the two pages, f. 30v, 31r, setting the infant Antichrist, his rule and fall, against Christ's nativity and ministry. Antichrist is swaddled in a cradle with the devil perched above his head, who is given a long, pointed nose like Antiochus Epiphanes, the Antichrist figure in the top register. Next, on the right, Antichrist is enthroned, holds a sword, a sceptre and is crowned. Further to the right he stumbles forward on a rocky eminence and his large crown falls off, devils failing to support him. This marks his inglorious end of reign and adjacent on the right there is a depiction of the Catholic Church which stands firm on its

rocky edifice, signifying its survival. The townscape, with falling towers, is the result of the earthquake which, in Apocalypse 11.13, follows the end of Antichrist's rule.

On the extreme right of the same register Christ too is depicted swaddled in a cradle, but with the dove of the Holy Spirit perched above his head. Further to the left, he is enthroned, holding the Word and blessing with this right hand. The political rule of Antichrist contrasts with Christ's priestly functions.

The bottom register tackles the evil practice of Simony.<sup>10</sup> In the chariot, called the Castle of Simony, a process of bargaining goes on to secure the benefits of a church living. Behind one of the participants, a devil operates a set of bellows injecting the vices, signifying mercenary attitudes.<sup>11</sup> This chariot, about to enter the hellmouth, condemns current practice. Another chariot, appropriately on the right of f.31r, shows the correct attitude, which operates by grace and it is Christ depicted in the heavens who holds the wreath over the vacant church, a reminder that the process is one that demands the highest integrity and as such receives his endorsement.

The good and the bad priest, f 8, are contrasted (Plate 16). The former, on the right, stands at the altar and exalts the host. There is a simplicity and dedication about the right-hand image of the faithful priest, whose higher elevation of the host is spiritually aspiring. On the left, the evil priest kneels at the altar in prayer as the devil behind him operates the bellows which inject the vices. Priest, devil and the five bellows are darkened areas, picking out the evil elements. The iconography used for the evil priest has several features in common with that used for Antichrist - the adjacent devil, the influence of the vices, the sinister side for evil and its antithesis to the good.

*Aurimons Civitas*, f. 32r (Plate 17), represents the walled city of *Aurimons*, the Golden City, an analogy of the Catholic Church (echoing a description of the golden city in Apocalypse 21.18, though four-square!). There was a town called Goldberg in Silesia and its involvement in events connected with the Hussites may be the contemporary source of the image.<sup>12</sup> Within its walls and towers are the central building, the '*praetorium*', and five persons. A lookout in the tower warns of approaching enemies and a watcher on the walls also appears to be doing his duty. Of the three priests inside, one sits idly while the remaining pair conspire together. Dominus Kruscho (who signifies Antichrist),<sup>13</sup> the man scaling the ladder, has climbed almost to the top and is about to gain access to the city, implying a threat to the Catholic Church. The need for vigilance and faithful attention to priestly duties is the message, but its mode of depiction is hardly likely to stir into decisive action. Here, the inscriptions are brief; but in other places are often quite lengthy.

In folios 30v, 31r, the Catholic Church is depicted in three places as standing secure on its rock foundation. The compiler of the document represented the category that was aware of its imperfections and vulnerability to Antichrist's incursion, but trusted in its capacity to reform and survive.

### c. The Wellcome Manuscript

The Wellcome Manuscript (MS 49), is an encyclopedic document, a key to knowledge invaluable to medieval society. Imagery and inscriptions on the life of Antichrist and his eschatological associations form an important section. The Apocalypse, with a view to understanding its hidden mysteries, details about the workings of the body - death, judgment, the *ars moriendi*, and the virtues and the vices, are among its other contents. It was produced in Germany (c.1420-25), and was sister manuscript of the later MS Casanatensis, which it preceded by a possible two decades. The Wellcome manuscript fell between the 13th century manuscripts and the block-books and at the time of its appearance was considered to provide the missing link between them.<sup>14</sup>

The Witnesses Slain, Wellcome MS 49, f. 10r (Plate 18), depicts Antichrist enthroned, holding an upright sword in his right hand and with a commanding gesture ordering the execution of the kneeling Witness; the other Witness is already dead. This executioner looks back at Antichrist, his appointed task fulfilled. The array of swords and empty scabbards, one planted vertically in the dead Witness, and all under Antichrist's strict command, epitomise his harsh tyrannical rule. Antichrist is bearded and wears headgear which unusually combines a crown with a mitre.<sup>15</sup> This type of crown appears in other illustrations of the Wellcome manuscript and appropriately typifies the politico-ecclesiastical typology of Antichrist as ruler and false priest.

Wellcome MS 49, f. 12v-13r, contains six scenes. The first is even more horrific as two of Antichrist's henchmen, wearing Jewish headgear, carry out gruesome tortures on two victims, while three more are exposed to attack by fierce animals. This is followed by a scene where, again, the Two Witnesses are beheaded, witnessed by a pointing Antichrist, whose executioner leans on his sword, and the two victims lie at their feet. His followers, all fashionably dressed in contemporary costumes, a characteristic of the manuscript, celebrate the event with music and dancing. Below this scene, in the bottom register, Antichrist falls forward, pretending to die, his headgear falling to the ground. 'Recovered', he sits on his throne, crowned, holding sceptre and sword. Thus he parodies Christ's death and resurrection.

Antichrist's fall and the aftermath are depicted in the remaining three scenes of f. 13r. (Plate 19). The top register shows Antichrist's fall as the next stage following his 'resurrection'; but his attempted ascension is not shown. His two footprints visible at the summit of Mount Olivet suffice to indicate his 'ascension'. He is struck down by the sword of Michael. Cross-nimbed and accompanied by the dove of the Holy Spirit, Christ oversees the event. Two winged devils, one double-horned, hover above the upended Antichrist, whose disarranged garments and falling tiara (the crown-mitre combination), add a measure of ridicule to the fall. On the other side of the mount, four figures, most wearing Jewish pointed hats, two holding money-bags, confirm the identity of his supporters who had assembled to witness his ascension. The iconographical features of this scene are discussed in connection with the fall of Antichrist in Cranach's *Passional* (Plate 78), and intervening examples.

Two unusual contrasting scenes follow in the two lower registers below Antichrist's fall (Plate 19). The first one of feasting and rejoicing; the other of sadness and affliction. The feast resembles scenes of indulgence in the vices when Antichrist, leader of the vices, has been present (Plates 13 and 98), but here the emphasis is on one vice, greed (*Gula*). Utensils and a few dishes are on the table and a child turns a spit while a woman stirs a cauldron. Males and females socialise, but moral codes are not blatantly disregarded, not the case in *Antichrist, Leader of the Vices* and *Revelling Catholic Clergy* (Plates 13 and 98). The figures wearing haloes standing at the right of the feast table are the Two Witnesses, identified in the marginal text, calling Antichrist's followers to repentance, who appear to be blissfully unaware of the fateful events about to unfold. A scene of judgment with darkened sun and blooded moon in the sky together, depicts the abandoned plough, sick animals and seven distraught figures as part of the aftermath of Antichrist's fall.

A scene from Apocalypse 13, Wellcome, MS, f.16 v (Plate 20), is an image of the Seven-headed Beast of the Sea being worshipped by the Two-horned Beast of the Earth and six of his followers. While five with hands clasped adore the beast, as instructed (v.12), the one on the right of the Two-horned Beast looks away. He has eye-contact with Antichrist, the figure wearing the mitre-cum-crown who, as often, holds upright the sword of political power. The largest figure with the deeply scalloped hem and raised sword, grasps the hair of the kneeling figure he is about to slay. This is a warning to the vacillating worshipper of what lies in store for those whose loyalty is lacking. This image, while it addresses some of the content of Apocalypse 13, a chapter with recognised Antichrist links, and introduces the figure of Antichrist as a human ruler and details of the violence by which his rule is sustained, he appears with depictions of the Earth and Sea beasts. Exactly what these relationships were intended to mean is problematic and discussed in connection with the similar block-book scene (Plate 22), where additional features of the image are discussed.

The Wellcome manuscript follows the traditions found in English and French manuscripts of the 13th century and belongs to what were termed by M. Delisle '1st family' manuscripts,<sup>16</sup> which opened with John's life to the time of his deportation to Patmos, where he received the Apocalypse visions. The next section was devoted to the Apocalypse itself, and John's life to his death was then resumed. A sequence of pictures on Antichrist's life came in the Apocalypse section, immediately after the death of the Witnesses slain by Antichrist (11.7). In the Wellcome manuscript, there were departures from this scheme. It started with the Apocalypse and closed with an undivided section on John's life and death and the Antichrist pictures were inserted after the ascension of Enoch and Elias, the Witnesses of chapter 11.12, 13, not after their slaughter.<sup>17</sup>

The manuscript's use of contemporary dress worn by many, updates its content, and pictorial interest is provided by incidental detail. There is no call to ecclesiastical reform and clerical figures are not featured. It was a high quality product, bound in calf, suitable for a library and its state of preservation is indicative of careful use by the few. In these respects it contrasts with the succeeding block-books.

However, it falls below the high standard of the 13th century manuscripts which the block books also took as their models.<sup>18</sup>

Antichrist is youthful, appealing, clean-shaven, but not a Christ look-alike and no longer the giant figure of the *Beatus* manuscripts, though in *Livre de la Vigne de nostre Seigneur*, discussed below (subsection g), again he is giant size. He was not depicted as an obviously evil person like earlier medieval examples, but the violence of his rule is shown to be extreme. As these deeds are usually committed by his henchmen, they have the effect, like the normalising of his appearance, of exposing his deceit, a basic element in his make-up. This allowed scope for artistic ploys and subtlety of presentation that would oblige the reader to be more observant, informed and deductive in arriving at a correct identity of the Man-of-Sin.

Antichrist's typological make-up is fully confirmed and biographical content is expanded, offering a wide range of material, drawn from various sources.<sup>19</sup> Some of the less familiar scenes, discussed above, are the two that follow Antichrist's fall which relate to the aftermath of his rule (f. 13r), not often depicted previously, though the exegetical tradition allowed a period of time for repentance after Antichrist's death.<sup>20</sup> Another is the burning of books, which he supervises in f.10v, the object being to suppress teaching contrary to his own, God's Word in particular. Antichrist's wider preaching efforts to secure followers, often carried out by his disciples, are shown to extend to monarchs as far afield as Egypt and Libya (f.11r), an aspect of his cosmocratic objectives, to acquire authority over the kings of the earth. He is shown 'marking' the hand of the King of Egypt, signifying his conversion.

The miracles depicted in the Wellcome manuscript range widely from the familiar ones of making dried trees bloom and their roots bear fruit, to the less common ones of making a statue speak, reversing the flow of water and changing the direction of the wind, all from Adso's account in *Libellus de Antichristo*. His bizarre miracles are also included - the castle supported by a thread, a warrior emerging from an egg, and a stag from stone (f.10v), which were not in Adso's *Libellus* and are not easily rationalised (Plate 24). There are no instances of such miracles being performed by Christ, though he speaks of having faith to remove mountains (Mark 11.22), but in the context of II Thessalonians 2. 4 he could be demonstrating his aspiration to deity.

Wellcome presents the orthodox position which as such would counter the dissident influences of the Hussites and the ideas advanced in Nicholas of Dresden's *Tabule*.

Briefly, in retrospect, *Beatus* and Lambert portrayed Antichrist as a warrior king-priest; *Casanatensis* depicted him in contrast to Christ and the Catholic Church; in *Hortus* he is seen manipulating monarchs, clerics and others to secure a following in the course of which his harsh and violent regime is all too evident.

#### **d. The Block Books**

Of the block book Apocalypses, the earliest are the three Netherlandish editions in the 1440s, and the sixth edition of the three German a few years later, though dates are controversial.<sup>21</sup> Of the large numbers produced, the majority wore out with use, and the comparatively few that remain consist of six editions of Netherlandish, or German origin.

In Bodleian Auct.M3.15, the Witnesses Slain, Apocalypse 11 (Plate 21), the content is similar to the Wellcome manuscript, f.10r (Plate 18). The close similarity of the two versions arises from the influence of the 13th century manuscripts. Antichrist, similarly enthroned, is larger than the other figures, wears a soft hat, not a crown, and his legs are crossed, which may look autocratic, but could be a defensive pose and convey an inherent insecurity.

The slain Witness merges with the dark, earthy background, allowing the other four figures to register against the empty sky; the living Witness kneels, reducing his height, enabling the heads of the other three to rise above their victims. This arrangement of the figures gives a clearer message than the Wellcome version and the prominent positioning of the swords define the tyranny of the prevailing rule. Three banderoles with brief entries are slotted into the available space above and below, making a compact union of text and image, whereas Wellcome has voluminous texts. The block book version virtually disregards the empty scabbards and sheds personal details, emphasising crucial features; the figures are firmer, making the more detailed manuscript version look sketchy by comparison. This emphasis on vital content was a fitting prelude to the Luther-inspired message of the 1520s which called for a positive response.

Worshipping the Beast, a scene from Apocalypse 13, where the Beast of the Earth and his followers worship the Beast of the Sea (Plate 22), is from an unbound German block book of c.1470. As in Wellcome (Plate 20), the Two-Horned Beast of the Earth sits on the central earth mound, his followers kneel in front of him, worshipping the leopard-spotted seven-headed Beast of the Sea because they have been commanded to do so (vv.2 and 12). Both beasts have anthropomorphic features, an interim stage in the morphology of Antichrist in the advancing concept from beast to human. The Earth Beast's legs, arms and sitting position have humanoid characteristics and his hooved feet signify a down-treading process. The seven-headed Beast of the Sea's four feet are more human than bear-like (Apocalypse 13. 2), and his faces combine human with lion-like features (v.2).

Antichrist is the crowned and bearded figure, with Jewish features, who holds a sceptre and wears a long robe corded at the waist. The tied waist, which could be indicative of security against evil influences, is, in Antichrist's case, a deception. He has eye contact with the doubter who has turned away from the seven-headed Beast and points to the dire consequences of so doing, whom the Earth Beast reinforces with an admonishing prod. The executioner in grabbing the hair of the victim conforms to established practice. It is significant that the three principal figures - Antichrist in human form and the two Beasts, are now placed at the same level, indicative of equivalence of power and identity. They

act in concert and obedience to all three is obligatory. The sword too is lifted up and held horizontally, signifying the tyranny of a regime, which is wholly Antichrist. Prior to the block books these two beasts had been identified with Antichrist. The traditional view is being presented, which was that Antichrist's rule was a brief three-and-a-half years duration. On this hypothesis, the two Antichrist beasts and the human Antichrist were operating virtually contemporaneously. There is no clear indication that the two beasts might be operating at different stages of history. A similar situation is discussed in the last subsection of the present chapter, where Antichrist in human form appears to be exercising the authority of the Earth Beast when the Sea Beast is also present. These problems highlight the matter of how long Antichrist was active, and in what capacity. (The Protestant view was that Antichrist's rule was much longer than a human life-span.)

The heights of Antichrist, the Earth and the Sea Beasts are in ascending order in *Worshipping the Beast* in the Wellcome MS, f. 16v (Plate 20), so the equivalence of their respective powers and identities are not conveyed and were possibly not fully perceived. There are six worshippers of the Sea Beast, which are reduced to four in the block book version. The pointing gestures and eye contacts are insignificant in Wellcome and do not give a clear message. In the block book version, essentials of the message are much clearer to see and to understand.

In the register above this scene (Apoc.13), Plate 22, the Sea Beast appears to have called down fire from heaven upon himself (Apoc.13.13), which may be an error. The apostle John, pointing to the Sea Beast being worshipped, is noteworthy in that it is seen to be an artist's gesture, noted in Bosch's *Mass of St. Gregory* in the Prado *Epiphany* triptych and in Signorelli's *The Rule*, considered in the next two chapters (Plates 42 and 53).

Rewards, the slaying of opponents and Antichrist's Fall are depicted in *Apocalypse*, Modena, Biblioteca Estense. AD 5.22. 181, c.1470 (Plate 23.). Antichrist sits, legs crossed, enthroned in the Temple of Solomon, identified in the inscription above. He is a young, seemingly confident, if not arrogant, ruler, wearing a soft hat, seen in some earlier examples, and holding a sceptre. He points commandingly to a servant standing in the doorway which leads into the scene on the left. From a chest containing gold coin bribes are handed out. One follower has been given a bag of money; another, holding the gift of a lidded cup, kneels in adoration. Behind the chest, one standing figure watches a mailed soldier about to slay the contending bishop, the other appears to be looking through the open door at Antichrist's commanding gesture. Two more bishops and a king on the extreme left appear to be in line for slaughter. This example clearly shows the range of Antichrist's ambition to rule in both religious and monarchical spheres. Antichrist's mode of recruitment, by threat of death or bribery, is established and telling facial expressions, inclinations of the head and meaningful gestures convey a lively sense of meaning.

In the lower register Antichrist falls under the fiery breath of a lionmouth, held by the cross-nimbed figure of Christ. The two devils, one pulling, the other prodding, facilitate the process and Antichrist's

hat falls off. A kneeling figure who watches the event through the *ostium apertum* clutches the garment of a bystander who resembles the Jew at the money-chest. Next to him is a soldier wearing chain-mail and two others. The sorrowing may not be their reaction to Antichrist's death, but to their earlier follies.

Plate 23 closely resembles MS 524, the illustrated Pierpont Morgan manuscript (Plate 11). The block book presents the subject-matter of f. 524 in a more direct and informative style, stripped of incidentals and some of the figures. Antichrist is not enthroned within a mandorla, within the Temple of Solomon. As depictions of Christ in glory are enclosed within a mandorla it is sometimes used to aid Antichrist's pseudonymous pose. Antichrist's death and fall are very similar and the *ostium apertum* episode is similarly presented

In the woodcut version, elegance, opulence and descriptive detail have again been sacrificed in favour of a frank and factual account of the two scenes. Top left, the number of figures has been much reduced and the Temple of Solomon greatly simplified. There are only three brief inscriptions in both the manuscript and the block book.

*Sham death and Resurrection, and Bizarre Miracles*, Nuremberg block book (c.1467), f 13r, f 5v (Plate 24), depicts in the upper of two scenes on the left, f.13r, Antichrist lying prone, shamming death, with a grinning winged devil in a hand-stand on his back master-minding the false resurrection. A king and two Jewish supporters, wearing pointed hats, stand on the right, but only the Jew at the front gestures in response; the one behind him looks away and the king is cool and haughty. A monk on the left raises both arms in amazement, his companion reacts uncertainly with a cautious pointing of the hand.

Below, Antichrist steps triumphantly from the tomb with a gesture of blessing, the winged devil at his shoulder. There are now six witnesses, the front ones kneel in adoration and most fold their hands in prayerful pose. The king is now moved to kneel and to fold his hands prayerfully. All parties appear to be convinced by the false miracle which parodies the death and resurrection of Christ.

In the two adjoining registers, Antichrist is still without headgear and dressed in a long pleated robe and again the source of his power is the winged devil at his shoulder. He first performs the most familiar of Antichrist's miracles, causing a tree to blossom from its roots, which has no precise parallel among Christ's miracles - though he cursed the fruitless fig-tree and it withered (Matt.21. 19), a process Antichrist could said to be exceeding. Also, the idea of bearing fruit occupies a spiritual dimension in Christ's preaching.

Below, he performs three bizarre miracles - suspending a castle from the air by a thread, producing a stag from a stone and a warrior from an egg. Two observers in each case, a monk and a Jew, are suitably impressed, and the winged devil at Antichrist's shoulder is still assisting. The bizarre miracles are not easily accounted for. They lack biblical equivalents, but they could be explained by his attempts to outclass Christ's miraculous powers.

Antichrist in all four images is youthful, appealing and beardless, but does not look like Christ. His miracles are designed to create a spectacle, impress the senses and increase his following, rather than impart a spiritual message.

The Devil would not be seen in the realities of the situation; he was introduced to instruct the viewer that this was how Antichrist was able to operate to deceive. Earlier portrayals of Antichrist were often such that it seemed one could hardly fail to recognise him from appearances alone. This gave a false impression and the subtleties of identifying him overlooked. Artists were becoming increasingly aware of the problem and more appropriately addressed the issue.

The block books were cheap to produce, their style direct and informative, and unlike the Apocalypse manuscripts, which were for the informed few, were well suited to the larger numbers for whom they were intended. They were the forerunners of the popular imagery of the Reformation which developed chiefly in the hands of Luther and the Cranachs in the 1520s, discussed in chapters 14 and 15 of Part IV.

#### **e. The Netherland Apocalypse**

The Netherland *Apocalypse*, MS. Paris B.N., *fons néerlandais* 3, 1400 (Plate 25), is a depiction of the episodes described in Apocalypse 11, and full page, like most of the 23 illustrations of this Apocalypse. Christ, a half-length figure from whose mouth fiery rays stream downwards, is adored by six crowned white-clad elders. John takes the rod from Christ to measure the Temple, top right, part of which (the outer court of the gentiles, v. 2), is to be excluded. Unusually, a young man is cast headlong over the wall, which seems like an over-literal rendering of verse 2, 'leave out' (A.V.), though the marginal rendering is 'cast out'. A touch of humour may be intended.

Below John, on the left, the Two Witnesses in white robes are lifted upwards by two supporting angels, all situated within the heavenly zone, depicting their ascension which follows their confrontation with Antichrist, and their execution. These earlier stages are depicted lower down, where they face Antichrist who stands with his three supporters. One at his left shoulder in a red robe and pointed hat seem to be functioning as the customary diabolical prompter. At bottom left, the Witnesses are beheaded and over to the right Antichrist sits in what is intended to represent the Temple of Solomon. He is elderly, crowned, bearded and looks towards his servants behind the chest of gold who watch him closely. The bishop and the figure in blue behind him hold precious gifts. This grouping resembles depictions where Antichrist's supporters are rewarded (see Plates 11 and 23). To the left of this, Antichrist approves the slaughter of the Two Witnesses wearing a crown quite different from the headgear banded with ermine in the other two depictions. Two persons are at his side, the one behind seems to be his customary diabolical supporter.

The falling masonry and collapsing towers represent the great earthquake of verse 13, and the two angel trumpeters, which marks the transition from the kingdoms of the world to the kingdom of Christ. Antichrist is not depicted actually falling from his throne, but he is seen on all-fours, still wearing his

ermine headgear, near the dead witnesses, a devil on his back and one pulling at his arm, which marks the end of his rule, its disastrous consequences all concentrated in the lower part of the page.

This image incorporates the familiar episodes. Colour and zoning combine to organise the contents, though the earthly region, where flowers and plants fill the gaps, is congested. The dark blue studded with stars define the heavenly zone. Much descriptive detail adds charm and spectacle. The imagery is informative, but not always coherent. Many of the episodes of Apocalypse 11, some of which were often depicted separately, have been fitted together and the result is an engaging, visual interpretation of the chapter's content in accordance with the traditional view. The depiction of the acts and consequences of Antichrist's rule, leave some scope for the viewer to come to terms with the artist's arrangement.

#### **f. The Preaching of Antichrist and Enoch and Elias, and Antichrist's Fall**

Michael Wolgemut's, *The Preaching of Antichrist and of Enoch and Elias* in the *Liber chronicarum*, Nuremberg, 1493 (Plate 26), is presented in the eschatological context of the penultimate Sixth Age of the world, a time of expectation and of apocalyptic fulfilment, of which the Chronicle gives an account.<sup>22</sup> It was believed that its end was approaching, that Enoch and Elias awaited the time of Antichrist in the 'earthly paradise' to descend and preach against him and it can be surmised from the inclusion of a depiction of this event that it was thought to be imminent.

Wolgemut concentrates on three aspects only - true and false preaching and Antichrist's fall, who is depicted as a youngish, clean-shaven theologian-preacher wearing the robes of a doctor of theology, not easily discernible as an evil man. The horrific two-horned devil behind him accentuates Antichrist's evil associations and devil-inspired message. He is not speaking from a church pulpit, but is being presented as an independent preacher and there is no indication of his being active within the church. The depiction of an unattached false preacher fits the current circumstances. One such independent preacher, the Drummer of Nicklashausen, is depicted in the Nuremberg Chronicle.

Antichrist's audience is not a typical church audience. There are several robed theologians in it, several Jews and well-favoured individuals. The majority engage in discussion among themselves; and a few face the preacher - a mixture of followers, sympathisers and critics.

Wolgemut presents a more pragmatic image of Antichrist. One must suppose the devil would not be seen; he accompanies Antichrist on the left of the image for the benefit of the Chronicle's readers. The practical test would be whether his true identity could be deduced from his appearance, the absence of a pulpit, the theologian's message, his possible promotion of the vices, the make-up of the audience, which includes several Jews. His appeal to the flesh might determine the issue for some, what a person's natural leanings are and whether he either wants to, or is able to follow the spiritual path. As independent false preachers were about, mentioned in the Chronicle, this depiction appears to meet a current problem.

The devil-inspired preaching on the viewer's left is countered by the God-inspired message of the two Old Testament prophets, Enoch and Elias, appropriately on the viewer's right. The two bearded prophets, the Two Witnesses, had become a familiar feature in presenting the traditional viewpoint (Plates 4, 9, 10, 12, 18, 21). Enoch and Elias are preaching from a church pulpit and as Catholic preachers presenting a true message. The Bible however is not being used by them, or their audience. In all these respects the Catholic stance of the Chronicle is evident. In the Witnesses' audience, more face the preachers and poor and ordinary folk preponderate. The theme of preaching truth versus error involving the three principal figures, represents a change of emphasis and not only meets current developments, but is perceived as an eschatological sign.

Antichrist's fall from Mount Olivet, following his attempted ascension, which is not depicted, is the most sensational element, a reminder that Antichrist's prideful actions will lead to his downfall.<sup>23</sup> The actions of the three devils, large and energetic, with additional evil faces, attempt to lift him up and to counter Michael's attack by using their cudgels to beat him off. Here he falls headlong, impliedly to hell, rays and fiery hail descend upon the falling figures, but this activity in the sky above Olivet does not spill over into the lower half of the picture and only one person appears to be aware of what is happening. He is the very noticeable large figure silhouetted against the mount with arms outstretched, head back and eyes bulging, amazed at what is taking place. He resembles figures in depictions of the fall by Signorelli (Plate 45), Gerung (Plate 99b), and Antichrist himself in *Livre de la Vine de nostre Seigneur* (1450-1470), an earlier manuscript (Plate 28).

Wolgemut's depiction is said to be the direct source for Cranach's *Passional* (Plate 78). This issue is taken up in connection with Cranach's illustration where references are made to other influential sources connected with Antichrist's fall.

#### ***g. Livre de la Vine de nostre Seigneur***

*Livre de la Vine...* is the title of a book (c.1450-1470), emphasising eschatological events, the punishments of hell and redemption, the fruit of God's vine gathered at the end of world.<sup>24</sup>

It takes up moral issues concerning redemption, in particular the persecutions of Antichrist's reign which follow his conquest of Jerusalem (depicted in f. 6r), and those aspects represented in three more scenes associated with the Antichrist legend. All four are considered below. Antichrist is presented in human form, of youthful appearance, notably devil-inspired.

In f.4r (Plate 27), *Antichrist Walks the Earth*, he is depicted as a giant figure, easily identifiable and dominating the landscape. He carries a sceptre of authority in his right hand. Unique testimony to his diabolical origins and the force of evil which possesses him, takes the form of a red devil-mask. It surmounts his head, has a protruding tongue and two large horns projected above the picture-frame, indicative of the surpassing authority of the evil that now reigns supreme in the person of Antichrist. Extension beyond the frame as a mode of establishing the priority of a particular feature, has already been noted (Plates 13). The expansive landscape is populated with trees, castles, distant hills capped by

towers and pinnacles, a solitary church with steeple and a lake with boats on it, all giving the impression of peace and order. Wearing a single garment to the knees drawn in at the waist, Antichrist too is presented as a disciplined figure in full control. He appears to eye with suspicion the woman, bottom left, who pointedly instructs two rustics, one a shepherd, the other a reaper. There is a contrast between the evil political order of the ruling Antichrist and the productive aims of the woman who may represent the figure of Natura which would be in harmony with the title, the underlying spiritual motives of the manuscript and the horizontal division between the two. The respective callings of the two rustics have spiritual overtones connected with the care of the Good Shepherd, the gathering of the harvest, and perhaps death, the grim reaper, which could stimulate the viewer to reflect upon the implications of the scene.

Folio 6r incorporates Antichrist as the pope followed by soldiery with spears, flying the same devil-mask motif of their leader as they enter the city of Jerusalem. This episode would appear to be more a frontal attack in the spirit of the Gog and Magog episode (Apocalypse 20), a theme depicted in *Beatus* manuscripts (Plates 5 and 6).

*Antichrist supervises tortures*, f. 30r (Plate 29), depicts a youthful, enthroned, ruler, legs crossed wearing a papal triple tiara, overseeing the infliction of horrific tortures (garrotting, suspending in a well, beating with clubs, shooting with arrows...), upon Christian martyrs, whose 'souls' fly upwards. This reads like a specific and strong indictment of the ruthless treatment of the regime against alleged heretics.

In *Death of Antichrist on the Mount of Olives*, f. 36r (Plate 28), his body arches backwards, his arms outspread (see note 23), as he is stricken by the spirit of Christ's mouth (II Thessalonians 2.8). He wears a triple tiara and his soul as it flees his body is enfolded by the same devil figure, now with arms and wings, whose mask he wears in f. 4r. Similarly afflicted are his followers, among whom are a bishop and a monk, strengthening the anti-papal message. All except the bishop and the kneeling monk wear similar dress to Antichrist himself as he walks the earth, f. 4r. There is also a Jew wearing a pointed hat. The two rustics and the figure of Natura in *Antichrist Walks the Earth*, are not present.

The identity of Antichrist as pope became a positive trend about half a century or more later in the anti-papal imagery of the Lutherites. There seems little reason to doubt the move in that direction in f. 30r and f.60r (Plates 28, 29).

#### **h. Antichrist Preaching, MS Vitrina.**

*Antichrist Preaching*, c.1430 to the late 15th century, MS Vitrina, I, f. 23v. (Plate 30),<sup>25</sup> depicts Antichrist, whose name is inscribed above his head, cross-nimbed, in monkish attire, preaching from a church pulpit. The preacher's glaring eyes, distorted mouth, facial features and intense and forceful manner portray an evil character. He is necessarily a false preacher and it is significant that he is

participating in the customary practices of the Catholic Church, which suggests that Antichrist could possibly be found there.

Other religious figures are present, dressed like the preacher; two are holding money bags from which handouts are being made, a tonsured monk being one of the recipients. Rewarding and bribing to please potential followers is standard Antichrist practice. Members of the laity, some rich, are also present, seemingly attentive; one holds a book, a source of instruction, but Antichrist is not preaching from one.

Antichrist points decisively towards the Beast of the Sea as it steps from the waters (Apocalypse 13.1). In chapter 13, verses 11 and 12, the Earth beast causes the Beast of the Sea to be worshipped. The preaching Antichrist would therefore appear to be fulfilling the Earth Beast's role (see Plates 20, 22, 80). Both beasts are evil characters, work in concert and both had earlier been identified as Antichrist.<sup>26</sup> The Earth Beast was also known as the False Prophet, who pretended to be Christ, a characteristic of Antichrist's deceit (Apoc.13.11-14).<sup>27</sup> Being cross-nimbed in the present context indicates that he is in the guise of Christ. The Earth beast is in effect being presented as Antichrist in human form in the type of a false priest.

The *paysage moralisée* treatment of the background landscape of towering rocks, high towers, a church with a cross on its steeple and a steeply ascending path, typify spiritual aims and aspirations, over which the dark and weighty clouds cast a sinister gloom, reflecting the latent evils of the situation.

As a depiction of Antichrist, it presents him as a pseudo-Christ, a false priest and preacher, a man of deceit; one who bribes his supporters, all confirming basic typology and associated with the apocalyptic Beast of the Earth commending the Seven-Headed Beast of the Sea.

### III Chapter 10. The Prado *Epiphany* by Hieronymus Bosch

While Antichrist is not named, or expected to be included among the traditional figures of an Epiphany scene, a close scrutiny of Bosch's entire Epiphany altar-piece yields an unexpected wealth of detail that supports his identity and develops the concept of the man-of-sin. It merits recognition as a notable late fifteenth to early sixteenth century contribution to the search for new forms in which to embody this controversial eschatological character.

In the contemporary *fin-de-siècle* climate of concern and expectation, there was a customary revival of interest in Antichrist.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to the generally optimistic and celebratory mood of the Epiphany theme, evil persists throughout the altar-piece and is focussed upon two figures - Judas, an Antichrist type who appears in the context of the Gregory Mass depicted on the outer doors (Plate 42), and Antichrist himself, the principal figure of evil in the central panel of the triptych (Plate 31).

The interpretation that the red-cloaked figure standing in the doorway of the dilapidated hut is Antichrist (Plate 31), is based upon its conformity to typological identities discussed in previous chapters - Antichrist as a Jew, a priest, a ruler, the focus of evil, a pseudo-character. There are clear signs that he is posturing as a miracle worker, an intercessor, a false Messiah. In particular the priestly and kingly types are interpreted and presented with a depth of understanding and iconographical ingenuity that excels most, if not all other depictions.

The long dark beard and general facial characteristics identify Antichrist as a Jew (Plate 32), and as Christ was a Jew, being of semitic origin was a characteristic they allegedly had in common.<sup>2</sup> Bosch, disregarding the crude caricature-like depiction of Jews in some earlier representations, presents a serious portrait, full-bearded and wearing an original and distinctive form of headgear, nothing like the pointed Jewish cap, the *pilas cornutum*, which Antichrist sometimes wears in medieval manuscripts (Plates 12, 14).<sup>3</sup> Looking less obviously evil, his capacity to deceive is increased and a careful and informed scrutiny called for. He wears a flimsy shirt and a long red robe which is gathered and hangs over his right arm, leaving his right leg exposed almost to the crotch, his right shoulder and chest also bare (Plates 31, 32). His revealing mode of dress picks up on the theme of immodest apparel and Christ's spiritual warning against it, 'Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that ... keepeth his garments lest he walk naked, and they see his shame' (Apocalypse 16.15). It points to Christ's sacrifice as a covering for the 'nakedness' of which Sin is the cause.<sup>4</sup>

II Thessalonians 2. 3, 8, 9, a chapter widely accepted as referring to Antichrist, describes his sinful and satanic ways and identifies him as 'the man of sin'. The colour red is similarly linked with sin and with Christ's sacrificial blood; its shedding being the acknowledged sin offering. The words of the prophet Isaiah 1.18, 'Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they be red like crimson...' speaks of the efficacy of Christ's blood in this respect. Red, as in Bosch, is sometimes the colour of Antichrist's garments (Plates 26 and 46). Immodesty, Sin and its associate colour and the

brazen exposure of the body come together in the Whore of Babylon, the Scarlet Woman, and scarlet is the colour of the Seven-headed Beast she rides (Apocalypse 17.3, 4). Christ too is sometimes depicted wearing a scarlet robe, especially in Passion scenes, and the account of the soldiers mocking Christ prior to his crucifixion is particularly relevant:

*...they stripped him, and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they had platted a crown of thorns they put it on his head...and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews.*

(Matthew 27. 28, 29)

This text fits Bosch's presentation closely, which lays emphasis on the theme of kingship and on Antichrist as a false Messiah, his red robe and 'crown of thorns' in particular. It is also noteworthy that Christ's mock crowning by the soldiers appears again among the scenes (bottom left), of the Passion in the Gregory Mass on the outer doors of the triptych (Plate 44). The theme of kingship is inherent in Messiah's role as the anointed one. It is relevant also to the typology of Antichrist, whose aim is to usurp Christ as world ruler, and a crucial element in the Epiphany context, as the Three Kings come to honour the one who will be King of Kings (Psalm 2.2, 6).

Silhouetted in the dark doorway gives him prominence. He has the bearing of a ruler and his mode of dress and distinguished headgear link him with the visiting kings in several respects. His red robe echoes the large red robe of the kneeling king, his tall crown-like head-gear makes him look more of a king than the others, especially as he is the only one of the four who actually wears his headgear. On closer scrutiny its thorny content establishes a connection with Christ's crown of thorns. It is also noteworthy that he may be holding the crown of the adjacent king, Melchior, which bears a striking affinity to the style, though not the thematic content of his large, armour-like collar. As the possible crown of the adjacent king, the fact that Antichrist is holding it could hint at his intended usurpation of kingly rule (Plates 31, 32). Antichrist is one who either ingratiates himself with the kings of the earth, or assumes their role, if necessary by force.<sup>5</sup> The Epiphany theme projects the idea of prospective rule and is a prototype of the homage all kings of the earth will bring to Christ when he has destroyed Antichrist and rules supreme. The impression is that Antichrist has come to observe, not to worship. Unlike the Three Kings he does not bring a gift, or make obeisance. They respectfully stand or kneel, heads bared, paying homage; he looks at the child with a secret smile, perhaps contemplating his intended challenge and the ease of conquest. A silent, hieratic observer of the scene, he looks intently at the one he intends to oppose and ultimately supplant. The principle of presenting Antichrist as the man apart is often upheld by his unique headgear, and a loose robe, fastened by a clasp or brooch, giving the impression of a quickly assumed disguise - a handy garment for a pseudo character (Plates 1, 10, 12).

His semitic features, his kingly appearance and the thorny element in his headgear, all reinforce the notion of Messiahship, which combines priesthood with kingship. Christ's kingly role is future and cosmocratic. For him priesthood came first in time and importance - the cross before the crown. He was the true priest, the priestly antitype. His kingship was contingent upon the fulfilment of his priestly

obligations.<sup>6</sup> Posing as Messiah, the anointed one, Antichrist's headgear advertises his kingly role, but as a crown of thorns it necessarily introduces the priestly factor, the sacrificial element, as well. Bosch's Antichrist is a masterly portrayal of the seemingly contradictory types of king and priest. Upon close scrutiny however, the priestly element is a sham and a deceit. Prominent are the loosely-plaited thorny twigs which do not penetrate the scalp. They are attached to a metal band comfortable to wear - a typical ploy of a deceitful character wishing to give the opposite impression and a travesty of the notion of the 'suffering servant' epithet of the true Christ.

A cylindrical glass tops the headgear, and inside a small shoot develops, flourishes and sprouts upwards bearing leaves and blossoms. This is more than likely a reference to Aaron's rod which miraculously budded, that was laid up in the ark of the tabernacle for a memorial (Numbers 17.10; Hebrews 9.4). The miracle demonstrated to those who had challenged Aaron's authority, that he, as priest, had God's approval; also the principle that by God's miraculous power what was dead could be brought to life. It pointed forward to Christ, the Great High Priest to come, of whom Aaron was but a type. Christ was a branch, a scion of the stem of Jesse, who would bear abundant fruit and flourish in the spiritual sense (Isaiah 11.1). It pointed to the death and resurrection to life of the crucified Christ, to his role as the 'suffering servant', and to the apotheosis of Christ's work as the Great High Priest. As Antichrist could not fulfil any such objectives, they point to the falsity of his priestly claim. The flourishing twig in the headgear attributes miraculous power to its wearer and presents Antichrist as a miracle worker, another typological facet of the man. Time, in Part IV, chapter 16 (Plate 114), who wears the hour-glass on his head, not only looks similar, but likewise attributes its meaning to the figure of Time who wears it.

Encasement in a glass is also an acknowledged means of display. Similarly, in the turban of thorns, the display factor is uppermost, and the two together raise doubts about the integrity of the wearer. Causing a barren, or an uprooted tree, to bear leaves and flowers from its roots, possibly the most familiar of Antichrist's miracles (Plate 10), is of a similar order to the flourishing shoot in the headgear .

Antichrist's complex headgear advertises his ability to be able to fulfil the essential achievements of Christ's priesthood - suffering, death, resurrection and ascension (themes presented in Plates 24 and 26). His headgear is much more than a means of distinguishing him from any other figure present, which has sometimes been its prime function. It is probably the most abstruse, epigrammatic and informative of all examples.

Another feature which links him with the Levitical priesthood is the small bell suspended by a ribbon with frog motifs on it, between Antichrist's right leg and the door-post (Plate 31). The Levitical High Priest had bells alternating with embroidered pomegranates on the hem of his garment, among other things to reassure the tabernacle worshippers, who could not see the High Priest as he ministered in the 'presence' of God, but could hear the sound of the bells, that he still lived and was in action as their priestly intercessor (Exodus 28.33-35). The pomegranate, which has many seeds within a single fruit, types the many believers in one Christ who benefit from his priestly ministrations. In combination, the

bell and the pomegranate, signified that Messiah, the Great High Priest to come, would enter into the literal presence of God to intercede for those who, being many, were united in Christ. Bosch's, *John the Baptist in the Wilderness* (Plate 33), and various representations of the infant Christ introduce the pomegranate in this latter sense.<sup>7</sup>

In the celebration of the Mass, according to Roman Catholic liturgy and practice, the ringing of the bell indicated the presence of Christ at the Eucharist, expounding the principle in the Exodus quotation of the living presence of the ministering Levitical High Priest. The bell in Raphael's portrait of *Pope Leo X* and *Cardinal Bandiello Sauli* attributes a similar intercessory function to the pope.<sup>8</sup>

Ringling a bell has also been the custom of lepers warning of their presence because of their uncleanness. This aspect of contamination is recognised in Levitical law (Leviticus 13. 45. 46). The bell attached to Bosch's Antichrist figure could therefore be interpreted as a warning to the observant and informed viewer to approach this man with caution because of his leprous state. His skin is pale, blanched an unhealthy white, and appears to be leprous, with sores on his leg, encased in a transparent 'sleeve'. Leprosy stands for Sin as a type of corruption with the most stringent of the Law's requirements attaching to it, and being leprous would constitute a ground of exclusion from all priestly duties. This further emphasises the fallacious witness of Antichrist as priest. Leg-sores encased in a glass hint at preservation and display; a point made in connection with the glass-encased twig. The transparent case surrounding his leg-sores reveals Antichrist's strategy of deception. He poses as one who can deal with Sin, which Christ alone could do, whose cleansing of lepers demonstrated the total efficacy of his cures (Luke 5.12, 13).

Isaiah 53.3 is quoted in support of Christ being depicted as diseased and leprous, but the passage is hardly supportive of this conclusion (see note 9). Alchemical theories based on transmutation, the changing from base to precious, had its human and moral parallels, and the encasement of Antichrist's leg-sores in a crystal bandage, bordered in gold, has been recognised as depicting the alchemical process. It would therefore represent the leprous first stage, with the certainty of a cure, the transmutation. It still allows Antichrist to be interpreted as an impostor, but hints at the perfect cure in prospect which Christ alone, the Messianic High Priest, would be able to accomplish.<sup>9</sup>

A king who usurps priestly functions to further his own aims awakens divine anger. There is a biblical precedent in the case of Uzziah, King of Israel who, in the absence of Samuel, the High Priest at the time, presumed to exercise priestly duties and was inflicted with leprosy as a punishment. Perhaps Bosch had this episode in mind, as it is exactly what Antichrist in his priestly masquerade is doing - usurping priestly functions to further his own ambitions. The account also testifies to Uzziah's pride, born of wealth and success and of his building of towers in Jerusalem and in the desert, the hallmark of pride in the Babel tradition (II Chronicles 26.15-22). A case can be made for King Uzziah being an Antichrist type.

As a priest, Bosch's Antichrist is certainly a spurious figure. He does not even wear the prescribed garments. Priests wore white garments, their bodies washed, both implying ceremonial cleansing from Sin. High Priests wore a white robe, a mitre and a breastplate, detailed in Levitical Law (Leviticus 8.1-9; Exodus 39.1, 2). He is nevertheless an impressive figure and, moreover, he looks like a king; and an uninformed believer lacking perception might easily be taken in. It could be that the recondite nature of Bosch's imagery has deferred general acceptance of this figure as a depiction of Antichrist.

References to chains are multiple in scripture, and to gold even more so, which is the metal with the highest status and is used in particular for those parts of the tabernacle, and the temple, where God's 'presence' was focalised, between the two cherubim in the Holy of Holies (Exodus 25.20-22). Gold chains and rings were used to fasten the breastplate to the High Priest's body, who bore on it the names of the tribes of Israel, memorialising them in God's presence (Exodus 28.14, 26, 27). Both chains and gold have therefore a specific application to the High Priest's functions. It was gross hypocrisy for Antichrist, a false priest, to wear them, as gold implies a worthiness and proximity to the sacred, quite unfitting in Antichrist's case. Bosch's Antichrist figure wears golden chains and shackles, seen on his right arm and leg. Antichrist, the man of sin (II Thessalonians 2.3), was both chained and shackled by sin, in the sense of being in bondage to it. Their gilded nature - gold chain and shackles, glorify and magnify sin as if it were a virtue. Only Antichrist and his followers would call sin, or bondage to it, a virtue. A facet of Antichrist's leadership of the vices is that under his rule they are commended as virtues (See chap.7, n.2). Christ himself was chained in the sense that he was held back from accomplishing his purpose until the time was ripe. In Messiah's case, 'My time is not yet come', is a periodic reaction which implies a plan controlled by time and events.<sup>10</sup>

It has been advanced by Lotte Brand-Philip that the golden chain worn by the Antichrist figure may have a legendary basis in a pre-eleventh century *Midrash Conen*, though the reason why is in keeping with the reason just stated, that Christ (the Messiah), had to await the appointed time.<sup>11</sup> It is seen particularly in Christ's reluctance to acknowledge, accept, or exercise his ultimate kingly status. His priestly obligations as the suffering servant came first in time. The first pair of woodcuts in Cranach's *Passional*, chapter 13, where Christ recoils from the man who wants to make him King, addresses this issue (Plate 66).

In spite of Antichrist's priestly display, he is primarily set on exercising his kingship regardless. His bid for cosmocratic power is a priority and a developing aspect of Bosch's treatment of the Epiphany theme.

In the central scene of the triptych (Plate 31), the heads of five human figures surround Antichrist, all framed by the dark doorway of the hut. They are more obviously associates, followers of Antichrist, than of the Three Kings. One with the reddish-purple features is elderly and the most evil in appearance; another wears a turban, and one, possibly more, is dark-skinned. They make up a wider representation than some groups of his followers depicted in other images, which may be intended to

indicate his ambitions for universal rule. One of them at least could be taken to function as a stand-in for those diabolical representations which are depicted at his shoulder, or standing nearby. The one wearing a turban identifies the Turk, often present in Antichrist imagery.

This old worn-out structure traditionally represents the Law, the synagogue, the Old Order; all have their limitations and are antithetical to Grace, the Ecclesia and the New Order. Antichrist is associated with the first group, Christ with the second. Antichrist's identity with the hut is given a three-fold emphasis. He occupies the doorway, clings to its post with both arms, and his leg echoes the twisted prop that supports its canopy extension. The Law's limitations were that it defined Sin, reminded those subject to it of death, the penalty for the sin of breaking its commands, but provided no deliverance. Christ, the only remedy, is appropriately associated with the Ecclesia, representing the New Order.

The resemblance between Antichrist's leg and the prop supporting the hut extension, hints at a deeper meaning - Antichrist's participation in aiding the achievement of the Messianic purpose, as Christ's position under the hut's extension is a symbolic move towards an escape from the restrictions of the Law. Antichrist cannot make this transition, or play any part in it. Christ occupies the rickety extension of the hut, held up by the twisted pole, one stage removed from its interior, aptly portraying his being born 'under the Law' that he might bring about deliverance from it. Christ occupied this notional intermediate state prior to his sacrifice.

A prominent figure in a doorway is symbolic of the power to give access, or prevent it. Antichrist, the 'man of sin', could only lead into deeper bondage to it and rightly stands in the doorway of the hut. Christ too is a door, the door of the sheepfold (John 10.7), which types the ecclesia and speaks of deliverance from the limitations associated with the hut, the synagogue, and the Old Law.

The bundle of straw which is used to block up one of the gaps above the lintel of the doorway in the decaying structure is a botching process (Plate 35). Straw has a connotation with the inferior and the sham, and destruction by burning. Higher up in the gable and in line with Antichrist, the 'star' of straw is likewise a travesty of the true star which shines in the blue sky above the hut (Plate 31). They must relate to Antichrist and Christ respectively. Making good the deficient by filling the hole in the structure with a bundle of straw, hints at Antichrist posing as one who can make good the Law's limitations, an important facet of his pretence. Christ however is the sheaf whose straw bears the grain which is separated from it and preserved, a process by which the faithful are selected.<sup>12</sup> Hugo van der Goes in the *Portinari Triptych* places a sheaf on the ground in the position which corresponds to the infant Christ, aptly representing Christ's fruitfulness, bearing many grains and typifying the many who are united in him. Like the seeds of the pomegranate, they are constituents of the whole.

Ass and ox usually appear together in the iconographical traditions of the Nativity and the Adoration. Here, only an ass's head is visible. The argument that it must be evil, since it is in the same pictorial zone as Antichrist, and that only its head is shown, has been interpreted according to ancient legend.<sup>13</sup>

In Bosch's earlier Epiphany, the *Adoration of the Magi* (1480-85), they both appear together, as do the shepherds, but in separate compartments of the hut (Plate 36). Scripture again elucidates the issue. The ass was an unclean animal, unacceptable as a sacrifice under the Law, but could be redeemed with a lamb (Exodus 34.20). The ass in this sense awaited its own 'redemption'. It is shown looking with wonder and expectation from inside the hut upon the one who would effect true deliverance, but in which it too would have a role as the beast upon which Christ rode into Jerusalem. In fact it is placed closer to the infant Christ than any except Mary. Christ and the ass, brought together in this way, epitomised the reconciliation of the unclean with the pure, and was emblematic of the ass being redeemed by the Lamb, and of the Lamb of God who rode into Jerusalem upon this long-suffering beast of burden. Christ too was the burden-bearer of man's sin.

Creatures taking refuge in the fabric of the hut (in the dark corner above the cross-beam, to the left of the star of straw), are appropriately an owl and a lizard; its tail is seen on the cross-beam. Both are in the list of 'unclean' beasts in Leviticus 11.17, 30 (Plate 35). Babylon, Antichrist's typological territory, is appropriately afflicted by divine judgment and becomes a place where none will build tents, no shepherds dwell, only owls and other creatures of the dark (Isaiah 13.19-21). The spiritual equivalent of the owl is expressed in John 3.20, that 'men loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil'.

Four shepherds climb up the side of the hut, two of them recline on the roof and two have staffs; one has a bagpipe, a traditional instrument for shepherds (Plate 31). Another has a knife in his headgear, a means of defence for self as well as for the flock. It is neither natural nor traditional for shepherds to be placed on the roof. Genuine interest in the Epiphany scene is seen to be lacking, so too are deference and a sense of wonder. They climb up the side of the hut; those preoccupied with each other do not even look; and those who do, peer curiously at the infant. The figure who looks through the square of wattle behind Mary, but does not climb the hut, has been identified as Bosch, also depicted in the scene of the Gregory Mass.<sup>14</sup>

In the Epiphany context, the shepherds are viewed as being Jewish because they were witnesses of the first manifestation of Christ's birth, whereas the Magi, or Kings, received the first manifestation of the infant king to the gentiles.<sup>15</sup> The former were the local shepherds in the Judean hills caring for their sheep; the latter had pagan associations and had travelled from far. The shepherds were therefore traditionally identified as Jews, who rejected Christ, and were for this reason usually associated with the hut. In Bosch's earlier Epiphany, one of the two shepherds looks away and both are placed under the roof of the hut. (Plate 36). This linking of the shepherds with the hut is clear in both of Bosch's Epiphanies, but in the *Prado* Epiphany Bosch expands the issue further by associating them with Antichrist. In the *Adoration of the Magi* by Geerten tot Sint Jans, c.1485, however, where the positioning of the five principal characters with a shepherd on the right is very close to Bosch's arrangement of figures, the shepherd is depicted looking upon the scene in a manner comparable with the adjacent kings.

The shepherds of Israel, the nation's leaders, exploited the sheep (Ezekiel 34.2, 8, 10), and there were those who, being hired, forsook their charges, abandoning them to their fate - attack by wolves, the flock's typological enemy (John 10.11,12). The presence of two wolves in the adjacent right wing is therefore significant. Whether Bosch's possible reference to the shortcomings of the shepherds hints at current clerical failures is considered below.

The conflict of pomp and humility in portraying the Three Magi-Kings is mainly explained by their royal origins, their alleged acknowledgement of the infant king, forecasting the ultimate acceptance by the gentiles of Christ as universal king. It seems that Bosch, as with the shepherds, is using the traditional concept of the Epiphany as a means of exposing flaws inherent in both categories. There is more than a hint of duplicity and unseemliness about some of the decorations on the gifts, garments and head-gear of the kings. On the helmet of the elderly king, placed on the ground before the infant Christ, two pelicans are swallowing ripe fruit, which, being gluttonous, belies the king's pious pose and unadorned cloak. While a tradition of fabulous wealth and ostentation developed in the portrayal of the visiting kings, their susceptibility to the influence of the vices which would render them vulnerable to Antichrist's advances is exposed. Embroidery on the sleeve of the white-clad Moorish king appropriately pictures Israelites gathering manna in the desert, which pointed forward to Christ himself - 'I am the bread that came down from heaven' (John 6.41 et seq.). But way off beam are the more typically Boschian pictures of strange birds with human heads, cannibalistic fish, and pagan ceremonies on the container of myrrh, which arouse doubts about the spiritual understanding of the wearer. The pelican on the lid is not drawing its own blood to feed its young, a traditional symbol of redemption,<sup>16</sup> which would be appropriate, but is pecking tempting fruit, the vice of gluttony (*Gula*). Bosch however stops short of the monstrous act of the pelican swallowing its young seen in the wing of his St. Anthony triptych (Plate 40).<sup>17</sup> Similarly incongruous is the jewelled strawberry in the Moorish king's hand, a symbol of lust, reminiscent of the temptation of Eve (Genesis 3.6).

Though the Three Kings, the Magi, were not Christian, but pagan, in the context of an Epiphany scene the idea of them being the aspiring firstfruits of the gentiles was not usually contradicted, nor even diminished. Bosch not for the first time, is taking a realistic view of man's true nature, emphasising that sin and evil are part and parcel of the human condition, as well as the natural order that surrounds them. He strips the Epiphany theme of traditional bias by exposing the flawed integrity of the Three Kings.

Bosch in this work departs in several respects from the traditional treatment of the Epiphany theme in pointing out these contradictory elements, throwing doubt upon their integrity and the likelihood of their maintaining it, especially under Antichrist pressure. The subject of the vices appears again in the depictions of the Passion scenes of the Gregory Mass. The Kings' susceptibility to Antichrist's influence is in line with the emphasis the altar-piece places upon the pervasive power of evil that is inherent in all of mankind, including its leaders. One can go further and claim that virtually all parties are flawed, in

contrast to the integrity and humility of the portrayal of Mary and the diminutive, naked infant, which abjure finery. She is not richly adorned and there is no hint of her alleged queenly status.

The depiction of Abraham's sacrifice of Isaac in the sculptural scenes on the golden gift brought by the kneeling king is a prototype of God's sacrifice of His own Son. Three frogs protrude from under the base of his gift, resembling supporting feet (Plate 31). These have a multiple appropriateness - the frog's connotation with Sin and the crushing of Sin's power. The frogs, 'crushed' beneath the gift, recall the aptness of Paul's words, 'God...shall bruise (tread) Satan under your feet...' (Romans 16.20). They also hint at the promise that the seed of the Woman would bruise (crush) the serpent's head (Genesis 3.15).

The resemblance of the 'helmet' held by Antichrist to the model of Hell in Botticelli's diagram of the Inferno in Dante's *Divine Comedy* has been noted by others.<sup>18</sup> Its funnel shape contains nine successively descending circles. Antichrist's destiny and that of his unrepentant followers is hell, and a hellmouth is a recurring iconographical motif used in association with their punishment. Held in the inverted position, its downward spiralling galleries convey the idea of descent into its depths. In this sense the 'helmet' could be an equivalent to the hellmouth, as Antichrist and his followers can only end up there. It bears some resemblance to a helmet, but it is difficult to reconcile the idea of its belonging to Antichrist in view of the profound significance which has been argued concerning the thorny crown he wears. The other alternative is that it is perhaps the headgear of the adjacent King, and if there is a susceptibility to Antichrist's influence, the process may well have already begun and thus explain why the helmet is in Antichrist's hand.

On the collar of the adjacent King, the Queen of Sheba's visit to King Solomon and the sacrifice of Manoah are presented.<sup>19</sup> Both are revered episodes in Jewish history, the former of events typical of the Epiphany theme - a pagan monarch visiting the Jewish King Solomon, who types the acceptance by a gentile monarch of Christ's future rule. They would be appropriate depictions for the collar of a visiting king..

The two figures at the foot of the right wing (Plate 34), are the donatrix, Agnes Bosschuysen, and her patron-saint, Agnes (*agnus* meaning lamb), which may also allude to the character of the donatrix. The lamb which rests in the shelter of a bank appears to have a further significance. In Bosch's *St. John Baptist in the Wilderness* (Plate 33), the Baptist who was Christ's forerunner points to a lamb, similarly sitting below a bank. In the Bosch scene also, there appear to be references to the infant Christ's future work as the Lamb of God, 'which taketh away the sin of the world' (John 1.29). Alongside the lamb is a shepherd's crook, perhaps intended to indicate awaiting the arrival of the one who is also 'the Shepherd of the sheep' (Hebrews 13. 20). The lamb and the crook are both within an enclosure resembling a sheepfold; its entrance unblocked, open to the landscape beyond. This situation which will change when Christ becomes the 'door of the sheep', i.e. the door of the sheepfold, which gives access to those

seeking salvation. At night (in the darkness of this world), Christ will protect his sheep from incursions of the enemy, like the eastern shepherd who lay across the fold's entrance at night to protect his sheep.

Beyond the open 'entrance', in the landscape beyond, a wolf attacks a man, a knife in its back, and a spear lies on the ground nearby. A true shepherd perhaps did his duty by attacking the enemy, or the fleeing shepherd is being attacked. Farther along the road another wolf chases a woman. They depict the harsh realities of life in the world outside the fold. Deeper into the landscape (Plate 39), the various perils of an evil world are all too evident - a place of execution at the top of a hill, implying the death, perhaps of an innocent victim, a reminder of the crucifixion of Christ. Around the wheel raised on a pole, broken bones lie scattered and the scene is abandoned. It is a gruesome scene of torture and death. The details of *John on Patmos*, by Jan Wellens de Cock, c.1520-25, (Plate 64), are almost identical.<sup>20</sup>

There is no specific indication in Bosch's depiction of defectors from their pastoral duties, but anti-clerical references are fairly frequent in other Bosch scenes. Clerical shortcomings are evident in *The Haywain*, where the pope is prominent in the procession that follows the haycart, seeking vain rewards as it careers toward hell.<sup>21</sup> In *The Temptation of St. Anthony* there is a well-fed cleric under a bridge (Plate 40), and more than a hint of the church-enriching indulgences in the documents held by him and the skating pelican nearby, who comes with a letter of complaint about the system. Not many years hence these issues were embodied in the Antichrist imagery of the reformists.

On the principle that the back-ground landscapes match their territorial and historico-religious associations, Galilee, the location of Christ's ministry, would be appropriate to the lakeland scene, with fishing along its shores occupying Christ and his disciples, making them 'fishers of men', promising deliverance to those who would respond in faith.

The left wing (Plate 34), shows the kneeling donor, Peter Bosschuysen, his patron-saint, Peter, and his coat-of-arms. There is the flavour of a domestic scene with Joseph at the centre and simple tokens of the prosaic order of Christ's family upbringing. Joseph, directly above the donor and looking towards him may be intended to refer to his Joseph-like dedication to the family. This arrangement parallels that of the donatrix, Peter Bosschuysen's wife Agnes, and the solitary lamb directly above her. The ruined buildings are traditionally related back to the temple of Solomon to which the shelter is attached. Again, the Old Order is represented, with the same lessons and Antichrist affiliations described in relation to the hut, reinforced by additional symbols of sin and evil. On the key-stone of the lintel and at the foot of the gateway pillars in the courtyard, are three frog motifs. The chimney as a means of access and egress has similar associations with evil. Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity* (c.1500), comes to mind with its refuge-seeking demonic creatures lurking, or disappearing beneath the stones.<sup>22</sup>

The doorway leads out, as does the gap in the wall on the right wing, into a landscape zone where several minor scenes portray worldly and lustful pursuits, which hint at the vices. Peasants dance accompanied by a bagpipe, a traditional rustic instrument with a recognised sexual connotation. A

courting couple seek the privacy of a shady footpath, another figure spies on them and unbridled horses graze, tokens of lust and pride. A gap in a belt of trees reveals a vista of open ground and a townlet beyond. Bethlehem might be most the fitting identity as the larger setting of the domestic scene of Christ's nativity.

The general theme of evil takes on more virulent forms in the central landscape (Plate 31). A man flees for his life hunted like an animal. Another leading his mule with crescents on the red saddle-rug, an ape on its back (Plate 38), looks as if he may be seeking lodgement, or refuge, at the inn of the White Swan, a place of evil repute,<sup>23</sup> but he passes beyond the crucial turning and follows the direction pointed out by the man on the statue, topped by an inverted crescent (Plate 31). He moves across the landscape fleeing the scene of the approaching conflict. The inverted crescent motif, twice used, makes reference to the Turk, frequent in Antichrist contexts.<sup>24</sup> The ape, inferior to humanity, is mischievous, able to mimic, attracting attention and favour beyond what may be prudent.<sup>25</sup> Antichrist an imitator, a pseudo-Christ, similarly attracts attention and is able to captivate by his trickery. Understandably, Antichrist is the ape of Christ.

Three groups of armed horsemen amidst the prominent undulations of the landscape are on the move, one emerging from between the windmill and the hill below it (Plates 31 and 38); one starting to cross the stream by the bridge (Plates 31 and 37); one on the left above the hut (Plate 31). These converging armies in Bosch's landscape suggest a stage in the final phase, '... the spirits of devils working miracles, which go forth to the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of the Great Day of God Almighty' (Apocalypse 16.13,14). There are links with the Three visiting Kings, to whom various territorial identities have been given as representative of nations and continents.<sup>26</sup>

This gathering of these opposing armies to do battle does not resemble a united effort of the Three Kings to come together to honour the King of Kings and accept his rule. They do not convey, for example, the joyful, celebration of the Saint Bartholemew altar-piece, *Journey of the Magi* (Plate 41). Depictions of the Three visiting Kings, the Three Magi, which traditionally point forward to the time when all kings will come to worship, often show three processions converging towards the place of birth. The *Journey of the Magi* altarpiece is one such example. By comparison these three have kingly attributes, wear lavish clothes and approach from different directions with their mounted retinues, to the blare of trumpets. Various texts of an apocalyptic nature are relevant and in this example, two biblical figures, King David on the left at the front, and the prophet Isaiah on the right side, bear scrolls with references:- 'the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents, the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts' (Psalm 72.10,11). and, 'all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the sides of thy feet' (Isaiah 60.14). Bosch, while maintaining the eschatology of these events, interposes the theme of opposition and challenge. This is another unexpected turn of meaning, a departure from Epiphany tradition.

The city in the background was traditionally Jerusalem in the altar-pieces of the period and it fits the context of Bosch's triptych. Its large size and imposing buildings testify to its eschatological importance, but its subdued tones, recession and ethereal mistiness, hint at the future ideal, the new order on earth, and Jerusalem's prophetic future which would represent the stage following the destruction of Antichrist. The standing cross near the city might have denoted the triumph of the Ecclesia, and the establishment of the New Jerusalem, but it leans and therefore detracts from the optimism and triumph usually associated with the final conquest. An explanation could be that the cross, because it is outside the city, in the world landscape, needs to function as a reminder that the final battle has not yet been joined, and that faith, confidence and optimism are hard to sustain in the midst of the prevailing evil. It would appear to hint not so much at failure to attain the victory in the end, but that tremendous hazards stand in the way to ultimate triumph.

The central landscape reflects the larger historico-prophetic aspects of the Epiphany and the final stages of Antichrist's bid for world power. The four equidistant sails of the windmill on the hillock have been interpreted as the four points of the compass, expressing the idea of all nations of the whole world being affected by these crucial developments.

The Mass of St. Gregory is depicted on the outside of the altar-piece. On the right of the altar, a member of Pope Gregory's *entourage* holds his tiara and below, on the left and right, the two kneeling dark figures are those of the donor and his son, the mother presumably deceased.<sup>27</sup> Gregory celebrates the Mass, said to be a miraculous confirmation of faith in Christ's bodily presence in the sacraments of the Mass (Plate 42).<sup>28</sup> Behind the donor, the artist, Hieronymus Bosch, points to the vision of the risen Christ depicted above the altar (See note 14 above).

The overall austerity of the scene is in keeping with the pathetic, forlorn figure of Christ showing the *stigmata* and wearing the crown of thorns. He is truly a man of sorrows, his head slightly bowed, his hands meekly crossed, 'his visage...marred more than any man' (Isaiah 52.14). He portrays more the rigours of a debilitating struggle than the customary intense gaze and erect head of the triumphant Christ. This mode is in keeping with the emphasis throughout the entire altar-piece upon the world's evil as an omnipresent power of virtually overwhelming force.

An engraving by Israhel van Meckenem of *The Mass of Saint Gregory* scene in the early 1480s, (Plate 43), bears a close resemblance to Bosch's depiction, which it may well have influenced. A large arch similarly surmounts the sarcophagus, placed above the altar. Bosch adopts this format, omitting the *Arma Christi*, but surrounds the resurrected Christ by an empty space edged with a border of nine angels (Plate 42). Beyond this border, scenes of the Passion spiral upwards; the *grisaille* sculptural treatment of these episodes giving way to an illusion of deeper space around the summit of Calvary (Plate 44).<sup>29</sup> The cross of Christ is centrally placed at the peak, but only two crosses are erected; the cross of the unrepentant thief is not in place, but is borne by two figures a little lower down the hill, moving towards the tree from which hangs the figure of Judas (Plate 44). Judas is made the main focus

of evil on the shutters; and the evil character of the unbelieving thief is subsumed by Judas, laying a double emphasis on him. The man and boy observing the spectacle appear to be a further representation of the father and son seen below the altar in the Gregory Mass. There are several issues - the warning and lessons to the observer, in particular the boy; the decease of the mother, the posthumous benefits to her in the appearance before the Mass of her husband and son, thus focussing upon the particular efficacy of the Gregory Mass.<sup>30</sup>

The Devil, carrying off the 'spirit' of Judas, provides the diabolical proximity seen in many Antichrist depictions and the black birds, fitting tokens of evil, wheel above. The typology of Antichrist is well represented in the case of Judas, a false disciple, the thief who 'held the bag' (John 12.6), and betrayed Christ for money, identifies him with the vice of avarice. His end as the Bible describes it hints at the fall of Antichrist - 'Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity, and falling headlong...' (Acts 1.18). He represents the evil that is apotheosised in Antichrist, adding weight to the conclusion that the character fulfilling the major role in the doorway of the hut with its greater wealth of typological evidence, is a depiction of Antichrist himself. As well as betraying the Son of God, Judas went out and hanged himself (Matthew 27.4, 5). Hanging on a tree brought a curse - 'cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree'. (Galatians 3.13; Deuteronomy 21.23). In Nardo di Cione's fresco of Hell, a horned Satan at the bottom of the pit, presiding over the lowest circle, devours three traitors, one being Judas who betrayed the Church.<sup>31</sup> Failing to exercise the insight God gives and taking an ill-considered step, i.e. hanging oneself out of despair (*Desperatio*), was condemned by the early medieval church. It was ranked with the vices and portrayed as a figure piercing herself with a spear.<sup>32</sup>

The inclusion of the seven Passion scenes which rise alternately from right to left on the shutters, is unusual in scenes of the Gregory Mass, but they achieve several purposes. They focus on the pervasive power of evil as a factor in the Passion itself. They also allow the theme of kingship, integral to the interior scenes, to be introduced on the shutters, a theme relevant to Christ and Antichrist, as well as being an important aspect of the Epiphany. They arise in Christ's appearing before Pilate, second scene up on the left and in Pilate's question, 'Art Thou a king then'? The reply, 'to this end was I born and for this cause came I into the world' (John 18.37), which takes up Christ's future kingship. Next below is the crowning with thorns, which broaches the subject again with its reference to the title, 'The King of the Jews' (John 19.21).

The order of the scenes of the Passion is fairly easily arrived at. From left to right, moving upwards, they are the Prayer in the Garden, the Arrest, Christ before Pilate, the Flagellation, the Crowning with Thorns, Carrying the Cross, the Parting of Christ's Garments (Plates 42, 44). Bosch's subsidiary additions to some of the scenes of the Passion provide the cue for the identity of the vices - the fat men and the dog at the crowning - gluttony (*Gula*), and the man with the monkey at the flagellation, *Luxuria*. A woman wearing a large hat, *Superbia*, is in the Christ before Pilate episode. These are reminders that both Judas and Antichrist are linked with the vices, these vices in particular; the fundamental reason

being that they are key men of evil and Antichrist is their leader. These scenes on the outer doors of the triptych confirm the basic Antichrist themes of the triptych.

The iconographical convention of the Gregory Mass is usually construed as an image of devotion with magical properties, able to confer privileges, but escape from Antichrist and the forces of evil he generates are not presented as a sure or easy option. It would be presumptuous, however, to suggest that the altarpiece implies reservations about whether the Church and the Eucharist are the guarantors of triumph for the faithful against the onslaughts of evil and the Antichrist. Signorelli's, *The Rule of Antichrist*, more confidently upholds the efficacy of the Church and its administration of the Eucharist to effect deliverance.

Bosch's presentation of the Antichrist endows him with a sobriety and a disguise that makes him seem all the more feasible, establishing the point that he is an artful deceiver and that an informed detection is required by those wishing to avoid being led astray. In this instance the cryptic imagery of the Messianic High Priest needs to be perceived and as previously mentioned, its recondite nature may be the reason why the Antichrist figure has not been readily recognised.

The artist and his patron are scripturally well-informed, with a depth of insight and sensitivity to textual and thematic relationships in scripture and ingeniously combine seemingly abstruse elements into a subtle complex of visual signs. Bosch's Prado *Epiphany* is an instructive metaphor of the struggle of Christ against the forces of evil in the world and in particular, the nature of their focus in the Antichrist's bid for universal rule. The number and richness of the allusions, substantiate the initial general comment that Bosch's Prado altarpiece is a unique and challenging contribution to late medieval settings of Antichrist, in particular its focus on Antichrist's legendary Jewish origins, an element rooted in the traditional viewpoint.

Bosch does not introduce the shepherds as respectful observers paying homage to the infant king. They subvert the humble spirituality of genuine keepers of the flock and better fit the imperfections and shortcomings associated with the hut to which they cling, curious, cynical, and unbelieving. No concealment is made of the susceptibilities of the Three Magi to the evil influences of their pagan origins and outlook. Traditionally this was not done. The appraisal of their visit has been moved away from the romanticised interpretation, towards a more pragmatic view of their aims and susceptibilities. The humble actualities of Christ's nativity have not been idealised. Virgin and child are rendered with palpable sobriety, and the resurrection is made harrowingly poignant rather than triumphal. Bosch's rendering of the *Epiphany* is more in the nature of a spiritual trauma than an occasion for joyful celebration.

The themes of priesthood and kingship, aided by relevant scriptural allusions, illuminate the two most fundamental types of Christ and Antichrist, particularly relevant to their Messianic and anti-Messianic

roles, in particular the concept of Antichrist as a false priest, a deceiver working false miracles, and one in whom aspirations for rule and kingship outweigh those of genuine sacrifice and priesthood.

Though some of its imagery easily cross-references to Protestant satirical scenes of the 1520s, the traditional point of view about Antichrist is upheld, but without the introduction of standard Antichrist scenes associated with it.

In the bleak political and social contexts, the climate of concern and eschatological expectation of the late 15th century, the artist and his advisors have created a solemn message of warning and exhortation, giving this setting of the Epiphany theme a relevant, if unique turn of meaning.

### III Chapter 11. Luca Signorelli, The Rule of Antichrist

Signorelli's fresco, *The Rule of Antichrist* (1499-1504),<sup>1</sup> takes up Antichrist as the central theme for the first time in a monumental mural decoration; where previously it had been subsidiary and rare,<sup>2</sup> illuminated manuscripts, illustrated apocalypses, engravings, block books and woodcuts being the preferred media. Along with six accompanying frescoes, all crowded eschatological scenes, *The Rule...* dominates the upper walls and pendentives of the *Cappella Nuova* in the Duomo at Orvieto.

The main figure of Antichrist, who appears four times in the fresco, is prominent, but off-centre, in all probability over a vertical golden section shared with the Cistercian monk back to back (Plate 45). One points up to heaven, the other down to hell; the choice is between Christ and Antichrist, whose sinister side is turned to the viewer. While this arrangement makes the main issue clear, a unique mode of further emphasis is to be seen in the close juxtaposition of the hand of the monk next to the pointing Cistercian, whose scrawny fingers are stretched over the cord of his habit. Like the rest of his group, with possible exceptions discussed later, he is securely girded around and stands with his companions on the side of Christ. Most significantly, the knotted cord is made to rhyme with the horn of the Devil, the two almost touching, implying a secure defence against the wiles of the Evil One. A further contrast is to be seen in the friars with cords tied at the waist, secure against attack, and the loose almost casually assumed garments of Antichrist which allow an ambiguity of identity with the Devil, explained below, and permit his intrusion. This unique iconographical focus of the fresco brings together truth and falsity, crucial issues in identifying the pseudo-Christ.

A Jesus look-alike with mature facial features, and a Jewish appearance, attributes of both Christ and Antichrist, give point to the choice between the two alternatives that had to be made. Antichrist may be mistaken for Christ, but closer scrutiny reveals averted, evil eyes, a dark complexion, and long knotted locks. Respectively these could be read as indicative of a deceitful disposition, an association with Evil, especially since he shares the dark colouring of the Evil One, and the reflection of a mind in disarray. A long loose robe falling over his left shoulder and a shirt with edges fastened with brooches or clasps, suggesting a quickly assumed, or easily discarded mode of dress, typify the mode of disguise of a pseudo-character. Cavernous sleeves and ample folds allow concealment, a deceiver's ploy.

Signorelli represents the Devil by a human figure, trimming his wings, but his horns are large and the hideous bellows contraption for the injection of vices (seen in two examples from MS Casanatensis (Plates 15 and 16), is replaced by a more natural stratagem. The Devil's left arm disappears into Antichrist's sleeve and the single hand that emerges is again the sinister left and could belong to either. Oblivious to the Devil's presence, which is after all an artistic ploy, the audience would need to deduce the Devil's influence from the other less obvious signs. To the undiscerning he might appear to be the true Christ, who also had encounters with the Devil (Matthew 4.2, 11).<sup>3</sup>

Antichrist's conduct and mode of rule raised numerous questions, especially about how not to be taken in. Among the recognised hazards were that he might seem worthy of attention, appeal to man's carnality, compel men to listen. He needed to be unmasked. Subtle clues may be all that were given, teaching that one needed to be perceptive and informed in order to avoid the wrong conclusion. Here, however, the terrors of his rule are only too obvious. One has only to look at the treatment meted out by his henchmen on the right, where members of the friar community lie dead, or injured. One lying prone has a split skull, another is being garrotted. Similarly in the area centred below the temple steps, where the episode of the Two Witnesses is placed, a sword is drawn to decapitate a Witness (Plate 45), while another is being returned to its sheath after use. He is a tyrannical ruler, overseeing the slaying of the Two Witnesses and others who do not submit to his rule and meeting out cruel forms of punishment. In these respects he conforms to iconographical tradition.

Antichrist's actions may correspond to some extent to those encountered by the Orvietans and especially the Dominicans, who opposed the alleged heresies of the anti-papal Cathars. These experiences give grounds for thinking the intention was to give the impression that these opponents of the Church had acted much as Antichrist's henchmen are depicted.<sup>4</sup>

Licentious conduct under Antichrist's regime is summed up in the mode of dress and sexual prowess of the henchmen. Man's lascivious inclinations are not veiled. Their depiction was tolerated within the context of religious art, even in a Duomo setting.<sup>5</sup> The richly attired Jew extracts from his purse the coins with which he rewards a shame-faced young woman. Similar implications on account of Antichrist's reputation as leader and promoter of the vices easily attach themselves to other women in the row behind and one on the other side of Antichrist who carries an infant.

The Jew is recognised by his facial features and beard and his customary purse, bearing in this instance Star of David motifs.<sup>6</sup> The Jews as followers of Antichrist, and their alleged avaricious ways, are combined in this figure. His turban headgear associates him with the Turk, both of whom were regarded as antagonistic to the Christian message.

At the foot of the pedestal, a pile of artefacts including money and precious vessels, more pagan than Christian, can be regarded as convertible items of value, suitable for gifts to the loyal, or bribes to confirm the doubtful. This follows medieval tradition where Antichrist, or his supporters, hand out gifts and bribes seen in previous illustrations (Plates 10, 11, 23). They demonstrate Antichrist's love of riches, the material basis of his appeal and his mode of control over others, whom he exploits to extend his influence.

His elevated central position at least gives the impression that he is being presented as a speaker, though he is not depicted in the act of speaking. His eyes are averted; there is little eye-contact with any of the audience, and none with the viewer. He is portrayed in an introspective pose, listening to and much preoccupied with the inner voice of his diabolical mentor. Only an occasional member of his

audience looks at him; few appear to be actually listening, though many engage in discussion. What they discuss would seem to be whether he is to be followed, accepted, but based upon what he says and how he acts. The historical characters in the audience would have decided such matters during their respective life-span.<sup>7</sup> Contemporaries will need to address it with some urgency, as judgment seems imminent. The pains of making the wrong choice are made only too obvious in this and the accompanying frescoes which are concerned with the last things - *The End of the World* (Plate 51), *the Resurrection*, *the destiny of the Damned*, and *the Elect*. The vivid portrayal of the sufferings of the damned lay bare the horrific element in the judgments to come, adding urgency to the warnings.

While Antichrist is elevated and centrally placed, which may seem appropriate for a speaker, or a preacher, it is noteworthy that he is shown standing on a pedestal, not in a pulpit, which puts his apparent preaching role in some doubt.<sup>8</sup> The use of a pedestal instead of a pulpit presents him more as an orator than as a preacher, which shifts the emphasis towards secular rule and the imperial mode. The relief of the rearing horse on the front of the pedestal he is standing on, strengthens this connection, conveying the idea of the ruler as a horseman, where the horse, identified as the people, is controlled by the reins in the rider's hands. Dante Alighieri, who is included among the chapel's portraits, and influential on the themes and imagery of the chapel, describes the emperor's relationship to the people in these terms.<sup>9</sup> Most of the episodes are concerned with his mode of rule, not the act of preaching and the title, *The Rule of Antichrist*, though possibly a later addition, reflects this. One of Antichrist's types is that of rulership and he aims at usurping the powers of rulers to achieve universal rule. This aim stems from his pseudo-Christ stand - false priest, false king, which, unlike Christ, makes rule a priority over priesthood. This may explain why his preaching role is eclipsed by his imperial stance.

A pedestal, which can have a more important function than merely elevating a speaker so that he can be better seen and heard, has much to do with Roman imperial practice, the assertion of the emperor's rule and authority, and the triumphal address. Raised up in this way, and by the extension of his arm (the *adlocutio* gesture), the emperor signified his authority when addressing a Roman audience.<sup>10</sup> The emperor and associates on his *rostrum* in the Forum as he addresses the people (Plate 47), depicted on the Arch of Constantine, erected in Rome, A.D. 315, resembles the way the accompanying figures are ranged in tiers on Antichrist's right and left. This would mean that the audience includes the viewers of the fresco, which is consistent with the gestures of the two persons at front left (Plate 53), who are communicating with them. So far as the parties on the left and right of Antichrist are concerned, the majority are in various ways like the categories on either side of the emperor in the forum - followers, contemporaries and leaders of the day.<sup>11</sup>

Antichrist is twice shown standing on a pedestal, first as the large central figure, and then as the smaller figure overseeing the punishment of the Two Witnesses in the group below the temple steps.

Antichrist's gestures are not those of the *adlocutio*, but in both situations, the power that lies behind the action is the man on the pedestal, whose will is carried out by those whom the fresco clearly identifies as his henchmen. A Roman emperor elevated on a pedestal is often accompanied by one or more who

carry out his orders. To the left of the poet depicted on the socle under *The Rule*, whose portrait has been partly destroyed by the arch surrounding the recess, an imperial figure stands on a pedestal with a subordinate figure behind him and armed Roman soldiers with standards bring two prisoners forward for judgment (Plate 48).<sup>12</sup> This closely echoes what happens in the episode of the Two Witnesses in *The Rule*. The content of the *grisaille* pictures on the lower walls make cross-references and supplement the frescoes, adding their own commentary. While not always apparent, or when recognised, free from debate, in the two respects just mentioned the connection is clear and seems like a cross-reference, establishing a further link with the imperial. It depicts the elevation of the ruler himself, the presence of an accessory figure, and servants carrying out orders, all manifestly present in the fresco itself. Interpreted in this way it gives credence to the imperial nature of Antichrist's authority, the stern orders carried out by his henchman in the killing of the Witnesses and those who oppose his mode of rule (Plate 12).

In other paintings Signorelli incorporates Roman scenes in the form of framed reliefs in the background which add their own commentary. A pertinent early example is the *Flagellation*, (c.1470), Plate 49, where Pilate, seated, looks on the scene from a high pedestal. On the upper right panel of the rear wall, two figures are similarly raised up; the front one is obviously engaged in the process of judgment, the one behind is a subordinate figure. Below are prisoners and their guards. The positioning of two figures on the pedestal echoes the arrangement in the *grisaille* scene, and very much resembles the positioning of Antichrist and Satan in *The Rule*. Andrea Mantegna's, *St. James the Greater condemned to death by Herod Agrippa* (1449-54), depicts Herod Agrippa seated on a pedestal as he condemns him to death (Plate 50), soldiers stand at each side, and others are dressed in Roman costume. The architectural setting is similarly reconciled.<sup>13</sup>

A double execution is taking place at the foot of the chapel steps in the presence of Antichrist, a diminutive version of the central figure and similarly dressed, and as already observed, standing on a pedestal. One of his henchmen dressed like the others up-front in colourful tights, sheaths his sword as the second one commits the grisly deed on the other Witness. Some earlier depictions of the Two Witnesses who were often named, though not here, show similar acts of violence being carried out under orders from Antichrist himself (Plates 4 and 10). They preached the truth in opposition to Antichrist and were slain. Signorelli's fresco embodies standard episodes in the life of Antichrist and there is little doubt that this one represents a depiction of the slaughter of the Two Witnesses. However, they are marginalised by being placed beyond the phalanx of spiritual men who as a class were believed to fulfil the latter-day role of the Witnesses. Signorelli therefore brings them into close conjunction with Antichrist, apparently wishing to accommodate the latter-day role of the Spiritual Orders, whose functions were identified with those of the Witnesses (See note 26 and related text).

*The Rule* poses questions about the identity of its Temple. Jerusalem's Temple was not at the summit of Olivet, though Signorelli places *The Rule's* Temple structure there, the scene of all the actions. It was a high point in Jerusalem, the site of Christ's definitive sermon, his ascension, his return (Acts 1.9-12).

This choice position gives special point to Antichrist's pride and maximises his challenge of Christ's authority there.

Traditionally, Antichrist is associated with the Temple of Solomon, which represented the obsolescence of the Old Order, the Law and the Synagogue, explained in connection with the hut in Bosch's *Prado Epiphany*. In medieval illustrations Antichrist was positioned within or in front of a temple building, sometimes amounting to little more than a porch with Antichrist enthroned inside (Plate 25).

Traditionally it was interpreted as the Temple of Solomon and sometimes labelled as such (Plate 23).

The Temple's huge porticoes in *The Rule* (Plate 45), and its numerous tall columns do not match the customary medieval depictions. It is on an imposing scale, soaring upwards and topped by a circular structure. The greater part of the temple harks back to the earlier classical style, which was perhaps thought sufficient to preserve the idea of an old order, especially appropriate in a context which lays much emphasis on the classical, not overlooking Signorelli's interests and skills in these directions. Its upward aspiration is reminiscent of the Babelite tower whose builders aimed at reaching up to heaven. They were condemned because it was the product of human pride, not an aspiration to Godliness. Its biblical context has Antichrist connotations, not least the Babylonian link, and the prideful ambition of all Antichrist types and shadows.<sup>14</sup>

Dark, sinister-looking figures surround the building and three more can be seen at the third level of the structure. The majority hold long spears and are dressed as soldiers, resembling Antichrist's henchmen in tights, a few wearing turbans. Among them are some dressed in shortish robes, two of whom are receiving adverse attention from the soldiers; the one on the left of the front porch is being led away by them. They would appear to be acting more as Antichrist's supporters and as Temple guards rather than mounting an attack on the Temple itself.

There are various reasons for deducing that Antichrist is being portrayed at the height of his power. His attempted ascension, tangible evidence that his tyrannical rule is at its end, and at the time when the work of the Witnesses was being exercised by the Spiritual Orders, who are among the casualties of Antichrist's *Rule*, and who were believed to supersede the End-of-Time work of the Witnesses. In addition there is multiple witness in the chapel's frescoes to events of the Last Judgment. All this, according to the Antichrist legend, was the time when Antichrist was expected to build a temple of his own. The details of the 12th-13th century account in Adso were that Antichrist's rule was an End-of-Time event during which he would destroy the Temple of God and build his own temple.<sup>15</sup> It can be argued that this is what he had done and that the Temple in the Rule is Antichrist's own. Three additional strands of the argument are that the pedestal upon which Antichrist stands is replicated in the design of the bases of the Temple columns, also that the Temple has met its destruction in the adjacent fresco, *The End of the World* (Plate 51), the three broken columns and its broken capitals and pillars in the debris resembling those of Signorelli's depiction of the Temple. Importantly, this structure is off-centre, and Antichrist himself is directly beneath its zenith. This rising up of Antichrist's temple to

heaven itself, is like the aims of the prideful Babelites to build a tower to reach up to heaven and fittingly embodies Antichrist's pride of character and ambition prior to his fall.

The position of the fresco and alignment of its temple in *The Rule* raise significant issues. Firstly, *The Rule* covers the earliest events depicted in the large murals of the chapel and is the first mural to be encountered, appropriately on the sinister side, just inside the entrance to the *Cappella Nuova*. Chronologically it is the starting point and if its anti-clockwise influences prevail upon the viewer, they lead along a disastrous course - first to the left side of *The Rule* itself where Antichrist falls to his death and, further left, to *The End of the World* which spans the chapel entrance. The next mural further to the left on the opposite side of the chapel to *The Rule*, is *The Resurrection*. This anti-clockwise progression leads on to the damned being consigned to Hell, on the right side of the chapel altar as one faces it. The very start of this movement to the left is the huge soaring temple in *The Rule*. Its alignment, biased towards the left, counters the orientation of the *Cappella Nuova*, turning the observer away from the chapel's altar upon a disastrous course.<sup>16</sup> It engenders an adverse influence, which underpins the argument that it is the temple Antichrist himself has built. This arrangement operates as a warning. As the worshipper enters the chapel he faces the altar and *The End of the World* is behind him. The faithful worshipper who is not distracted by the wiles of Antichrist, metaphorically turns away from the sinister influences of Antichrist's rule and advances to the chapel altar, where the benefits of the Eucharist as dispensed by the Catholic Church, will secure him against the wiles of Antichrist and the ensuing judgments, vividly portrayed in the surrounding frescoes.<sup>17</sup>

In *Christ Handing the Keys to Peter*, c.1482, by Perugino, to which Signorelli himself contributed,<sup>18</sup> the Temple represents the Roman Catholic Church, which is centrally aligned within the dominating perspectivity of the scene. In keeping with the theme of the keys, the Church is presented as central, authoritative, giving the impression of permanence, and the small figures, similar to those in *The Rule*, are swallowed up by the immensity its forecourt, discounting any serious threat. This is not the case in *The Rule*, where the perspective of the Temple is off centre, the site congested and the scene designed so as to depict prevailing conflicts, the pressures and the trials of the situation. Christ handing the keys to Peter, the theme of the Perugino, asserts the claim of the Church of Rome to its authority allegedly derived from the Apostle.<sup>19</sup>

Approaching soldiery on horseback are seen faintly at the rear, left of the Temple. The horses are facing away from the Temple and there is (as yet), no confrontation against the dark footmen around its precincts. Having come from behind the building, the horsemen appear to be moving forward on a different quest and are not being subjected to the rain of fire poured out on Antichrist and his supporters. One concludes from this that they do not belong to the Antichrist fraternity. The company of horsemen would appear to be responding to Christ's triumph over Antichrist. Much of the hillside is covered with small dots which may represent people on the move. 'Fields already white with harvest' were Christ's words describing the multitudinous response to his teaching (John 4.35, 39-41), and the prophet Isaiah (2.1-5), referring to the later return of Christ, speaks about the Word of the Lord going

out from Jerusalem and many people saying , 'let us go up to the mountain of the Lord... he will teach us of His ways and we will walk in his paths ...' This construction seems feasible so far as these more distant details are concerned.

Historical Jerusalem was in the valley below Mount Olivet, where Signorelli introduces a city-scape. It could however in *The Rule's* wider context be intended to awaken associations with the New Jerusalem. Bosch (Plate 31), appears to do this. In some apocalyptic imagery a city-scape may be incorporated, raised up on a hill, awakening New Jerusalem associations.

A miracle of healing, or raising the dead, takes place to the right of the rearing horse where Signorelli places a smaller figure of Antichrist. Persons near the sick-bed are numerous, presumably to indicate the high demand for the exercise of his miraculous healing powers, since little else appears to have been achieved in this cameo scene, except to present Antichrist much in the way in which Christ would have been seen - as a miracle-healer. Placed appropriately on mount Olivet, it is the most typical and familiar scene of Christ's early ministry, and which has influenced the general layout of the fresco. By doing this, Signorelli perhaps intended to play up the pseudo-pastoral role in order to bring about a better balance, having placed so much stress on the tyrannical rule and final judgment of Antichrist. As a depiction of Antichrist raising the dead, the episode depicts Antichrist as a miracle worker, one of his basic types, and his custom of parodying the work of Christ (Plate 24).

Remnants of trees showing little more than leaves, over to the left and adjacent to the falling Antichrist (Plate 45), are the only references to Antichrist's alleged miraculous power over nature, leaves being made to sprout from the roots of trees (Plate 10). Perhaps there were more detailed references originally, but much appears to have been erased. Instead, and more appropriate to the end-of-the-world anxieties of the times and the immediate need to maximise the folly of following Antichrist, his attempted ascension is seen to bring catastrophe upon those who had chosen to follow him, delivering a potent lesson for Antichrist's 'audience' as well as the viewer.

The central arena of the fresco, on Mount Olivet, is appropriately chosen for the staging of Antichrist's fall, for reasons already given (Acts 1.10-12). It is the site where Antichrist is consumed by the spirit of Christ's mouth and destroyed with 'the brightness of his coming' (II Thess. 2.8). In the fresco, the emphasis is laid on the spectacle and ignominy of the fall effected by Michael with sword. Michael is he who is like Christ, and Christ is the embodiment of the Word which is described as a 'two-edged sword'.<sup>20</sup>

Divine judgment is also being poured out on his supporters, noticeably his henchmen in striped tights (Plate 45). A speedy dispatch shows Michael with the sword and Antichrist's headlong fall, but unlike the Wolgemut fall, no accompanying devils either lift him up or pull him down. Neither are there independent witnesses of the event. All suffer as the fiery darts rain down. The reeling backwards motions of some of the victims reflect the prominent single observer with arms raised in Wolgemut's

depiction of the Fall (Plate 26). Iconographical types, Phaeton and Superbia, are models for Antichrist's fall. Phaeton was brought down by one of Zeus' thunderbolts and sent crashing down to earth.<sup>21</sup> He is described in the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493) as a stand-in for Antichrist in his wanton pride, and the depiction of Antichrist's fall by Wolgemut in the *Chronicle* begins a similar spectacular descent. *Superbia* (pride), is also depicted as a falling monarch, or a falling rider. Often pierced by the sword of *Humilitas*, she bears a double resemblance to depictions of the fall where Michael's use of the sword strikes him down (Plate 26).<sup>22</sup> There are Superbia-like falls in *Hortus Deliciarum*, f 258v, Duvet (Plate 62), and the *Wellcome* manuscript (Plate 19). Typological relationships in the *Psychomachia* of Prudentius and in turn, their origin in classical Greek and Roman art and mythology, have been pointed out by Katzenellenbogen.<sup>23</sup> Biblical texts describe sensational falls of Antichrist types - Babylon, Leviathan, Lucifer and the Whore of Babylon.<sup>24</sup>

The band of friars (Plate 52), is made prominent by its central latitude and separation from the rest, except for the hinging of the pointing Cistercian back to back with Antichrist (Plates 46, 52), an important focal point already noted. This heightens their distinction as supporters of Christ in a predominantly Antichrist context, their corded habits indicating their security against the intrusions of the Devil. Antichrist points downwards to hell and to himself, a man of Pride. What he thinks and intends is the work of the Devil standing close. The Spiritual Men search the Bible. Hand movements progress from pointing out a text, climaxing in the Cistercian's firm gesture pointing up to heaven, supposedly indicating from whence Christ will come in fulfilment of his promise, an issue possibly under discussion. While overall they appear to be a consolidated group, they are not entirely of one mind. It looks as though an issue of debate engages the pair wearing different headgear, one of whom wears a turban and could be a Muslim convert. The friars to their right, unlike the others, are bare-headed and confer together; as though their outlook were different. On the identity of the prominent member of the group, St. Vincent Ferrer and Fra Domenico Benivieni have been suggested.<sup>25</sup> Developing from Joachim de Fiore's deliberations, they were believed to have a special function as the end approached and it would appear to be the intention to indicate the developed viewpoint that the supposed roles of the Two Witnesses would become evident in the work of the Spiritual Orders.<sup>26</sup> The Joachimist forecast about their latter-day role provides a convincing explanation why the Two Witnesses are downgraded by placing them nearer the perimeter, and interposing the Spiritual Men, placing them centrally.

The cord of the friar next to the Devil, which brings together the Devil, the Antichrist and the Franciscan Order, has previously been mentioned as establishing an important fulcrum. Not surprisingly, it has a yet deeper significance. Antichrist will be exposed and overcome by the cord. One link in the argument arises in the episode where Virgil, travelling with Dante, takes the cord from Dante's waist, lets it down as a fishing line into the abyss and Geryon, the sea creature, rises up.<sup>27</sup> It has been argued that Geryon can and should be given a Leviathan-Antichrist identity.<sup>28</sup> The identity is based upon Geryon's pleasant face, spotted, sea-creature body, serpent tail and deceitful nature. Antichrist's sometimes pleasant appearance, but evil nature, reveals the contradictory make-up which

underpins his deceit. It takes in Job quotations about catching Leviathan, and Antichrist's typological associations with the Beast of the Sea.<sup>29</sup> Virgil and Dante ride the beast, controlled by the cord, also known as 'Phaeton's reins'. Antichrist's fraud, his deceit, is uttered by the tongue, and it will be bound by the spiritual orders who operate by the use of the tongue. By this means Antichrist will be exposed, bound and destroyed. The role of the spiritual orders in all this is based initially upon the Joachimist claim that they function as the Witnesses, operating at the time of the end with whom Saints Francis and Dominic have been associated, and it is noteworthy that members of both orders are represented in *The Rule*. This phase is connected with the coming of Antichrist in the 6th and the 7th *etas*.<sup>30</sup>

The two adult male persons, front left, have been identified as the artists Signorelli and Fra Angelico, the former the forefront figure (Plate 53). They did not work on the chapel together, and their respective contributions were separated by just over fifty years.<sup>31</sup> As portraits of Fra Angelico and Signorelli they had been both accepted and rejected.<sup>32</sup> Sarah James argues for their rejection as portraits of the artists and claims that they depict the Two Witnesses whose slaughter takes place near the foot of the temple steps.<sup>33</sup> Their roles by this time, as previously stated, were being taken over by the Spiritual Orders, which is why they are sidelined in *The Rule*, the Spiritual Orders being presented close to the focal centre. The artists are turning and one is pointing much as the Apostle John is seen to be doing (Plate 22), and the artist, Hieronymous Bosch, in the Mass of St. Gregory (Plate 42). Both wear dark, sober garments, Signorelli the accepted dress of a successful artist, Fra Angelico the habit of a Dominican friar, his cap testifying to his high status and devoutness as a member of the Dominican Order.<sup>34</sup> They contrast with the exhibitionist dress and physical prowess of some figures, notably Antichrist's henchmen, and accord with the serious challenge their work presents.

John's role in the *Apocalypse*, 'signs', or 'signifies' the message, essentially symbolic, often a forewarning of things to come, which was seen rather than heard, or read, and to which serious heed should always be taken. Illuminators as early as the 12th century began to depict John responding to the subject-matter of the message.<sup>35</sup> Shadowing John's approach, the artists actually point to the subject-matter of the fresco with implied warnings about the nature of Antichrist's rule. and each in his own way conveys a personal message.

It is difficult to consider them as other than the two artists in this context. Communication with the audience has been mentioned already in connection with Antichrist who can be construed as speaking to the viewer, much as a ruler addresses his subjects in the imperial tradition. By glance and by gesture the two artists call the viewer to take note, and their character is well depicted in their actions. Signorelli engages with a stern look straight in the eye; the viewer must either react directly, or turn guiltily away, evading the challenge. At the same time his hands hold each other in contentedness and with the satisfaction of an assured artist, his work completed. Fra Angelico reacts sensitively with sad, downcast eyes and obliquely pointing finger. A friar himself, he is stationed next to the more gruesome scenes of the fresco which have fallen mainly on the friar community, the head of the adjacent body almost touching the hem of his robe. For him, especially, the events were poignant, but retribution

would follow and was already manifesting itself in the graphic events of Antichrist's fall. Next to Fra Angelico's head is the head of one of Antichrist's men, struck down from above. Fra Angelico's prominence and moral stature link up with the resolute stand of his Dominican predecessors at Orvieto who withstood the Cathars, whose anti-papal opposition bore similar characteristics to the Protestant's later stand on Church authority - eucharistic doctrine and teaching about purgatory. These issues of power, authority and the doctrinal stand of the Roman Catholic Church are strongly upheld in the decorations of the chapel, as well as the recognition of the equivalence of pagan sources.<sup>36</sup>

The artist as the alleged revealer of divine truth is very much a tenet of belief, and it comes particularly into play at this point in the chapel's display. In *The Rule*, the first fresco on the left of the entrance to the chapel, and in the *End of the World* adjacent to it, there is a concentration of looking and pointing figures (Plate 54). Some at least of these persons have been recognised as being invested with authority and credence in prophetic utterance. Two prominent characters, one an Old Testament king or prophet (David), who looks pointedly at Antichrist's henchman, his hand raised as he points to the fulfilling events of prophecy, the other a seated sibyl (the Cumaean Sibyl), with an open book, who refers to a prophetic text as she converses with a person almost totally hidden.<sup>37</sup> The three younger persons, one Antichrist's henchman, the other two soldiers, look up aghast at the final, no doubt unexpected, catastrophe. The portrait of the poet, Empedocles (Plate 55), similarly concerned in his writings about End-of-Time events, leans out of his tondo and looks up in the direction of their fulfilment.<sup>38</sup> The artist's initials 'L S' (Luca Signorelli), are in his line of vision and one may take this as a further indication of the painter as a revealer, or signifier, of truth, who saw what others did not, and was adept in communication. Signorelli's contribution in these respects is discretely acknowledged, lending strong support to his being identified as one of the two artists.

Though judgment on Antichrist appears in *The Rule*, judgments relating to *The End of World* occupy two restricted areas on the left and on the right over the chapel entrance, adjacent to the left hand side of *The Rule* (Plate 51). On the right, a darkened sun and bloodied moon signify the world's end and the Last Judgment. The principal sources, include the following scriptural texts:- Joel 2.10, 31; 3.15; Matthew 24.29-31; Mark 13.4-27; Luke 21.7-27 and Jacopo da Voragine's (c.1230-1298 ), *Leggenda Aurea*, which itemises several of the episodes.<sup>39</sup> They follow the death of Antichrist. Judgment by flood, shows surging waves with boats perched precariously on their crests threatening to engulf large buildings. One, a ziggurat tower, recalls the constructions of Babylon, the land of Shinar and the Tower of Babel (Babylon), all of which were subjected to judgments of one kind or another, which typify aspects of the final judgment. Man's pride and ambition to build a tower to reach heaven was an act of pride and provocation and was punished as such, and Antichrist associations with Babylon develop from this phase of biblical history (Genesis 11.2, 4, 9). At the same level, just below the moon, are two large buildings, one resembling a church, the other a ziggurat tower.

There is much scriptural support for the association of water with sin, judgment and death - symbolically in Christian baptism, the judgment by flood of Noah's day, and the crossing of the Red

Sea. In the analogy of the Ship of the Church, Christ's makes it to the shore, completing the voyage of salvation; the false church of Antichrist capsizes and sinks beneath the waves. Waters lie between the legendary land of the living and the land of the dead and are crossed by Charon in a boat. Signorelli introduces this theme in *The Damned being Plunged into Hell* fresco situated on the right side of the altar at the opposite end of the Chapel. A group resembling Antichrist's henchmen torture their victims, and below, a mixed group of men and women stare at the wreckage of broken columns and capitals of three truncated pillars, still on their bases. As previously stated, the design of the bases resembles that of the pedestal upon which Antichrist stands, as well as the bases of the temple, which would identify it not only as the one depicted in *The Rule*, but as the one he built.

At the very bottom of the stack the larger group of ten persons - prophets, philosophers, astrologers, previously discussed, focus on the spectacle of fulfilling prophecy about the end of the world.

### III Chapter 12. Albrecht Dürer: The *Apocalypse* Woodcuts (1498)

Dürer achieved a great technical and aesthetic advancement in his *Apocalypse* imagery well beyond that of his immediate predecessors. Undoubtedly influential in these respects, expectations might therefore be high in terms of his contribution to the Antichrist theme, but so far as Antichrist is concerned, Dürer's imagery is limited and uncertain; and it is not easy to quantify this element in his *Fifteen Woodcuts*. Two items only have been chosen from this series which present features of particular interest in the present context. They are *The Martyrdom of John* and *The Whore of Babylon*.

One of the woodcuts, number thirteen of the 1498 series, combines Apocalypse 13 and 14. The former chapter is about the seven-headed beast of the Sea, one of which is wounded and falls back; the beast of the Earth, and the number 666. All of them had been given an Antichrist identity. These Antichrist associations are clear enough, and it is also clear that judgments are to be poured out by Christ who holds the sickle and that all, including those who worship the beast, will be subject to them. Dürer however is not specific about which of these he identifies as Antichrist.<sup>1</sup>

Following consideration of the two items, opportunity will be taken to look at the iconography of the Whore in earlier and later examples by other artists.

All the *Apocalypse Woodcuts* following the title-page are impressive and complex scenes from the Apocalypse, with the exception of the *Martyrdom of John* (Plate 57), which has a legendary source.<sup>2</sup> It is of special interest in the present context on account of its association with an Antichrist type, the Emperor Domitian, contemporary with the Apostle John, whom Dürer portrays watching intently as John sits in a vat of boiling oil. This form of sustained torture followed by exile on the isle of Patmos was typical of the evil ways of Domitian, who was frequently quoted as an Antichrist figure and written about in these terms.<sup>3</sup> That Dürer would have known this is implied in his choice and treatment of the episode, as he gave the scene a setting contemporary with his own times, depicted the Emperor as a Turkish Sultan, and strengthened the national emphasis by introducing two more turbaned figures. Sultan and Turk were notorious on account of their incursions into Christian territory over a long period and the Turk's opposition to the Christian Church associated him with Antichrist.<sup>4</sup> A turbaned figure accompanies the emperor in the Grüninger Bible's depiction of the Martyrdom of John (c.1485), Plate 56c.

Enthroned, robed in ermine, feet crossed, holding a sceptre, an imperial, tyrannical ruler (Plate 57), Domitian keenly observes the torture his subordinates carry out at his command. The setting is one of imperial splendour with an elaborate canopy over the throne. Imperial figures have been well represented among Antichrist types and Antichrist's imperial associations were discussed in connection with Signorelli's, *The Rule...*(chapter 11).<sup>5</sup> The Apostle John, whom Domitian so ruthlessly mistreated, was the one to whom Christ 'signified' the Apocalypse (Apocalypse 1.1), and whose epistles contain the only Bible references to Antichrist by name.

Rome's first century persecution and enslavement of Jewish subjects, its attack on Jerusalem and the destruction of the Temple, typify Babylon's mode of rule and endorse Rome's Babylon identity. Domitian typifies the evil tyranny of Antichrist in the Last Days, associating him with the prototypical Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylon.<sup>6</sup>

It is significant, but not surprising, that Dürer should choose in the anxious years of the fifteenth *fin-de-siècle* to introduce in the first illustration after the title-page of his *Fifteen Apocalypse Woodcuts*, one who in so many ways prefigured the Antichrist.

He also introduces a similar Sultan figure in his depiction of *The Whore of Babylon*, number 14 of the series (Plate 58). As both are prominent in their respective contexts, it would be logical to attach a similar significance to each of them.

The vision of the Whore on the seven-headed beast had attracted Antichrist allusions and associations which would be well known, even if they were not accepted. However, Dürer's Antichrist link is made with the Sultan, not the Whore. He is depicted gesturing towards her as she rides the seven-headed the beast, as though he had fallen for her blandishments and is introducing her by gesture to the two foremost figures, the burgher and his companion, whom he faces and with whom he converses.

Crowded together, left foreground, are various figures. The kneeling, cowed monk; and the *landsknecht*, identified by his towering ostrich plumes and slit clothing.<sup>7</sup> Also among these figures are another soldier holding a halberd and wearing a horned helmet, a woman, said to be wearing a Nuremberg cap, a merchant - hand on hip, and the burgher wearing the tilted hat, present at the martyrdom of John. Kings and senior clerics are noticeably absent from the group of persons to whom the Woman is offering her favours, with the exception of the Sultan who is the sole ruler figure. Dürer's selection does not include senior clerics, or rulers, bar the one exception, though in other depictions of the theme, political figures are more often present. The earlier Cologne Bible and the Grüninger Bible include an emperor, a king and at least one Jew and similar figures are present in later examples (Plates 56a, 56b, 56c, 82, 86).

*The Whore of Babylon* welds together three episodes belonging to chapters 17, 18, 19, which interact and reinforce the certainty of divine retribution on the Beast and its Woman rider and her associate city. One of the angels proclaims the fall of Babylon; the relevant Apocalypse text identifies it as Rome, the city on seven hills (Apocalypse 17.9). Babylon well and truly burns; the flames behind the Woman threaten to engulf her and the typical curvilinear tail of the beast is less erect than usual against the rising flames, as though it sensed its approaching doom. Whereas one angel with outspread arms proclaims the advancing destruction of the city, the other has not yet released the millstone. This reflects the textual facts that Babylon burns and the stone's later release destroys her utterly. Apocalypse 18 gives the detailed account of Babylon's downfall, indicating its far-reaching impact on the prosperous city.<sup>8</sup> The sword-bearing rider above the cloud barrier (the knight faithful and true)

(Apocalypse 19.11-16), advancing at the head of an innumerable company of faithful supporters is on his way to do battle. He is not depicted as the immortalised Saviour of the text (Apocalypse 19.13), but as a German princely figure leading an attack upon the adversary below, implying a contemporary politico-religious struggle.

Dürer has clothed the woman in rich attire - a long robe pulled in at the waist, (cp. Cologne Bible, Plate 56a), emphasising her slim, attractive figure. Sitting sideways, arms outspread, are iconographical characteristics retained from early imagery.<sup>9</sup> Forearms and bare shoulder are brazenly exposed, calculated to allure her suitors. She wears a necklace and holds up her ornate cup in pride higher than beast's seven heads, also seen in the Cologne Bible, Plate 56a. With falling ringlets, eyes and eyebrows well defined, her right hand holds the cup in formal display. Contemporaneous features are achieved by current taste and craftsmanship in the Venetian style design of the chalice with knob and ornamented lid and the attire of the woman.<sup>10</sup>

The iconographical continuity in depicting the Whore of Babylon is sustained in a long line of examples.<sup>11</sup> The Woman on the Beast, San Millan Beatus, f.197v (Plate 59), an early instance, c.970, employs the side-saddle position with arms stretched out sideways, holding high her cup of abominations. Her style of head-covering which hangs down to her shoulders is seen in other depictions (Plate 60). There is however no exposure of the body; her dress does not cling, but is voluminous. The curvilinear shapes in the hem echo the beast's genitalia to which they are juxtaposed and are indicative of her whorish and adulterous character and the vice, *Libido*. She is stylishly and richly dressed and wears a large jewelled brooch. These too are recurring features typical of *Luxuria*. Unusually the Beast is given one, not seven heads, but is multi-toothed, feet fiercely clawed and has a serpent tail, indicative of its evil make-up and associations. The Woman and the Beast maintain their poise showing that she is in full command.

*The Whore on the Beast*, MS Morgan 524, f. 16v, a mid-thirteenth century example (Plate 60), portrays a less ferocious beast - apart from its spiky horns, but the woman is very much a *Luxuria* figure. Her dress clings to the upper part of her body and arms, and is pulled in at the waist. The circular object at her waist is a mirror, which in the upper register she holds in her hand, an attribute of *Luxuria*. One arm holds the cup; the other is brazenly angled at her waist, giving her both authority and allure as she looks engagingly at the Apostle John. Her head-covering intertwining with her arms is much extended in length and imparts elegance. Post Dürer, in the polemical imagery of the reformation, where the Woman's identity becomes manifestly that of Antichrist, these iconographical features prevail. In the female context, *Luxuria*, is particularly relevant.

Dürer's influence upon 16th century illustrations of the Apocalypse is extensive and is evident even in those examples which were first to take a firm anti-papal stand in the 1520s - Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (1521), the Apocalypse illustrations in Luther's New Testament translations of 1522 (the September and December Testaments), and those that were influenced by them. Some of

them were produced by Lucas Cranach, his older son Hans, and Hans Holbein. These publications form the subject-matter of the following chapters, 13 and 14 of Part IV.

Jean Duvet (1485-1561), much influenced by Dürer, but with a distinctive personal style, demonstrates the continuing iconography of the Whore of Babylon. His twenty-three engravings of the Apocalypse, c.1555, depict the Babylonian Whore in two typically complex scenes, shallow in depth. She rides her tall-necked beast with animal heads (Plate 61), a seductively exposed figure with breasts bare, skirts hitched up, exposing her legs. Her eyes engage her admirers and she wears rich attire decked with jewels. She raises high her cup of abominations in one hand; the addition of a serpent twisted around her extended arm is indicative of Edenic temptation, while with the other she clings to the necks of the beast. In the following illustration (Plate 62), the falling millstone strikes one of accompanying kings and the Whore plunges head-first into hell in a calamitous, Superbia-like fall, above the tangled necks of the beast. Babylon already on fire suffers as the millstone falls, which strikes the crowned head of one of the admiring kings (middle right edge). There are two broken columns, signifying the downfall of an established order which had brought divine justice upon itself. Broken columns are the remnants of a previous order of things which can carry sad memories of former glories, like the remnants of the fallen empires and civilisations of Greece and Rome, much beloved and admired by Renaissance humanists. They function like tombstones. In the apocalyptic context, as here, they refer to the impact divine judgment will have upon apocalyptic Babylon. In the traditional, non-apocalyptic scene of John's martyrdom (Plate 63), the enthroned Emperor Domitian extends a down-pointing hand towards the man about to immerse the Apostle John in the vat of oil. He leans forward from his throne elevated on three steps with a high canopy and hanging draperies. Behind him and beyond, the columns that support the imperial order of things are as yet unbroken.

Undoubtedly a major influential figure in *Apocalypse* illustration, Dürer (1471-1528), represents a stage in the process of development up to the threshold beyond which Babylon was identified as Rome, the Pope as Antichrist, and the Scarlet Woman on the Beast as the Papal Antichrist.

## Notes on Part III

### Chapter 9. Illustrated Apocalypse Manuscripts and Block books

1. Scribner (1994), p149.
2. McGinn (1988), p25, n.113, and Illustration 20, p.48, *The Pope as Antichrist* (Jena manuscript, c. 1500 A.D., now in Prague, National Museum, ms. IV. B4, f.35a). The latter depicts the Pope enthroned, wearing a triple tiara, blessing two monks doing obeisance.
3. *Hussite imagery and Luther's Passional*, see D.G.Kawerau, vol.IX of Weimar Luther edition, p. 676 ff.
4. Saxl (1942), pp. 82-134.
5. Emperor Sigismund was the enemy who sent army after army against their country in order to suppress the only true worship of Christ ... as Huss and his followers understood it. Saxl (1942), p. 89, lines 5-8, and n.2.
6. In the year of the comet Huss became rector of three faculties at Prague university and had been appointed to preach at the Bethlehem chapel, the traditional seat of Czech national religious resistance. Shortly before, Wyclif had sparked a debate in Prague by an adverse comment about university learning. For the latter reasons Saxl perceives a connection with the message associated with the comet. Saxl (1942) pp. 93, 94.
7. The Hussites, unlike other reformist groups, were prepared to use force in the furtherance of their aims and the Hussite wars were fought in and around Prague. Saxl (1942), p.86.
8. The evil king of Daniel 11.21-30, a 'vile' man who secures control of kingdoms and wars against the king of the south, was identified with Antiochus Epiphanes, as a type of Antichrist, in the time of Jerome. CCL 75A: 921-22.
9. The Emperor's continued reluctance to join a crusade led to his excommunication, which the Emperor ignored, and set out on what was by then the sixth crusade. It was unacceptable to the pope that an excommunicate should lead a crusade, so he proclaimed him no longer king in Germany and declared that Sicily owed no further allegiance. The Emperor raised opposition against the pope, obliging him to retire to Perugia. By 1234 both were again at loggerheads when Frederick attempted to make himself master of the whole of Italy. Before the impasse could be resolved by the calling of a council, Pope Gregory died. Maxwell-Stuart, *Chronicle of the Popes. The Reign-by-Reign Record of the Papacy from St. Peter to the Present* (London 1997), p.113.
10. Simony was one of the Church's evils, the pope the principal offender, and indicative of the need for reform. Saxl (1942), p. 20.
11. The operative vices are consanguinity, bribery, servitude, favour and noble birth. Saxl (1942), p. 87.
12. Saxl (1942), pp. 91, 92, lines 3-6.
13. Saxl (1942), p. 90, line 8. 'Dominus Kruscho signifies the Antichrist, his followers the Antichrist's army'. (*Dominus Kruscho significat antichristum. Satellites Kruschonis significant exercitum antichristi.*)
14. Bing (1942), p.144 and p. 144, n. 1.
15. The crown ideally fits the politico-religious typology of Antichrist's power. Wright (1995), p.174, in this connection refers to the imperial regalia of Charles IV. Exactly how such possible influence may have operated is not clear, but the combination of crown and mitre so far as Antichrist is concerned is remarkably apt and Wellcome is unique in this respect.
16. Bing (1942), p144, n. 2.

17. Bing (1942), p.145, top paragraph.

18. Bing (1942), p.144, top paragraph.

19. Wellcome's expansive account in the 18 pictures devoted to Antichrist's life and death, implies the use of additional sources beyond the standard texts. Bing (1942), p. 145, n. 1, observing this, reports having been unable to identify them. Referring to the period after Antichrist's death, Emmerson (1994), p.144, identifies the exegetical tradition as the source which Wellcome appears to be following.

20. The exegetical tradition concerning the last things, allowed a period of time for repentance after Antichrist's death followed by signs and wonders. The Wellcome gloss gives 45 days. See chapter 6, n.14.

21. See Bing (1942), pp.143,144, 146 and n.3.

22. Hartmann Schedel, *Liber Chronicarum*, (Nuremberg 1493), concludes its account of the sixth age with Wolgemut's depiction of the preaching and the fall of Antichrist. The sixth age extends from Christ to the time of Antichrist and the seventh age follows on. There is also a short chapter on Adso's *De Antichristo*, which gives an account of the legend describing the Two Witnesses, Antichrist's three-and-a-half year rule, his death following his 'ascension'; then a 45-day opportunity for repentance to those Antichrist had converted; after that the Last Judgment.

23. Antichrist's fall is spectacular, implying a descent akin to Simon Magus, Phaeton, Superbia, and Leviathan, though the fall is depicted mid-air. See Richard Emmerson and Ronald Herzman, "Antichrist, Simon Magus and Dante's 'Inferno' XIX", *Traditio*, 36, 1980, pp. 378-382. Jerome was thought to be the first to identify Antichrist's destruction with the Mount of Olives: *Commentarium in Daniel* 11 (PL 25, 574C).

24. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 134, c.1460s, authorship unknown. For its didactic character, details about its two parts, end of world events, the fate of human beings, and its treatise on Antichrist following the Adso tradition, see F. Carey, ed., *The Apocalypse and the shape of things to come* (BM 1999), p. 93.

25. MS Vitrina I, was begun between 1428-35, painted by Jean Bapteur and Péronet Lamy, finished late 15th century by Jean Colombe. Wright (1995), p162. The skills of the artists are seen in realistic, spatial landscape settings, imbued with an atmosphere of approaching doom conveyed by lowering skies and dark shadows, especially in the unfolding apocalyptic episodes which inhabit them. For a facsimile, see Clément Gardet, *De la Peinture du Moyen Age en Savoie,III; L'Apocalypses figurée des Ducs de Savoie (MS Escorial E. Vitr,V)*, (Annecy 1969).

26. Concerning the identity of the beasts of Apocalypse 13.1, 2, 11, 12 (the Beast of the Sea and the Beast of the Earth), the latter is much less often unambiguously depicted as Antichrist and the authorities less specific, but its Antichrist associations were acknowledged. Various attributions to the Earth beast are - as a disciple of Antichrist who will preach deceit (Berengaudus gloss); the power of Antichrist (*Glossa ordinaria*); part of a unity of Evil. These identities would be known, but are variously applied and treated as interchangeable. For relevant observations, Emmerson (1981), pp.22, 23, 40, 74, 124, 132, 211.

27. The false priest 'had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon' (Apocalypse 13.11-14). Exegetes as early as Primasius of Hadrumetum sixth century and Haymo of Auxerre in the ninth had interpreted Apocalypse 13.3 and 12 as indicating the overwhelming pride of Antichrist which impels him, among other exploits, to parody Christ's Ascension and Pentecost. (Primasius, *Commentarium*, PL 68, 879A; c.882BD. Haimo of Auxerre, *Explanatio in Apocalypsim*, PL 117, 1099-1100.)

## Chapter 10. Bosch: The Prado Epiphany

1. Mia Cinotti, *The Complete Paintings Hieronymus Bosch* (London 1969), p.9, refers to 'the spiritual unrest that troubled the end of the fifteenth century' and 'the terror with which the dawn of the year

1500 was awaited. A romantic interpretation of the apocalyptic prophecy presented this date, as it had the year 1000, as the year that was to bring the end of the world'.

2. Christ was a Jew whose lineage is traceable from Abraham through David, as the genealogies of Matthew 1.1 *et seq* and Luke 3.33, 34, confirm. The origin of Antichrist from the Jewish tribe of Dan is a deduction from Genesis 49.17. (See Part II, ch. 5, 'Human, Semitic and Evil'.)

3. Suzanne Lewis, *Tractatus adversus Judaeos* in the Gulbenkian Apocalypse (1986), p. 547, n. 21, mentions the long robe which often covered the head and the Jewish pointed hat (*pileum cornutum*) worn by European Jews without derogative connotation until the 13th century, when it became necessary in order to comply with canon 68 of Lateran Council IV (H. Rothwell ed., *English Historical documents, 1189-1327* (London, 1975). Semitic imagery and comment from the Berengaudus glosses, much of it anti-semitic, is a significant feature of the Gulbenkian Apocalypse, which dates from c.1260.

4. The sins of Adam and Eve brought about a consciousness of their state of nakedness, typifying their Sin, and their attempt to provide a covering for it by an apron of leaves started a process to deal with Sin. A more effectual covering appointed by God - the use of an animal skin, which entailed the shedding of blood, introduced the principle of a blood sacrifice for sin under the Law, which in turn pointed forward to Christ's sacrifice, the totally efficacious covering for it. A further warning about nakedness is in Exodus 20.26.

5. As the Pseudo-Christ, his aim is to usurp the supreme power of Christ's rule (Apocalypse 17.14; 19.16, 'King of Kings and Lord of Lords'). This aspect is represented in Plates 10, 11, 22, 23.

6. Christ's High Priestly obligations came first, following which he passed into heaven itself (Hebrews 4.14; 7.26, 27). He rules on the throne because he is worthy, being the High Priest that offered himself. ('... Worthy the Lamb that was slain to receive power ...' (Apocalypse 5.12). Also, '... power be unto him (i.e. the Lamb), that sitteth upon the throne' (Apocalypse 5.13).

7. In the Annalena Panel, Fra Angelico (c. 1450), the Virgin and Child enthroned appear with Peter Martyr, Cosmas and Damian. Pomegranates with their fruit and flowers are introduced as garlands which decorate the architectural frieze and have a similar significance.

8. A small hand-bell, the sanctus bell, is rung at the elevation of the Eucharist. The mere presence of the bell in Raphael's portrait of *Pope Leo X with Cardinals Julio de' Medici and Luigi de' Rossi*. (Uffizi Gallery, Florence.), can be taken to indicate, at the least, the Pope's intercessory role in the mediations of the Eucharist.

9. Isaiah 53.3, '... despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.' Christ suffers because of the way men treat him, not because he is diseased and leprous. Laurinda Dixon, *Bosch* (London 2003), chap. 7, 'The Crucible of God : Bosch's Chemical; Epiphany', pp. 211-212, discusses alchemical issues and makes critical comment on L. Brand-Philip's observations based upon Hebrew legendary sources.

10. 'My time is not yet come' (John 26.18). 'My time is at hand' (Matthew 26.18). Delay is also implicit in II Thessalonians 2.8, the chapter establishing that the man-of-sin arises from within the ecclesia and continues till Christ's Second Coming, when he is overthrown. Acts 3.20 - 'The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before that great and notable day of the Lord come', similarly indicates a time-table of events before Christ's rule begins and the usurper's is ended.

11. Lotte Brand-Philip, 'The Prado *Epiphany* by Jerome Bosch', *Art Bulletin*, XXXV, 1953, p.208 and n.4, refers to the *Midrash Conen*.

12. This is a figure for the selection of the faithful whereby they, the grain, are separated from the chaff and preserved. John Baptist speaking of Christ, '...Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' (Luke 3.17). Gerung, Part IV, chapter 3, section (a), takes up the theme from a Jeremiah quotation, which asks, 'What is the straw to the wheat?' Nahum 1.10, referring to the wicked, '... they shall be devoured as stubble, fully dry.' Plate 101 depicts the husbandman on Luther's side representing the redemptive process.

13. Brand-Philip (1953), p.270, notes 15, 16, 17), interpret the presence of the ass's head on the basis of ancient legend, relating to ass worship, one of the calumnies of the Jews. The ass is sometimes given a position of honour, in Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity*, for example, where it is large and elevated, its back arching above Mary, her halo interposing between the intersection of the cross on its shoulders and the head of the Virgin. There are good reasons in Bosch's Prado *Epiphany* for ignoring the calumnies and recognising the participating role of the ass in Christ's triumphs, including his symbolic visit to Jerusalem as its future king. Zechariah 9.9 '... behold thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation: lowly and riding upon an ass'. Isaiah 1.3, is a telling reference: 'The ox knoweth his owner, the ass his master's crib'.

14. Alleged representations of the artist are: the man peering through the wattle at the infant Christ; the one left of the screen in the St. Gregory Mass, who points to the vision; the man on the right helping Anthony cross a bridge in the left interior wing of Bosch's: *Temptation of St. Anthony* triptych (Plate 40). These three figures look alike and could conceivably be younger versions of the older alleged portrait of Hieronymous Bosch (c.1555). Self-portraits of the artist have been discussed by D. Bax, *Ontcijfering van Jeroen Bosch* (The Hague 1949), pp. 20, 21.

15. The first manifestation of Christ's birth to the shepherds was to Israel; the first manifestation to the gentiles was to the Kings, the Magi, who represent the aspiring first-fruits of the gentiles, an expression in Augustine's *Sermones* 200.1; 119.1; 202.2. Lewis (1986), p.548 and n.27.

16. The pelican, drawing blood by plucking its feathers to feed its offspring, like Christians being fed by the Eucharist, is a traditional symbol of redemption. A depiction of the pelican in the tondo on the reverse of Bosch's *St. John on Patmos*, presents it in its traditional, self-sacrificial role. Dante refers to the Apostle John leaning on the breast of Christ as our pelican (Dante, *Paradiso* 25: p.112).

17. The pelican swallowing its young on the left, under the bridge, in the left wing of Bosch's, *Temptation of St. Anthony* triptych, would appear to be intended to match the conduct of the cleric holding an indulgence by means of which they enrich themselves at the expense of the laity. See Plate 40.

18. F. Lippman, *Drawings by Sandro Botticelli for Dante's Divina Commedia* (London, 1896).

19. Solomon and the Queen of Sheba's visit I Kings 10; Manoah, Judges 13. Manoah was the father of Samson, the latter a judge and a Nazarite, whose conception was promised by an angel. It is appropriate as a parallel to the sending of a deliverer by God, in Samson's case to deliver Israel from their Philistine enemies; in Christ's case, as the Redeemer.

20. Wellens Cock, *John on Patmos*, c.1520-25 ( Plate 64). Three long posts to which wheels were attached on which victims were tortured, skeletal remains strewn around, replicate features of the Prado *Epiphany*, right wing. Wellens Cock creates not so much an evil landscape as a scene of desolating judgment in an awesome setting of towering rocks surrounded by water, desolate and bereft of human life.

21. The Pope and the Emperor are much like the rest of humanity in the pursuit of the material, except that they maintain a measure of dignity, whereas others endanger life and limb to grab what they can. Bosch combines it with numerous other forms of vanity and indulgence, which preoccupy and turn humanity away from the more serious issues of life. Christ watches from the heavens, unperceived except by the angel on the wagon. A peeping Tom watches a courting couple and a small group sing, unaware that it is the devil playing the tune (through his nose). Their destiny is Hell of which the right wing is a depiction. This example is not in the anti-papal category. The *St. Anthony* Triptych and other examples by Bosch, reveal the vanities and temptations of the way - dancing to the bagpipe, love-making and more heinous offences.

22. The *Mystical Nativity*, Sandro Botticelli (1501), has been viewed as a portrayal of the Joachimite theme of the peace and harmony of the third age ('status'), following a time of trouble, the loosing of the devil for three and a half years, after which it was expected he would be chained and trodden down. It was associated with the troubled period in Italy in the 1490s. Angels engage in a celebratory round; the inhabitants of heaven and earth rejoice together and embrace, the effect being to dispel the last vestiges of evil, sending devils scampering for cover under the stones. It is linked with Apocalypse 11 and 12.

The painting follows the 15th century trend in its use of a traditional theme (here, the Nativity), to embody an eschatological message and relate it to contemporary events and expectations.

23. An inn also with a sign of the swan in Bosch's *The Prodigal Son*, is closely similar, clearly a place of evil repute with its barrel bee-hive, illicit love, and the presence of pigs. (The prodigal in the parable consumed his substance with riotous living and 'ate of the husks that the swine did eat.' Luke 15.16). A donkey crossing a desert landscape recalls the flight into Egypt of the infant Christ; the ape recalls Antichrist, the Ape of Christ This could be read as a parody of Christ's nativity, a novel introduction among Antichrist's parodies of episodes in Christ's ministry. The crescent on the red rug which covers the donkey and the one on the pointing image, which direction the man leading the donkey seems to be taking, represents the Turk who has connotations with Antichrist as an enemy of the Church. H. W. Janson, *Apes and Ape Lore in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance* (London 1952), p. 68f).

24. Islam was commonly regarded as the enemy of the Church; the much-lamented capture of Constantinople (1453), invasion of Bible lands and the city of Jerusalem by the Turks were among the painful memories of the period.

25. *Luxuria*, one of the vices, conveys the idea of worship of the inferior and may be applied to the male observer in one of the scenes of the Passion in the Gregory Mass, accompanied by a monkey as he watches the suffering Messiah. Vices are much in evidence in these scenes, showing that Christ's Passion was compassed about by the evils common to humanity.

26. The three companies bear a warlike appearance and do not move either in the same direction, or visit either of the cities depicted in the landscape. This element of detachment allows them to be construed as converging for war in accordance with the prophecy of the 'three frogs'. Impliedly the three kings stand for all the kings of the earth who are ultimately drawn by Antichrist to the final battle. The number is symbolic and the terrain and proximity to Jerusalem endow the scene with eschatological meaning relating to the final conflict and the relevant prophecies:- Apocalypse 16.13, 14; 19.19; 20.7,8; Ezekiel 38.8 and Psalm 2. The three magi are representative of all kings, but their specific national and continental identities are obscure. Clues have been taken from the three sons of Noah - Sham, Ham and Japhet, who were the ancestors of all the nations following the destructions of the flood. Asia, Europe and Africa may have originated in interpretations of Daniel's prophecies. (Daniel's Dream Map used in two of Luther's works on Daniel, has all three and link his prophecies with the onslaught of the Turks upon Europe.) Egypt, Libya and Ethiopia, is misleading, as they are just three of many nations who accompany Gog of the land of Magog to the battle (Ezekiel 38.5,6 and context).

27. This deduction supports the conclusion that the man with the boy watching the hanging Judas represent the donor and his son. See note 30 below; also Brand-Philip (1953), p.290.

28. The vision of the risen Christ who was alleged to have appeared at a celebration of the mass by Pope Gregory in the church of Santa Croce of Jerusalem in Rome, was claimed to authenticate the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, which became a foundation doctrine of the Church of Rome. It was a recognised devotional image during the Middle Ages, affording generous remission of time in purgatory. These claims were much disputed, especially by protestants, and became for those who questioned their authenticity, one of the papal Antichrist's deceptions and were to feature in anti-papal art and literature. See Scribner (1994), p.255; p.297, n. 12.

29. Another engraving by Israhel Meckenem, executed about ten years later, would appear to refer to the 'indulgence' awarded to those who prayed before an image of the Gregory Mass, as additional clerical figures encompass the altar on three sides. There are fewer, but larger and more formal representations of the Passion behind the half-figure of Christ, and the instruments of the Passion rise up behind and above. It is in the Prado triptych, however, where Bosch's spaciality and *grisaille* mistiness capture the spiritual elements and transformations which may have been associated in his mind with the alchemical processes, whereby the base attains to purity (cp. n. 9).

30. The mother could be presumed dead, as she does not appear in the Gregory Mass (Plates 42, 44). Father and son are represented again, the father drawing his son's attention to the fate of Judas, who having served the devil is carried off captive by him, as each is claimed by the one he served. The identities of the donor, Peter Bronckhorst and his wife, Agnes Bosschuysen, are generally accepted, though some uncertainty has been expressed about the coat-of-arms which appear with them on the two wings of the triptych. Brand-Philip (1953), p.291 and n.103.

31. Nardo di Cione's, the circles of hell based on Dante's *Inferno* (1350s), Strozzi chapel, Santa Maria Novella, Florence.

32. A. Katzenellenbogen, *Allegories of the Virtues and Vices in Mediaeval Art* (1964), pp.79, 80 n. 1), contains several explanatory entries on *Desperatio*. Suicide out of despair was viewed as an ill-considered step and condemned by the law of the church from early times and was usually represented by piercing with a spear. Examples occur in Cycles of Virtues and Vices appearing on jambs of porches, church façades and capitals (e.g. Notre Dame and Chartres). They taught moral lessons and gave solemn warnings, relevant in the present context.

## Chapter 11. *The Rule of Antichrist* (Signorelli)

1. The decorations were begun by Fra Angelico, assisted by Benozzo Gozzoli, in 1447. Fra Angelico departed in 1449 and did not return and though Perugino and others were approached in the contract to finish the work on the vaults, which began April 5. One year later a second contract was meantime, the chapel stood unfinished from 1449 till c.1498. In that year Signorelli accepted the one drawn up, which included a new programme for the chapel (November, 1499). Work started in April 1500 and the frescoes were finished in 1503. Meltzoff (1987), pp. 306, 7, 9; 349. Fumi (doc. CLV ), p. 307, n. 46.

2. This reflects the Church's more liberal stance on a variety of issues at that time, particularly in Orvieto and in Rome. Riess (1995), p.7, briefly refers to the attitude of the Church that Antichrist has never become an official part of the doctrine and institution of the Church. See also, *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. Richard Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (London 1992), pp. 3-19.

3. Matthew. 4.2, 'And when the tempter came to him he said, "If thou be the son of God..." ... 'Then the Devil leaveth him', v.11.

4. The nature of the treatment inflicted upon the Spiritual Orders by Antichrist's henchmen in *The Rule* reflects to some extent their earlier suffering at the hands of the Cathars. The Dominicans in particular had distinguished themselves in the bitter struggles against the Cathars on various issues, including Purgatory and the Eucharist. On both sides there was suffering and bloodshed. Without doubt, the accusations against the Cathars, would from the Catholic standpoint be thought of as 'antichrist'.

5. The lascivious, the erotic and the carnal, and the proliferation of naked figures in the frescoes are explained only partly by the subject-matter of the visions being depicted. What was incorporated was no doubt accepted as being consistent with current standards of decorum. There is no question of Signorelli having exceeded the limits by imposing his own methods. The balance between aesthetics and ethics had shifted mid-15th century towards the former, and what would be tolerated in religious art had broadened. Riess (1995), p.5, quotes Vasari's 'positive assessment close to Signorelli's own time'. 'Signorelli paved the way for the final perfection of art,' and he stressed 'how much Michelangelo learned from this curious and fanciful invention' at Orvieto, 'with angels demons, ruins, earthquakes, fires, miracles of Antichrist, and a number of fine figures, and their terror on that great and awful day.' Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, e architettori*, ed. Paulo Barocchi (Florence 1966), 3: pp. 637, 640.

6. The identifying features are clear and the Star of David (*Mogan Davids*), leaves little doubt that it refers to David, the ideal of Jewish kingship and a Messianic type, on whose throne Christ will sit (Luke 1.32). At the time, it was called Solomon's Seal and required to be worn by law in that part of Italy and often elsewhere in Europe. A yellow star had also to be worn by Jews on leaving their houses. Pietro Scarpelini, *Luca Signorelli* (Milan 1964 ), p.43. Meltzoff (1987), p.345 n. 107. Signorelli combines the two - a double star and yellow in both star and garments. Prominence is given to the purse, signifying the pecuniosity of the Jew. The Jew could be responding to the mendacity of the woman, or rewarding her for services rendered. The influence of the vices, part of the make-up of the Man of Sin's regime, is evident in these two respects, and among Antichrist's supporters are other lone women, two holding infants. A point of special note is the turban worn by the Jew, combining the Turk and the Jew in a single figure, confirming their 'antichrist' reputation.

7. Dante, Alexander the Great, and Cesare Borgia, a stand-in for Julius Caesar. Riess (1995), chap.V, discusses the portraits.

8. Examples can be cited where Antichrist's sermonising proceeds from a pulpit, hardly any where he stands on a pedestal. The *Velislav Bible* (*Velisai Biblia Picta*, c.1340, Prague Univ. Lib. MS XXIII. C 124, vol. 132r ), shows Antichrist on a pedestal (Plate 14). He appears to be preaching to a Jewish audience, as all wear pointed hats, but their genuflection is appropriate for an idol, and the pedestal is appropriate for the one so treated. See n. 15 below and chapter 5, n. 8.
9. Dante, *Convivio*, IV, ix.
10. Katzenellenbogen (1939), p.6, illustration 2, shows Marcus Aurelius thus, commanding his troops on his column in Rome. Illustration 1 depicts *Concordia* commanding like an emperor, using the same gesture. (*Psychomachia* MS., late tenth century, Paris, Bib. Nat.). Scenes of oration date back to the address of the Roman Emperor, with which the gesture is associated. The first artist to illustrate the *Psychomachia* drew mainly from the vivid battle descriptions of Prudentius and took their form from battle scenes represented in Roman art. Katzenellenbogen (1939), p.6.
11. The apparent exceptions among categories in Antichrist's audience are the historical personages, but within the Antichrist time-frame they are legitimately present as his erstwhile supporters (or opponents). The presence of political leaders of the day, the seating format and the forum layout further confirm the *The Rule's* presentation of Antichrist's links with imperial practice.
12. This is a scene from the *Philippics*. Demosthenes, the famous Athenian orator, delivered abusive speeches against Philip of Macedon and accounts for the term *Philippics*. Cicero's similar speeches against Anthony were also termed *Philippics*. Riess (1995), pp. 123, 124, explains why the identity of the adjacent portrait should be Cicero is significant, in that Cicero was exemplary on the issue of true and false teaching, a crucial theme in *The Rule*.
13. Classical allusions are precise and coherent throughout, consistent with the humanistic-classical leanings of the artist, Andrea Mantegna.
14. Genesis 11.4 *et seq.*. Babel is Babylon in the land of Shinar. The King of Babylon conquered Israel, captured Jerusalem and enslaved its people; because of his pride he was obliged to learn that it was God who ruled.
15. Antichrist's association with the Temple of Solomon is a recurring visual feature and is an established part of the mediaeval *vitae* and included in Adso. In the *Velislav Bible*, f. 135v, Antichrist directs the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon in Jerusalem. See chapter 5, n.8.
16. Riess (1995), p. 27, draws attention to the influential factor of the Temple's orientation in the context of the chapel. The *Cappella Corporale* and the *Cappella Nuova* are transept chapels on the north and south respectively of the Duomo, which lies east-west.
17. These are:- *The End of the World*, *The Resurrection of the Flesh*, *The Damned*, and *The Damned Entering Hell*, all of which are reminders of coming judgment, and contain numerous violent episodes to which those who had been unrepentant followers of Antichrist would be rendered subject.
18. Signorelli's contribution to *Christ Handing the keys to Peter*, Sistine Chapel (1481), and various parallels between this work and *The Rule* are the subject of comment by Meltzoff (1987), p.346, 7.
19. The Primacy of Peter from the Catholic standpoint is explained in Maxwell-Stuart (1997), pp. 11-16, 'The Rise to Power'. (See Part I, chap. 2, p. 22, n.14 also relating to the keys.)
20. For the standard exegetical interpretation of II Thessalonians 2.8 - 'He cannot be destroyed by any human act. Christ (at his Second Advent), or Michael (as Christ's agent), will kill Antichrist.' Emerson (1981), p.39. The three following references have a bearing upon this aspect of Antichrist iconography - the Word as a two-edged sword (Hebrews 4.12), forges links with Christ who was the Word (John 1.14; Apocalypse 19.13, 15), consuming Antichrist 'with the spirit of his mouth (II Thessalonians 2.8), and Michael as chief prince (Daniel 10.13, 21; 12.1).
21. Katzenellenbogen (1939), p.6. The Phaeton myth explains that he, the son of the Greek sun-god, Helios, drove his father's chariot recklessly and set fire to Earth. The Phaeton of 14th cent *Ovide-*

*moralisée* often appears on Roman sarcophagi. *Luxuria*, another of the vices, of which Antichrist was leader, has been depicted falling headlong out of her chariot, whose horses rear up on either side like Phaeton in his sun chariot. Similarly, *Luxuria's* horses rear up either side like Phaeton's. *Ibid.*, pp. 5, 6.

22. Katzenellenbogen (1964), p.8, n.1. She is depicted falling from her horse in the 12th century *Hortus Deliciarum*, f.258v.

23. The sources of this imagery are the secular scenes of Roman relief sculpture and the cycles on triumphant columns. Katzenellenbogen (1939), pp. 5, 6.

24. The 'fall' of Judas is less spectacular; he enters the plot of ground purchased with the betrayal money where he falls 'headlong' (Acts 1.18). Jezebel, thrown down from a window, is trampled by Jehu's horse; dogs eat her flesh and only feet and hands remain (I Kings 9.29). While some Antichrist illustrations send him tumbling down from a great height like Phaeton's headlong plunge, he little more than stumbles in MS *Casanatensis* (Plate 15).

25. Meltzoff (1987), pp. 348, 348 n.116.

26. See John Friedman, 'Antichrist and the Iconography of Dante's Geryon', *JWCI*, 18, 1972, pp. 108-122 concerning the work of the Dominican and the Franciscan Orders, p.120 and n.46.

27. Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos xvi and xvii. Friedman (1955), pp.108 and 118.

28. Friedman (1955), pp.117-18.

29. Job 40.20; Apocalypse 13.1 and 11. The Apocalypse reference is to the Beasts of the Sea and the Land, with an obvious application to the Beast of the Sea so far as Geryon is concerned. Friedman (1955), p 118.

30. Friedman (1955), pp.120-21.

31. See n.1. (c. 50 years apart)

32. While both portraits have been generally accepted, doubt has been expressed about Fra Angelico, but the portrait is feasible as a younger version by Signorelli, based upon a death mask of Fra Angelico. Riess (1995), p.16. See Pietro Scarpelini, *Luca Signorelli* (Milan 1964), p. 110, concerning his doubts. Fra Angelico was a Dominican, a respected member of the order (See next n.33), and he is positioned adjacent to the Dominicans, who had suffered under the onslaughts of Antichrist, as they had earlier suffered at the hands of the Cathars. Sarah James, *Signorelli and Fra angelico at Orvieto* (2003), p.69, rejects these views and identifies the two artists as the Two Witnesses.

33. S. James (2003).

34. The cap (*zuchetto*), worn by Fra Angelico is a token of distinction and devotedness to the Dominican order. Riess (1995), p.16.

35. Barbara Nolan, *The Gothic Visionary Perspective* (Princeton, New Jersey 1977), p.70 *et seq.*, in her analytical study of illuminated apocalypse manuscripts, focuses on their expressive aspects, and among many examples, describes John's personal responses to the visions.

36. Ancient scenes of death and sacrifice in the grisaille illustrations below the large frescoes pay tribute to classical heroes which might seem incongruous in a Christian sanctuary were it not for other instances in Italy where the pagan is cheek by jowl with the Christian. These alliances affirmed in the Duomo at Orvieto not only further the trend, but are of special dogmatic significance. Here the more abstruse elements of the state and regions of the departed are defined, primarily on the basis of reports of the alleged experiences of poets, philosophers and sibyls, some in the writings of Dante. Most of these issues upheld in the decorations were to constitute grounds adduced by protestants and reformists in support of their conclusions about the Antichrist's Papal identity. Meltzoff (1987), pp. 316, 310, 303, 306, 358.

37. The Old Testament King, or Prophet, is identified as David by Riess (1995) and Meltzoff (1987). The seated sibyl is possibly searching the sibylline oracles, as they are among the literary sources of events concerning the End. Developing interest in Antiquity during the later 15th century, led to increasing reference to them. They were esteemed as the pagan counterparts of the Old Testament prophets and consulted in the past at times of national crisis. Michelangelo includes them along with the prophets in the Sistine Chapel. Sarah N. James (2003), in reference to the *Dies Irae*, identifies David as the central figure and the woman next to him as the Cumaean sibyl (Plate 54).

38. The figure who looks out of his tondo has been identified as Empedocles: Riess (1995), p.6 and p.159, n.24, with a reference to Luzi, *Il Duomo di Orvieto* (Florence 1866), p.158. See Meltzoff (1987), pp. 320, 322). Like the group of prophetic figures, he observes the events predicted.

39. Some of the signs of the End of the World which Signorelli has depicted in his fresco surrounding the entrance to the chapel - floods, falling stars, falling buildings, fire and blood, are listed in the opening Advent section of Jacobus de Voragine's, *The Golden Legend (leggenda aurea)*, which deals with the seasons of the Church's year. The entire work, c.1260, is a compendium of medieval thought and belief. Jacobus de Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, trans. W.Ryan (Princeton, New Jersey 1993).

## Chapter 12. Albrecht Dürer: The Apocalypse Woodcuts

1. Riess (1995), p.106, in his study of Signorelli's, *Rule of Antichrist*, refers to other depictions, but only briefly refers to Dürer. He thinks Antichrist can be identified 'with more certainty' as the beast of the Earth and the beast of the Sea in this particular woodcut.

2. The tradition of John's martyrdom in Rome during the persecution of the Christians by the Emperor Domitian, A.D. 96, was established in Jacobus de Voragine's, the *Golden Legend (leggenda aurea)*, c.1260. See chap 11, n.38.

3. Domitian's evil reign and persecutions feature in the Geneva Bible, a new translation of the Bible; two editions (London 1576 and Edinburgh 1579). Antichrist was identified with the papacy, the scorpions and locusts were compared to the popish hierarchy, the Turks were mentioned in conjunction with the pope and Satan. Firth (1979), p. 122, n.30, f.118r; p.123, n.32.

4. The Turk is linked with the Jew in Signorelli's, *The Rule*, Turkish figures are often seen in Antichrist imagery and frequently appear in Gerung's illustrations in Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John* in the 1540s. See chapter 15, n.17.

5. Examples of emperors described as Antichrist types also include Augustus, Nero, Caligula, Diocletian, Julian.

6. Daniel 4.27-32, testify to the extent of Nebuchadnezzar's pride, the prelude to his 'fall' and that of all Antichrist types. His conquest of Jerusalem, the transportation of its inhabitants and temple treasures are recorded in Daniel 1.1, 2, 3; II Kings 24.1, 2; II Chronicles 36.6.

7. *Landsknechte*, identified by their slit clothing and plumed headgear, came often from the lower classes and had a reputation for disreputable, undisciplined conduct which could taint those who made use of their services, whether Catholic or Protestant. For this reason they became the subject of satirical exchanges between the two. Scribner (1994), cites examples, p. 237.

8. Apocalypse 18.3, 5, 7, 9, 24 enumerates apocalyptic Babylon's many evils, and the totality of her destruction (vv. 8, 21). The prophet Isaiah in various chapters writes in a similar vein in reference to the historical, prototypical Babylon (Isaiah 13.19, 20; 14.12-16).

9. The iconography of the outspread arms and sideways pose of the Woman seated on the Beast belongs to an established tradition. See Wright (1995), chapter 6, pp. 182-6.

10. Dürer's own drawing (1495), made during his Italian visit, is in the Albertina, *Graphische Sammlung*, Albertina, Vienna.

11. See Wright (1995), chapter 6, 'The Great Whore of the Apocalypse cycles'.

## Part IV: THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY: Antichrist and the False Church

### Chapter 13. *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Lucas Cranach)

*Antithesis figurata vitae Christi et Antichristi*, 1521, known by the more familiar title, *Passional Christi und Antichristi*, published in May, 1521,<sup>1</sup> consists of thirteen pairs of contrasting woodcuts. Each pair, headed 'Christi' and 'Antichristi', set the conduct of Christ and the pope in sharp contrast. The identity of the papacy with the Antichrist is unambiguous throughout and directed at the leader of the institution, not at a specific pope, implying the falsity of the Church itself. Each pair, related to a stage in Christ's ministry and a corresponding papal episode, demonstrate the contrast between the genuine and the sham and that the actions of the pope are contrary to the example Christ set.

Cranach's *Passional* came at a crucial time in the history of the Protestant cause following a bull of excommunication against Luther.<sup>2</sup> Ideas expressed in his manifesto of 1520,<sup>3</sup> find expression in the *Passional*, a pamphlet produced in the workshop of Lucas Cranach, friend of Luther and sympathetic to the cause. Lucas Cranach's illustrations, accompanied by short explanatory passages written by Melancthon below each picture, with the addition of references to scripture and papal decretals, powerfully spell out its message.<sup>4</sup>

In the second of the first pair of woodcuts (Plate 66), the papal Antichrist is depicted not only as a priest and religious leader, but as a secular ruler prepared to adopt political methods, including the use of force, to hold on to his sovereignty. He is with a bishop and a cardinal, accompanied by guards with halberds - a combined spear and battle-axe, making a resolute stand against a force headed by political rulers on horseback. A chain and two canon bar their access through an archway leading into property bearing the papal coat-of-arms, emphasising the papal sense of ownership, rulership, and authority and their maintenance by force. The pope as a false priest, religious and political leader represented in the first pair of woodcuts fulfil the typology of Antichrist discussed in chapter 2. (*Antichrist attacks Jerusalem, Antichrist as Priest attacks Jerusalem*, Plates 4 and 5 respectively.)

Christ's aversion to the idea of accepting the crown offered to him by the man advancing towards him, in the first woodcut illustration (Plate 66), is conveyed by the *contrapposto* movement of Christ, who neither sought, nor encouraged, the bestowal of kingly power.<sup>5</sup> Texts below the image are John 6.15, 'when they perceived they would take him by force to make him a king, he departed...' and John 18.36, 'my kingdom not from hence' (if it were), 'then would my servants fight...' The pope, however, who is supposed to preach and practise these principles, is manifestly holding on to power by force. Luke 22, another of the texts, reports the episode of Christ's betrayal and arrest when the disciples asked, 'shall we smite with the sword?' Christ counters with, 'suffer ye thus far' and the healing of the severed ear of the High Priest's servant (vv. 49-51). Christ is not only depicted moving away, but his aversion to any such purpose is also conveyed in the disposition of his person. For him the cross came before the crown; his earthly role was to fulfil his priestly obligations, that of 'suffering servant'. His kingship was

contingent upon it and lay in the future. Cranach's treatment portrays the antithesis between Christ's objectives and the misguided ambition of the throng that bear down upon him to make him their King. There was no political ambition in Christ's earthly mission that could respond to it. Below Antichrist, the text reference is to II Peter 2, a chapter which refers to false prophets and teachers and the judgments that would come upon them. Melancthon in his accompanying notes referred to the alleged grant of secular power by the Donation of Constantine. This was a topical issue following publicity in Germany about the falsity of the claim.<sup>6</sup>

Reference to the papal use of force had a long history and some popes had acquired warrior reputations.<sup>7</sup> In the title-page of a pamphlet, *Des Bapsts und der Pfaffen Badstub* by J. Cammerlander (1546), Plate 67, the pope riding the Seven-Headed Beast wears armour, is dressed as a *landsknecht* (a mercenary soldier), and holds the sword and orb of political rule, implying papal involvement in political issues and the use of methods exercised by ruling powers.<sup>8</sup> Ecclesiastical and political powers were often in contention, the pope asserting himself in the political sphere, grabbing at privilege and control. Plate 68 is an allegorical presentation of the pope contending for the mastery over the Ship of the Church with Emperor Charles V, whose sceptre of rule and tree of state (on the left), are broken. A serpent around the pope's neck witnesses to the evil connotations applicable to Antichrist which is consistent with the details of the title, *The Pope as Antichrist*. This woodcut printed in 1576 was a reversal based upon an earlier broadsheet (c.1460), showing the broken sceptre, in the hand of the Emperor Frederick III.

A simple seat, a cell-like room with a tiny window is the setting for the mock crowning of Christ by the soldiers. In stark contrast is the opulence, pomp and deference for the Antichrist setting of the papal crowning (Plate 69), with officiating clergy and the spacious mural representation of an armed force, again ready to defend and uphold papal sovereignty. The genuflecting soldier who mocks the crowning of Christ is echoed by two kneeling monks at the pope's coronation. Added comment harks back to Constantine. The terms of his alleged 'Donation' read thus:-

*Constantine crowning the pope says : The emperor Constantine put the crown, made from the purest gold and precious gems, from his own head on the pontiff of the Roman Church; and he put the papal cape and all the imperial garments on him, performing for him the office of strator.<sup>9</sup>*

Christ, sitting on a box-like seat has the crown of thorns painfully pressed home. It derides the idea of Christ as king, which is mentioned twice in the text reference, John 19. When they had arrayed him in a purple robe, they said, 'Hail, king of the Jews' (vv. 2, 3), and later (v. 14), Pilate said, 'Behold your king.' These acts - the 'imperial' purple robe and homage by genuflection, were not demanded, or sought, but done in mockery (vv. 2, 3, 5). A sleeping dog, curled up at the feet of Christ, apparently indifferent to acts of violence, suggest that such were commonplace so far as Antichrist's actions were

concerned. The dog by the side of the Emperor Domitian, the Antichrist type, in *The Martyrdom of John* (Plate 57), similarly fails to react to the fearful spectacle.<sup>10</sup>

The pope in the second woodcut of the third pair (Plate 70), seated beneath the canopy of his elevated throne, bestows a blessing by gesture only, as the emperor, a prince kneeling at his side, kisses the pontiff's foot. Papal pride is summed up in the palatial setting, which starkly contrasts with the austerity of the cell where Christ's 'crowning' takes place, and the pontiff's assertion of authority over secular rulers. An anti-papal scene on one of the floats in the Accession Day celebrations (Plate 110), illustrates similar obsequies.<sup>11</sup> In the confined, cell-like room with his disciples gathered around him (Plate 70), Christ kneels as a servant and washes the apostles' feet, setting an example of service and humility to those who follow him (John 13.4, 5, 14, 15, 16 ).

The influence of Dürer is evident, particularly his depiction of *Christ Washing the Disciples' Feet* from the Small Passion, c.1509-11, (Plate 71). Christ and Peter are similarly positioned and Peter's hand is also raised to touch his forehead. Christ, still holding Peter's foot, bends lower in the *Passional* as he reaches down to the bowl, and the intimacy of their relationship is indicated by a more huddled positioning of the figures. Dürer's influence is apparent in the numerous hand gestures as the disciples converse in various poses and in the folding of their garments. In stark contrast to the detailed portrayal of the figures is the austere, cell-like setting, and the small open window which replaces the lighted chandelier. In other illustrations of the *Passional*, attention to similar details and skilful enrichment point to Dürer's influence.

The accompanying scriptural reference, John 13, which includes the account of Christ washing his disciples' feet, states that he did it, 'knowing that the Father had given all things into his hand and that he had come from God... ' (v.3). Christ's virtue of humility, in spite of his divine Sonship, contrasts with the pope's pride, chief among the vices. The higher the exaltation of self, the bigger the downfall. Occupying an elevated, canopied throne, attended by ecclesiastics and political rulers who await their turn to make obeisance, is at odds with Christ's humility and exposes the pride and ambition of the papal Antichrist and his imperial style. Apocalypse 13, the reference below the second frame, mentions the Beasts of the Sea (v.1 ) and the Earth (v.11 ), the Image of the Beast (v.14), and the number of the Beast, 666. This chapter had attracted the attention of theologians and exegetes, and had acquired Antichrist identities and associations, and later illustrations of this chapter contain papal references.<sup>12</sup> Verses 4, 8, 12, 15, refer to the worship of the various beasts and the compulsion to do so, which reflects the situation represented in the second illustration.

In paying the tribute money, the theme of the fourth pair (Plate 72), the pope is shown to be in denial of precepts that Christ himself is prepared to uphold. Christ is with Peter, who instructs him to pay tribute to 'the kings of the earth' with the money miraculously appearing in the fish's mouth, 'lest we should offend' (Matthew 17.25, 27). Christ's subservience to rulers is a principle expanded in Romans 13.1-8,

referred to in the accompanying text, which exhorts subjection to the higher powers, ordained of God, and to render to them tribute and dues.

In Christ's day, when Caesar ruled, Christ said in another context, 'render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's (Luke 20.25). One might add that the pope had taken Caesar's place, a well-founded case of the pope usurping imperial rights and privileges, as well as disregarding the injunctions of scripture. This lesson, construed as a command which not only Christ, but Peter (allegedly the first pope), respected, had been set aside by the one claiming to be his successor in office. The pope claimed exemption for clerics and was prepared to use the interdict, mentioned in the printed text, against those who, in keeping with Christ's command, levied taxes on clerical persons and their property. Besides upholding the privileges attaching to clerics, which gave rise to much anti-clerical feeling, it fuelled the charge of avarice, which explains the reference in this frame to the miracle of the dragnet (John 21). A net full of coins, which the pope is seen pulling in, signifies the papal thirst for riches, present in various settings, especially in connection with the sale of Indulgences. An altercation at the front between a king and a soldier representing secular power, on the left, and on the right members of the clerical orders presenting a document, suggest a formal objection to a request for the payment of dues. The two-level format corresponds to Raphael's *Disputa* (1508-11), Vatican, *Stanza della Segnatura*, with the main focus at the centre of each. In the upper, the 'heavenly zone', the pope gathers the fruits of the church's levies upon others. Below, in the 'earthly zone', as the text explains, the pope claims exemption from taxes imposed on clerical persons and is prepared to use the ban to prevent it.<sup>13</sup> The queuing figures are mainly clerical persons who have been required to pay their dues, and the two central figures, one of whom is a soldier, represent political power which imposes it. In the lower zone of the *Disputa*, two figures at the extreme right and left turned their backs on the theologians, as the two central figures appear to be doing in the woodcut.

In the fifth pair Christ humbly associates with the poor and the lame, taking the form of a servant, whereas the pope in princely state presides over a tournament. The antithesis of Christ's humility is Antichrist's pride, a theme which runs through the next four pairs, climaxing later in the final pair of scenes with his attempted ascension. Attendance at a tournament - a frivolous entertainment, hints at neglect of more serious duties.

Antichrist as pope is depicted carrying his ceremonial cross as he is borne aloft, comfortably seated in an elaborate carriage (Plate 73), the sixth pair. He progresses grandly in front of imposing buildings, with the papal keys above the entrance. His blessings are bestowed from a position of authority and comfort. Manifestly he heads a powerful institution. Christ in the first of the pair bids his disciples bear their crosses and follow him, implying a mode of life consistent with sacrifice and service. They are shown barefoot with a stiff, stone-strewn climb ahead, requiring a willingness to endure the hardships of Christ's calling. There is a total absence of outward show and the trappings of an established religious order. Matthew 16.24, 25, identified in the accompanying text, expresses the essence of Christ's call, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.'

For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it'. In the second illustration of several pairs, particularly 1, 4, 6 and 7, imposing buildings and interiors showing the papal coat-of-arms, display signs of affluence and worldly power, whereas the first woodcuts, where Christ's way of life is presented, simple outdoor settings with leafy trees form the backdrop. The pope's commitment is presented as merely symbolic and artificial.

Neglect of prime duties by the pope, such as preaching the Kingdom of God and ministering to the needy, following instead an imperial life-style far removed from the humble example set by Christ is taken up, in the second frame of the next, the seventh pair (Plate 74). He is shown feasting with senior clergy at table, elevated on a dais with an over-reaching canopy. Servants ply him with sumptuous fare and a line of musicians, shown below holding instruments, provide entertainment. *The Gaming Table of Blasphemers* and *Revelling Catholic Clergy* (Plate 97b and 98), depict the pope in similar scenes and in *Antichrist, Leader of the Vices* (Plate 13), Antichrist himself presides over his followers likewise engaged. Like the previous example of the pope presiding over a tournament, papal preferences and priorities help to delineate the character of Antichrist as a false priest. Isaiah 56, quoted in the texts below, is scathing about what are alleged to characterise papal habits:- indulgence, gluttony (*Gula*) and false shepherding:-

*Yea, they are greedy dogs that can never have enough, and they are shepherds (i.e. leaders of the flock) that can never understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain...Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine and we will fill ourselves with strong drink ... (vv.11, 12)*

In contrast to the pope, Christ is first shown as a humble preacher who goes barefoot and speaks outdoors to an attentive audience of ordinary folk, including mothers and infants. The reference to Luke 4 is about Christ's visit to the synagogue where he read from the prophet Isaiah, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor...to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind...' (v.18). Christ ministers to essential human needs, especially spiritual blindness and the darkness of unbelief.

The incompatibility of the use of force is raised again in the eighth pair. This time it refers to the pope's readiness to wage war against a town. The commentary says the pope will go to these lengths to secure possession of clerical property and is willing to spill Christian blood and overturn civil authority for material gain. When clergy are imprisoned, the pope interferes, even overriding oaths and ties of allegiance.

The respective mounts of Christ and the pope are compared next in the ninth pair (Plates 75). Whereas with Christ humility precedes glory, the pope puts it first. He claimed the emperor allowed him the privilege of riding in state on a steed, and that it even placed him above the emperor himself. The relevant Constantine reference is as follows:-

*Constantine: We give to blessed Silvester and his successors the palace of our Empire. We decree that they may ride horses decked out in caparisons and*

*coverings of purest white, and we also confer upon them the various imperial ornaments and all the glory of our power as well as giving them the estates which we possess and enriching them with various properties.*<sup>14</sup>

Christ, seated on an ass, rides into Jerusalem, an episode pointing forward to his ultimate Kingship. Matthew 21 and John 12, in the accompanying text below, refer to the gospel accounts of Christ riding into Jerusalem:- 'Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass' (Matthew 21.5). The presence of soldiery in front of the pope's procession, which includes a cardinal and a bishop, is the equivalent of the armed security and protection given to monarchs, but it fails to protect the Pope and his retinue from deliverance to the Pit, round the next corner, where devils hover ready for their committal.

In depicting consignment to the pit in the left background, a well-rehearsed Antichrist theme, the long-established formula of the hellmouth with huge jaws and eyes is not used, though not outmoded. Gerung in the 1540s, introduces several in his illustrations for Meyer's *Commentary*.

*Christ on an Ass confronts the Pope on a Mule*, Dahlem (Plate 76), the theme is expanded by including headgear and coat-of-arms. Christ wears a crown of thorns, the pope a triple tiara. The crossed keys, tiara and Medici roundels denote respectively, papal authority to open and to shut, triple rule, and Pope Leo X's aristocratic connections.<sup>15</sup> They imply a measure of pride in the reference to the pope's high birth, in contrast to Christ's humility and service, who did not grasp at equality with God, his Father (II Thessalonians 2.5-8). The pope's Antichrist identity, however, is not made explicit.

Christ's words (Matthew 16.18,19), which the papacy claimed granted Peter, the alleged first pope, the exclusive power of the keys to open and shut, was contested by Protestants in particular and used in anti-papal propaganda. The issue is addressed in Holbein's title-page of the *Coverdale Bible*, 1535, mentioned in chapter 14, where all the apostles are shown holding keys, denying the primacy of Peter and papal claims in that respect. Christ's '*arma Christi*' and the pope's coat-of-arms in *Christ on an Ass Confronts the Pope on a Mule* (Plate 76), expose profound differences. The crossed rod and sponge echo the crossed keys; the cross and scourges echo the Medici roundels; the one lays bare the obligations of Christ's suffering servant role; the other the privileges of a family inheritance.<sup>16</sup> Christ's crown of thorns on top of the shield is set against the triple tiara, similarly placed. The style and simplicity of Christ's garment, who is also bare-foot, is also ill-matched with the rich brocade of the pontiff's dress and slippers. Numerous scriptural references incorporated below the image epitomise the range of texts and themes of the *Passional*.<sup>17</sup> The lowly ass compares with the larger, richly caparisoned mule, a hybrid beast (a cross between an ass and a horse), which implies impurity of origin, perhaps a reference to Antichrist's diabolical origins and associations, a common feature in earlier medieval imagery, now applied to the pope.<sup>18</sup>

Christ's respect for poverty, the tenth pair, and his injunctions to his disciples about abjuring worldly riches, is not compatible with papal concern about bishops not presiding over anything but a great town and being given sufficient provision to match their station - a worthy title and great honour.

From his throne, the pope in the eleventh pair is shown issuing commands about trivialities such as the ordering of clothes, tonsures, making provision for feast days, consecrations and benefices, which equally reveal a hypocritical state of mind and an enhancement of material values. This concern about making provision for the clergy purports to show how they elevated themselves as the elect of God, and neglected the interests of the laity.

Christ drives out the money-changers from the temple in the penultimate pair (Plate 77), the accompanying text, John 2.13-17, making references to the event; but the pope is seen to be trading in church like the money-changers by selling Indulgences and, in effect, taking their place. Petitioners are seen lining up for these benefits, with necessary payment, though Christ's benefits were, by Grace, free. References to Matthew 10.8 and Acts 8.20, 'freely ye have received, freely give' and to Peter's words, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money', appropriately carry the lesson over to the second image with its emphasis on the sale of indulgences where the Pope-Antichrist collects the proceeds. The text below the papal scene (II Thessalonians 2), describes the man of sin who sits in God's temple showing himself as God (v.4). Here the Papal Antichrist is seen to be exercising powers beyond his station. A further reference, to Daniel, about altering divine ordinances and holy writ, accompanies a string of incompatible actions - selling palliums, bishoprics, breaking laws, dissolving marriages, all for payment, and demanding that the pope's voice be heard and obeyed as if he were God.

Christ's Ascension and the fall of Antichrist, maintain the antithesis of Christ versus the Antichrist in the final pair of images (Plate 78), and contrast the destiny of the two. According to tradition, the last stages of Antichrist's life are the staging of his death and resurrection, and his attempted ascension to heaven from Mount Olivet, for which he gathers his followers to witness his triumph. It ends with his fall and descent into hell. Textual references which support the first image: Acts 1, Luke 1, John 12, give the details of the promise of Christ's birth and destiny, and an account of his Ascension. The constituents of this image are a domed Mount Olivet, with Christ's footprints at the summit and receiving angels on either side. A small group of disciples on the left witness the event; there is a distant city view on the right and the ascending figure of Christ in familiar form with banner. In the second image, the falling Antichrist with accompanying devils, affirm yet again Antichrist's papal identity by title, diabolical association, triple tiara and vestments. This significant development in the identity of Antichrist as pope is sustained in some later Bible illustrations considered in the next chapter. One must suppose the accompanying devils had failed to underpin his staged 'ascension'; the lowest one to the right seems to be involved in a vain effort to do so. In some illustrations the precise intent of the devils' actions seem ambivalent, the aim appearing to be to drive Antichrist down to hell rather than to assist

his ascension. One may attribute this to the apparent ambiguities of the particular image, or to the inconsistencies of the Antichrist legend.

The pit in the accompanying woodcut is a simplistic portrayal of flames engulfing three victims. II Thessalonians 2, one of two supporting references in the text below this frame, gives details of the 'man of sin' (v. 3), recognised as the Antichrist, but not named as such in the chapter, and tells of Christ who will consume him with the 'spirit of his mouth' and 'destroy him with the brightness of his coming' (v.8). These details are however not incorporated into Cranach's image. In some illustrations of the fall, they take the form of Michael attacking the ascending Antichrist with a sword.<sup>19</sup> Apocalypse 19, the second text, refers to a series of events which include destruction by the sword 'out of his (Christ's) mouth', mentioned twice (vv. 5 and 21), indicative of the sword of the Word.

*The Preaching of Antichrist, Enoch and Elias and the Fall of Antichrist*, by Wolgemut in Schedel's, Nuremberg Chronicle, dated 1493 (Plate 26), sometimes quoted as a direct iconographical source for Antichrist's fall in the *Passional*, is a link in a longer chain.<sup>20</sup> The two have few features in common, mainly the devils who surround the offender and try to lift him up, and neither depicts Antichrist's ascension. There is no sword-wielding Michael, no rain of fire, the domed Mt.Olivet is in the adjacent print and is linked with Christ's ascension, not Antichrist's fall, and so are the footprints.

In relation to the fall, the man who exalts himself, who even plays God, ends up in the depths of hell. This is the alleged destiny of the one who tops the ecclesiastical hierarchy. It is one of the many topsyturvy transformations which take place as fate catches up with Antichrist.<sup>21</sup> Christ came to serve and will be exalted to rule the nations; the pope, grasping at kingly power, is seen to be reigning 'now', but his Antichrist identity implied that the tables would be turned and the ignominious fall that awaited him would conform to that of which *Superbia* and *Phaeton* are recognised prototypes.

A familiar episode of Christ's ministry set alongside a papal event, the introduction of explanatory Bible texts and references, papal decretals, and the use of antithetical format, were not new devices.

In several important respects Cranach's *Passional* is strikingly similar to anti-papal propaganda and method a century earlier, stemming from Wyclif, Huss and followers. *The Old Colour and the New*, by Master Nicholas of Dresden, c.1414, which is manifestly anti-papal, as already pointed out, bears witness to these correspondences. To a lesser extent they are present in MS *Casanatensis*, a manuscript of German origin dated 1420-40, and in the moralised bibles, both of which contain Antichrist imagery, antithetical format, and anti-clerical, though not anti-papal, references to Catholic Church practice, themes similar to the *Passional*.

These correspondences between earlier and later imagery reveal thematic and iconographical continuity and development. This is particularly so with Antichrist's 'ascension' and fall. Another facet of this, periodically noted above, is the embodiment of traditional scenes of Christ's ministry - preaching, the

crowning with thorns, the expulsion of the money-changers from the Temple, the entry into Jerusalem, and the Ascension, which echo established modes of artistic treatment of these subjects, usually in simplified, direct form. Antichrist iconography had previously been incorporated in depictions associated with the Sermon on the Mount in Signorelli's *Rule of Antichrist*; the Adoration, the Resurrection and the Mass of Saint Gregory in Bosch's *Prado* triptych. There is also a nativity scene in Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity*, c. 1500, which interprets an aspect of Joachist theory on the Antichrist.<sup>22</sup>

Cranach's *Passional* proved popular and ran into several editions in a comparatively short time. Its influence is seen in many propagandist works that followed. Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*, illustrated by Matthew Gerung, perhaps the most extensive collection of Protestant, anti-papal scenes, which belongs to the 1540s, in many respects echoes the themes and format of Cranach's *Passional* and is examined in chapter fifteen below.

The implications of the *Passional* were that, as the head of the papacy was the Antichrist, the Catholic Church was false and, being judged so, would be expected to fall. This latter deduction is implicit in the final pair.

Imagery from the Apocalypse, which retained its popularity and appeared in the literature of the Reformation - Bible illustrations, commentaries, pamphlets, had a limited application in the *Passional*. The fall itself, which had acquired some of the trappings of the Antichrist legend, is its closest point of contact with the Apocalypse visions.

Cranach's *Passional* presents the Lutheran case for the papacy as Antichrist. It is an explicit denunciation of the pope's alleged character, lifestyle and rule, showing his political stance, pretensions to kingship and imperial rule, the use of force, and setting papal decretals and canon law above God's Law, amply upheld by its biblical text references. It demonstrates a failure to implement the moral precepts of Christ's teaching, example and way of life, characterised by humility of spirit, and eschewing worldly ambition. Set against Christ's integrity of character and his dutiful preaching of God's Word, the pope is shown to be neglectful, false and misguided. Antichrist's duplicity, his pseudo-Christ identity, established in earlier art and literature, were recognised as finding their fulfilment in the pontiff himself.

Luther judged the pope by his doctrine, not by his life and it was for the doctrine that he denounced him as Antichrist. 'The zealous study of the history of the Church led Luther to the conviction that the very institution of the Roman Church since it had been ruled by the popes corresponded to the description of the tyranny of the Antichrist'.<sup>23</sup>

#### IV Chapter 14. Apocalypse Illustrations in the 16th Century Bibles (c.1520-1550)

From the early 1520s, anti-papal features supporting the concept of the papal Antichrist and the false ecclesia appeared in the Apocalypse illustrations of Luther's September New Testament translation, 1522 (pub. M. Lotter, Wittenberg), the 1534 *Biblia* translation by Luther (pub. H. Lufft, Wittenberg), and their outflow. They were influential in the period leading up to Gerung's 1540s illustrations in Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*, the subject of the next chapter. This imagery inevitably bears the stylistic influences of Dürer who put his stamp upon 16th century Apocalypse illustration generally.

##### **The September Testament (1522)**

In the illustration of Apocalypse 11 (Plate 79), the Two Witnesses are not identified as Enoch and Elias, and logically cannot be identified with the Roman Catholic Church, but as prophet-preachers. They are attacked by Antichrist depicted as the Beast of the Bottomless Pit, named in verse 7, which is wearing a small tiara with a crucifix on top. His appearance as a winged dragon with clawed feet, instead of a human form, was possibly an indication of protestant feeling about the nature and potential of papal opposition. In medieval manuscript illuminations, the Beast of the Bottomless Pit was first given a beast-like appearance, developed humanoid characteristics and was also portrayed as a human Antichrist.<sup>1</sup> These modes of identity, firmly established by Cranach's day, advanced a stage further when he depicted the Beast wearing a tiara, giving Antichrist a papal identity.

In the same scene of the December Testament (1522), the Beast's tiara was reduced to a single tier. This was a discretionary move to avoid the consequences of offending papal sensitivities.<sup>2</sup>

Apocalypse 13.11, the Seven-Headed Sea Beast and the Two-Horned Beast of the Earth (Plate 80), a monk's cowl worn by the Earth Beast establishes a papal link, and since it caused the earth and its inhabitants to worship the Sea Beast, it hints at papal approval of that beast as well. The evil reputation of each beast, detailed in the text, is virtually the same, speaking great things, uttering blasphemies, and deceiving by miracles, all Antichrist characteristics (vv. 12, 13, 14). The number of the Two-Horned Earth Beast, 666, 'the number of a man', also part of the chapter's content (v.18), had already been given an Antichrist identity as early as c.926.<sup>3</sup> Emperor Maximilian I is the central crowned figure (Plate 82), among those adoring the Seven-Headed Beast.<sup>4</sup>

Apocalypse 16, the pouring out of the Seven Vials (Plate 81), shows one of them being emptied onto the throne of the Beast, which wears a triple tiara and is given the same appearance as the Beast of the Bottomless Pit (Plate 79), who kills the Two Witnesses. From the mouth of this Beast, identified as papal, evil spirits like frogs come forth. They are described (v.14) as devils working miracles, going forth to the kings of the earth to gather them to the battle of the great day of God Almighty. The text says they come from the mouth of the dragon, the beast and the false prophet, but in this illustration they proceed from one mouth and there are twice as many as the text states (six, not three). This is

unlikely to be an error and therefore makes a strong point about papal influence upon political forces. In Plate 97b all three frog-like spirits are again seen to emanate from the pope's mouth. Among contemporary persons present (Plate 81 and 84 ), are Archduke Ferdinand, left, towards whom the frogs are directed, and the mercenary leader, George von Frondsberg, who wears the ostrich plumes of a *landsknecht*.<sup>5</sup> No changes are made in the depiction of this scene in Luther's December Testament (1522).

Apocalypse 17.4f., the Whore of Babylon, September Testament, 1522 (Plate 82), is depicted wearing a triple tiara surmounted by a crucifix and carrying an elaborate chalice, the cup of abominations. She is portrayed as a papal religious figure, impliedly head of the false church. The chalice containing the wine of her fornications, its contents purporting to be truly Christian, are inebriating, 'full of abominations and the filthiness of her fornication' (v.4), spelling out her deceit; her illicit relationships with the Kings of the Earth (v.2), implying political involvement. She rides the Seven-Headed Beast. Her typological make-up of political and priestly rule, the former on account of her rule 'over the kings of the earth' (vv. 17,18), take up the basic Antichrist prototypes associated with rule and religion discussed in Part II, Antichrist's Typological Ancestry. Her appearance as a seducer is depicted by her confrontational, side-saddle pose on the beast, the brazen angling of her left arm, her bejewelled appearance, her purple and scarlet array (v. 4 ), and revealing attire - a low cut neck-line and a bare shoulder. All have associations with the vices attributable to Antichrist: *Luxuria*, *Superbia*, not to mention deceit, and now *Libido*. These vices were formerly attributed to her as an evil woman and an evil city.<sup>6</sup> Now her role is different, but the iconography is very close to the earlier depictions. Here she is interpreted as Antichrist. She cannot be the True Church, but the evil politico-religious leader of the false church. Those who receive the cup of abominations from her are Charles V, his brother Ferdinand, and Duke George of Saxony.<sup>7</sup> These representations indicate a change of viewpoint in keeping with Protestant polemics. As the Whore of Babylon (Apocalypse 17.1-5), she takes on Rome's Babylonian affiliations. Her power approximates to the imperial and her Babylonian links place her in the age-long setting of Antichrist's typological ancestry, especially as described in Lambert's *Liber floridus*, which sees the linkage between the four world empires of Daniel, chapter 2, the Tree Dream of Daniel 4, and Lambert's list of cosmocrators, who stretch from King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Antichrist's prototype, to Antichrist himself.<sup>8</sup> In protestant imagery, the evil city and evil woman concepts are expanded, conforming to the description of the Whore of Babylon in Apocalypse 17 and applied to the false ecclesia of Rome, allegedly corrupting and misrepresenting true religion. Her female identity is not inconsistent with her Antichrist identity, because as Antichrist she represents the false church and in both Biblical and ecclesiastical metaphor, the Church is represented as a woman.<sup>9</sup>

The title-page illustration of the pamphlet, *Des Bapsts und der Pfaffen Badstub* (Plate 67),<sup>10</sup> develops the vision of Apocalypse 17, in which the Babylonian Whore rides the seven-headed beast. She holds aloft her 'cup of abominations'. Forsaking the text, she is depicted sitting behind the pope who wears the papal tiara and holds the orb and upright sword, emblems of secular power. The pope clad in the slit clothing of a *landesknecht*, confirms the 'warrior' element of Antichrist's tyrannical rule. The

Babylonian Whore is linked with the papacy, and together they depict the tyrannical ruler and pseudo-religious aspects of Antichrist typology, rationalising and elucidating these seemingly contradictory elements. She is identified with Babylon, and Babylon is identified as Rome. Together, they imply the falsity of the Catholic Church. A nun and a monk, both kneeling in adoration, and secular rulers, face the approaching beast. Nun and monk together, while representing the lower clerical orders, also hint at immorality, a theme encountered in contemporary anti-clerical propaganda and later in Gerung (Plate 97b). The monk is about to kiss the beast's extended paw, a reference to the papal practice of kissing the pope's foot taken up in the *Passional* (Plate 70). Three standing figures, an emperor, a Turk wearing a turban, and a bishop, look on in wonder at this display of power.

In the woodcut for Apocalypse 18 (September New Testament, 1522), Plate 83, which is concerned with judgment on Babylon, the papal-Rome connection is shown by means of Rome's landmarks, the Capitol and Castel Santangelo, adjacent to the Tiber.<sup>11</sup> It is not historical Babylon, but papal Rome that is being consumed by towering flames and about to be struck by the falling millstone released by the angel. Those who witness its fall, classed as courtesans, canonists and benefice-holders, wear contemporary dress and react to the event with various gestures.<sup>12</sup> Rome's landmarks in reference to Babylon the Great (*Apocalypse* 18), being less obviously anti-papal, were left untouched in the December New Testament (1522).

Apocalypse 19.19, 20, September Testament (1522), the armies of heaven led by the angel, who thrust the apocalyptic beast into hell also include contemporary persons, Hutten and Sickingen, indicating as elsewhere their alleged sympathies towards one side or the other.<sup>13</sup>

Thomas Wolff's publication of Luther's New Testament (1523), Basel, with illustrations by Holbein the Younger, followed the September Testament (1522), not only incorporating all its anti-Papal references, but enlarging some of their features. Holbein's depiction of the pouring out of the Seven Vials (Plate 84), introduces changes and gives a clearer depiction of this complex vision. Unlike the September 1522 Testament, the correct number of frogs emerge from its mouth, and though the standing figures are slightly changed, they are clearer images and Archduke Ferdinand alongside the mercenary leader, Georg von Frondsberg, are no doubt intended. The Beast on whose seat the Seventh Vial is poured wears a larger tiara with crucifix.

The uninhibited anti-Papal allusions of the German Testament (1523) are characteristic of the 1534 *Biblia* translation (pub. H.Lufft, Wittenberg). In the depiction of *Apocalypse* 11, Luther's *Biblia* translation (1534), Plate 85, tongues of flame, indicative of Holy Spirit power, come from the mouths of two protestant preachers against the background of the Castle Church at Wittenberg. It is clear that the interpretation of the Witnesses has changed. As contemporary preachers manifesting Spirit Power and identified with the Protestant cause, their identity has become a denominational issue between the true and the false Churches, the Protestant and the Catholic. The opposing parties, both Catholic and Protestant, had therefore virtually ceased to expect the actual re-appearance of the Two Witnesses,

Enoch and Elias. Signorelli's, *The Rule*, advances the notion that the Spiritual Orders would perform the work of the Witnesses. This matter was discussed in chapter 11.<sup>14</sup>

In the presentation of the Whore of Apocalypse 17, Plate 86, the triple tiara, the cup, the beast, its towering horned heads and tail are all enlarged and dominate the right half of the woodcut. At the centre the angel points out to John the vision of the Beast. A multitudinous company are assembled, the nearest of whom are kneeling princes wearing crowns. A fortress and a church steeple topped by a crucifix seen in the distance, aptly summarise the constituents of the alliance of church and state.

Judgment on Babylon, Apocalypse 18, the city of Worms (Plate 87), was the city where the authorities had set themselves resolutely against Luther and condemned him.<sup>15</sup> The city burns fiercely, the flames of judgment envelop the duomo and other ecclesiastical buildings and the angel releases the millstone that was to bring about total destruction. Worms is therefore identified with the sins of Babylon as perpetrated by Rome, and its papal Antichrist and false church associations.

Apocalypse 20.8, 9, the attack on the beloved city by the forces of Gog and Magog, portrays the city of Vienna (Plate 88), and is a depiction of the 1529 attack on the city by the Turks, a highly disconcerting event of apocalyptic significance. The illustration had been used previously in the 1530 edition of the New Testament by Hans Lufft of Wittenburg, where the identity of the city was inscribed.<sup>16</sup> It can be construed as a depiction of the outpouring of divine punishment upon the Catholic Church and shows the sensitivity of the times to events regarded as apocalyptic, partly signified by the presence of the dragon figure, lower right.

#### **IV Chapter 15. The Papal Antichrist and the False Church: Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary***

- a. The Word, Law and Grace**
- b. The Ship of the Church**
- c. The Witnesses and Antichrist Enthroned**
- d. Vices - the Revelling Clergy**
- e. Babylonian Links and the Fall of the Catholic Church**

Matthew Gerung's (1500-1570) twenty-six pairs of contrasting woodcut illustrations for Sebastian Meyer's *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John* (1539), are anti-papal.<sup>1</sup> They express the Protestant view throughout that the pope is Antichrist and the papacy is the false church, the church of Antichrist. Their paired, antithetical format, anti-papal stance and polemical character resemble Cranach's *Passional* of 1521, but unlike the *Passional* they are related throughout to *Apocalypse* texts and imagery, adding substantially by way of paraphrase and analogy to propagandist material from that source. The discovery by Petra Roettig of a manuscript in the Bavarian State Library revealed that Gerung's woodcuts were those commissioned for Meyer's *Commentary* and by which the definitive order and pairing of the illustrations was established.<sup>2</sup> The discussion of Gerung's illustrations follows the pairing attested by Roettig.

##### **a. The Word, Law and Grace**

The woodcuts examined in this sub-chapter present religious themes of a doctrinal nature based upon papal attitudes to God's Word, and to Christ's redemptive work in relation to Law and Grace.

Roman Clergy in the Bottomless Pit, dated 1546 below the artist's monogram, is the first illustration in the *Commentary* (Plate 89). Unlike all the others it lacks a pictorial partner and is accompanied by a scripted Frontispiece.<sup>3</sup> A band of cloud separates the heavenly from the terrestrial areas of the image, creating an internal antithesis often present in the other woodcuts.

Below the cloud barrier, in the terrestrial zone, three beastly creatures make up the central group of 'Roman Clergy', identifiable by their headgear as a pope, a bishop and a cardinal. The pope's triple tiara, cloak and hood, surrounds his shoulders and hangs down behind. He has a composite make-up: the body and tail of a lion, and a partly humanised face which retains leonine features. Probably both feet are clawed, though only the left is visible, planted on an open book. The forelegs are hooved, one points at the cardinal; the other rests on an open text.

From the nature of the discussion, clarified below, one at least of the books is a Bible. Reference to papal failure to acknowledge the authority of the Word, frequent in Protestant polemical writings and illustrations, often takes the form of a foot being planted on the Bible.<sup>4</sup> While the lion's clawed feet are a means of attack in keeping with its ferocious nature, the parted hoof belongs to the ox, typifying the

servant, but used to tread down the Word in this instance, and signifying an abuse of spiritual power.<sup>5</sup> Cords stretching across the three open texts imply the suppression of their message and may indicate that all are Bibles, opened at various texts, which are being consulted.

The two horns at each side of the pope's tiara establish links with the two-horned beast of the Earth (Apocalypse 13.11). This Beast had been identified as Antichrist and given a papal identity by its monk's habit in Luther's September Testament, 1522 (Plate 80). He caused 'men' to worship the beast of the Sea (Apoc.13.1), which had been similarly identified. The title, 'Roman Clergy in the Bottomless Pit' has its own beastly connotation with the Beast of the Bottomless Pit, the Beast that opposes the Two Witnesses of Apocalypse 11. In early medieval manuscripts it was depicted in either beastly or anthropomorphic form and given an Antichrist identity as early as the third century A.D.<sup>6</sup>

The association of the papacy with the lion arises later in connection with the other animal figures present in the adjacent group on the left; but as leader among the beasts it is aptly chosen to represent the head of the papacy. Scales on the thighs, arms and the tail of the cardinal awaken associations with apocalyptic creatures. The bishop too has claws and a spotted, leopard-like face, a characteristic of the Beast of the Sea which was like a leopard (Apocalypse 13.2). Apart from this and the pope's two horns, a feature of the Earth beast (Apocalypse 13.11), the identity of the clerics as representations of the beasts of Apocalypse 13 is somewhat limited. These two who, like the pope, wear a hooded cloak and clerical head-gear, engage in joint discussion about the texts. As members of the papal hierarchy, the Catholic Church, not just the pope, is being represented.

The following text, Jeremiah, 23.28, 29 of the *Commentary*, clarifies the matter so far as the Bible and the Word are concerned :-

*The prophet that hath a dream. let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word let him speak my word faithfully. What is the straw to the wheat saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?*

God's warning to the prophets (not quoted in the *Commentary*), continues, in later verses, 31, 32 :-

*I am against the prophets...that steal my words everyone from his neighbour ...that use their tongues and say, He saith ...and cause my people to err by their lies ...yet I sent them not, nor commanded them...Ye have perverted the words of the living God ...I will...cast you out of my presence.*

The theme is one of accusation against prophets and teachers who distort the Word and preach a false message. Their punishment for these offences is being assisted by the towering figure holding a blazing torch over the clerics, who, striding forward, drives them into the pit.

The meaning of the line, 'What is the straw to the wheat ?' is indicated in the previous line which distinguishes between 'the prophet that hath a dream' and 'he that hath my word'. The implication is that the Word must not be contaminated by the false prophet's 'dream'. They are as different as the straw and the wheat, the former, the stubble, is worthless in comparison with the wheat, which typifies the Word as the Bread of Life, the staple spiritual diet for the believer (John 6.25).<sup>7</sup>

Another group of four animals, in the mouth of the Pit, bottom left, also have open texts, and include a rat, a large lion, a smaller lion behind the bishop, and an ass. They too are implicated in the misdeeds of the senior clerics in the misrepresentation of God's Word, whose punishment they share. As papal theologians, they wear doctors' hats, a mode of head-gear used for Antichrist by Wolgemut (Plate 26), and by Gerung (Plate 98). Above them, a Jesus look-alike figure raises a hammer which is being aimed at the two larger beasts looking towards him.

The two larger figures converging towards the guilty from the edge of the frame are God's agents in the judgmental process. Holding respectively a fiery torch and a hammer, they typify, in the language of the Jeremiah quotation, the force of God's Word to consume like a flame and destroy as a hammer. They emphasise the judgmental powers of the Word. The Jesus look-alike with the hammer represents Christ himself as the Word, 'the Word made flesh' (John 1.14).<sup>8</sup>

In posture and dress, the figure with the torch exudes the austerity and zeal of a prophet and must represent Jeremiah, whose prophetic text provides the key to the theme of the woodcut. Jeremiah was sent by God to preach, in whom God's word was as a fire shut up in his bones, such that he could not desist from preaching it (Jeremiah 20.9). This points to the compelling power of the Word to convert the hearer as well as to punish those who distort it and is a double rebuke for the offending papacy. It is a powerful indictment against the alleged misdeeds of the Catholic Church, since not only the pope but other senior clerics and the theologians are all classified as offenders.

The sagging cloud base, the declining contours of hill-slopes, a top-heavy subdivision of the image, two black devils swooping down on each of the two groups, and the two large figures converging from either side, generate an irresistible force against the offenders, reinforcing their propulsion into the abyss in fulfilment of Jeremiah's warning from God (*supra*), 'I will cast you out of my presence'.

The message witnesses to the power of God's Word and the dire consequences when apostasised. This underpins the notion of an apostate ecclesia, which the Apostle Peter warned about (II Peter 2.1, 2), and was the conclusion Protestants had reached about the papacy. Committal to the pit means exclusion from the heavenly precincts, depicted in the celestial sphere where the angel with a key controls access. This counters, by implication, the claim to papal authority in the use of the keys and that issues of reward and judgment are determined by the heavenly powers.

Situated beneath an arch above the wall on the right is the altar upon which the Lamb reclines. Underneath, the 'souls under the altar' are portrayed as naked children, revealed by the small figure with arms raised who holds up the altar-cloth.<sup>9</sup> Their nakedness, denoting the innocence of this favoured category, await the judgment, which for them is one of reward. These souls under the altar have been faithful unto death, but they must await their brethren who will be tried as they were before receiving the crown of life. The angel with the key who opens up the celestial door for the faithful would traditionally lock up the Beast in the Bottomless Pit'. Gerung has taken liberties with the details for polemical purposes, possibly to emphasise that access to the heavenly precincts is under divine, not papal control. Here the offending clerics and theologians are not locked up with a key, but are no less confined to the pit. They occupy the position of the Beast of the Bottomless Pit which had a long-standing identity with the Antichrist.

Gerung adopts a popular polemical ploy used in anti-papal satires of the 1520s, the substitution of animals for people. The title-page of a pamphlet, *Die Luterisch Strebkatz*, 1524, illustrates a contest between Luther and the pope, representing true and false religion (Plate 90).<sup>10</sup> In a tug-of-war in which the *strebkatz* was gripped between the teeth, the aim was to gain possession of it. Some of the observers are given animal heads and include several opponents of Luther. One who wears a crown and has two rats pictured on his cloak, represents Hochstraten, a theologian known as 'king of the rats' featured in several polemical prints of the 1520s.<sup>11</sup> The animal just above Gerung's monogram is a rat, and could represent Hochstraten, appropriately wearing a doctor's hat as a theologian, not a crown as king of the rats. The large lion and the ass's head just above it, already had established papal connections.

In a more familiar use of animal faces (Plate 91), *Leo X, Murner, Emser, Eck and Lemp as Animals* are respectively depicted as a lion, a cat, a goat, a sow and a dog, based on their name, or the sound it makes, or their characteristic mode of conduct. Leo X is lion by name and savage by nature and is given the central position and named 'Antichrist'.<sup>12</sup>

Twenty years after Cranach, Gerung, drawing on anti-papal iconography, shows in compelling terms the destiny of the faithful and the unfaithful, judged in relation to their attitude towards God's Word - a definitive Protestant theme, and very much to the fore in English examples and attitudes discussed in the final chapter. The importance and integrity of the Bible in its prophetic, doctrinal and moral aspects is presented as inviolable and brings down the severest penalty upon those who misrepresent it. All parties, the papal hierarchy and papal theologians, are fully implicated in this image. The Jeremiah reference specifically identifies the offenders as prophets, impliedly false, and involved in preaching and teaching, all aspects of priesthood and fulfilling the typology of Antichrist as false priest. His diabolical associations are established by the pope's 'bestly' representations; and deceit in the use of the Word makes the link with Antichrist, leader of the vices. The pope himself is depicted as Antichrist, a false priest and ecclesiastical head, whose leadership is also depicted as false. The inference is that the Catholic Church itself is false and is the Church of Antichrist.

*John and the 24 Elders* and *Law and Grace* takes up the theme reiterated in Protestant propagandist art and literature pointing to the alleged doctrinal shortcomings of the papacy's grant of forgiveness in exchange for the payment of money, in particular by the purchase of an indulgence. As these grants were not free, they were not by grace. Given in exchange for 'payment', they came within the category of 'works' and therefore conformed to the requirements of the Law, which required works of obedience in order to keep it. As Christ was the only one who kept the Law, escape from the consequences of breaking it was through him alone and therefore by grace, and free. Any reversion to works to obtain forgiveness was ineffectual, retrograde and sinful, as it spurned God's purpose of redemption in Christ. The expressions Law and Grace embody these principles.

*John and the 24 Elders* (Plate 92a), dated 1546 and bearing the artist's monogram, depicts the vision of the heavenly order; Christ is seated within a mandorla with two of the four Apocalyptic creatures on either side and the seven candlesticks lit in front. Clockwise from top left, the four are the lion, the eagle, the calf, and the apocalyptic man, each with six wings and dotted with eyes. They have a deep symbolic significance, which includes the four evangelist writers of the gospels. Below, separated by a cloud-band, are the twenty-four elders, signifying the august faithful who have been judged worthy (Apocalypse 4.2-8). The gifts and favours are by God's Grace and provide a basis upon which Gerung presents the issues of the Law and Grace, which he expands and accentuates in the second image.

John, a large figure kneeling at bottom right is permitted to view the heavenly scene. Gerung's diminutive contemporary landscape, bottom left, has trees, buildings, and seascape and a pointed tower at the top aspiring heavenwards. There may be an expectation of divine favours, but cut off by the heavy cloud-base, the far-reaching consequences of what is going on in the heavens (and their tragic outworkings in the terms of the second woodcut), are as yet hidden. In Apocalypse illustrations a terrestrial scene below often implies that what is decreed in the heavens will affect the familiar *status quo* on earth (Plates 64 and 65).

At the very top of the second image, *Law and Grace* (Plate 92b), separated by a cloud band, the Father, the Son, each holding a sceptre, the dove of the Holy Spirit, and the orb centrally placed, represent divine world rulership and authority. Below, four essential stages of Christ's salvific work - his nativity, crucifixion, triumph over Sin (standing upon the serpent), and his ascension. The latter is indicated by the feet of the ascending Christ, the rest of whose body is obscured by the cloud-barrier as he enters the heavenly zone. Gerung incorporates the four apocalyptic creatures of the first image, stationing them in telling juxtaposition. These variations increase the emphasis on the theme of redemption by Grace through Christ. The lion is placed next to the triumphant, resurrected Christ, the 'lion of the tribe of Judah', standing on the serpent.<sup>13</sup> The ox, the burden bearer, replaces the paschal lamb at the foot of the cross and the eagle is near the feet of the ascending Christ. The four creatures also represent the summation of the community of the faithful, full of eyes and effortlessly mobile in executing the divine will.<sup>14</sup>

Among a small group of Old Testament prophets, Moses, the Law-giver, identifiable by his two horns, holds the two stone tablets on which the Law was inscribed. While even the prophets under the Law look upwards towards Christ and the symbols of redemption by Grace, those in the pit look away. The two stone tablets, representing the Law, pointed by Moses in their direction, indicate the nature of their offences upon whom the blindness of the Law had allegedly remained.

Down-pointing arrows in the hands of an angel, lower right, across the cloud barrier immediately above the pit, indicate divine disfavour and imply consignment to it. Representing what must be deemed to be the false church, are the pope, a bishop, a cardinal, all wearing customary headgear, and a half-naked weeping woman. Next to her is a document with writing on it, resembling an indulgence granting forgiveness for sins committed - but to no avail, hence her bitter tears. This is doubtless intended, in the context, as a reference to the Church's claim to forgive sins, exercised through its priesthood, and in particular, absolution in return for monetary gifts, and other 'good works'. The inclusion of two senior clerics with the pope widens the Antichrist identity, with implications for the Catholic Church as a whole. This conclusion persists throughout the *Commentary*.

Failure to recognise and implement the principle of Law and Grace, and to acknowledge in practice the authority of God's Word were regarded as fundamental challenges to the authority and work of both the Father and the Son and typified the work of Antichrist.

In these three woodcuts the types of Antichrist as false priest and false religious leader are expanded and doctrinally defined, purporting to show that he is a false prophet, a false preacher, a false teacher. These are all aspects of priesthood, well exemplified in the case of Christ.

#### **b. The Ship of the Church**

Old and New Testament incidents contain images of boats in peril on the waters and in need of deliverance. The main examples are the ark, which saved Noah and his family from the Flood (Genesis 7. 9 to 8.21), the fishing boats in which Christ's disciples toiled, threatened by storm and tempest (Mark 4.38-41); the ship the Apostle Paul and other prisoners were sailing in to Rome, which ran into ferocious weather and began to break up. Following the disciples cry, 'Lord save us, we perish', calm ensued, and Paul's crucial command, 'except ye abide in the ship ye cannot be saved', was equally authoritative in terms of 'salvation' (Acts 27.31). These lessons were mainly for those who belonged to Christ's Ecclesia, the True Church, and as the message of salvation was shown to depend upon the deliverance through Christ, a false Christ, a false church, the church of Antichrist, could not deliver, or itself expect to be delivered, and would most certainly perish. Bible teaching, Antichrist legend, Protestant theology, each foretold that the Church of Antichrist was therefore doomed.

The central structure of a church building called the nave (Latin: *navis*, ship), underlies an iconographical tradition in which the ship is an image of the Church. It dates from early Christian painting, of which there are several examples in the Roman catacombs, and a little later than the ark

symbol, of which it appears to have been a development. One of the most famous *navicella*, the *Ship of the Church with Christ walking on the Waters* is a mosaic by Giotto, c. 1300, for the atrium of Old St Peter's. (Plate 68 is a depiction of the ship of the church)

*Doctor Brant's Narrenschiff* (1499), shows the folly of attempting to climb aboard the capsized ship of Antichrist tempted by a bag of gold (avarice), held in Antichrist's hand, who sits on the upturned hull (Plate 93). The folly of those struggling in the water is indicated by their headgear, a fool's cap with bells. Peter's ship nearby, identified by the key in Peter's hand, who stands at the sea's edge, receives the boat as it reaches the shore. A bellows contraption used by a devil for injecting the vices and a twisting snake arching over Antichrist's head, confirm his diabolical links. He holds instruments of Christ's Passion in his left hand. This is a double deceit in that he poses as Christ, who suffered affliction, whereas Antichrist was one who afflicted others.

Gerung combines the ship image with the *Apocalypse* vision, *The Third Trumpet* and *The Ship of the Church*, both dated 1547 and with the monogram 'MG' (Plates 94a, 94b). Again, the apocalyptic vision is used analogically. The sounding of the Third Trumpeting Angel, described in Apocalypse 18.10,11, was followed by a Great Star falling from heaven, burning as a lamp and falling upon the third part of rivers and fountains of waters. The star was called Wormwood and the third part of the waters became wormwood, indicating bitterness, and many died in the waters because they were made so. Gerung places the trumpeting angel within a circlet of cloud, top right. The falling star, burning furiously, falls into an expanse of water. A jet pours water into a cistern from which persons have drawn water. Some are lying down including the *landsknecht* and appear to be suffering ill effects of the waters made bitter. Broken trunks and blighted trees similarly show the impact upon earth of events decreed in the heavens.

In the contrasting image, *The Ship of the Catholic Church* (Plate 94b), a scene of shipwreck on the waters made bitter, pope, bishop, cardinal and a monk are in the foreground vessel which is in difficulties, about to be engulfed by the waves. There is a large winged monster with scales and a long tail forked at the end, from whose diabolical head its fiery breath is enveloping the head of the pope. Though seeming to attack the vessel, it focuses on the pope and provides that customary affiliation with evil in representations of Antichrist. His jewelled triple tiara, richly decorated cope fastened with a jewelled brooch (*Luxuria*), the diabolical breath of the winged serpent around his head, and his performance of priestly functions as head of the Church, encapsulate his identity as Antichrist and cross-reference to several types. A monstrance, sacraments on the table blessed by the pope, are about to be received, but their efficacy is now seriously challenged. Papal bulls and decretals held by two cardinals standing on the bridge, where the crossed keys of the papal arms are displayed, are the papal Church's means of fortification, identity and protection, but are proving ineffectual to deliver in these straitened circumstances. It is denied the power of deliverance on which the True Ship of the Church can depend. The ship of the Papal Church is doomed because it is the false church of Antichrist, and trusts its own defences.

In the adjacent vessel at right-angles are the emperor wearing his crown and holding a sceptre, a prince sitting opposite, and a courtier. In the angle formed by the sail and the leaning mast of the papal vessel, a king wearing a crenellated crown appears to have fallen overboard and is clinging to the side. This vessel, representing secular power, strikes the papal vessel amidship, implying a state of disharmony, even conflict, between secular and ecclesiastical powers. Both vessels share the same fate. The respective powers, the political and the ecclesiastical, may be at variance with each other, but they are both presented as enemies of God. They are all categorised as unbelievers and share the same fate, as both vessels are sinking. Two ships behind on either side of the monster's tail are facing similar hazards; there are monks in the one on the left.

At the top, two tiny boats sail in calm waters. This expanse of water is overlooked by a city with towers and on its landward side a group of figures, which include a seated woman holding a child, have made it to the shore and possibly represent the faithful who are set to reach the city, towards which two figures, one pointing ahead, near the end of their journey. As so often the case, a group of buildings raised up in the landscape represent the spiritual goal, the city set in a hill, the New Jerusalem.

*The Woman Clothed with Sun attacked by the Seven-Headed Dragon* (Apocalypse 12.1-17), is paired with *The Ship of Christ*, dated 1547, 1548, respectively and each with the monogram (Plates 95a, 95b). The Woman surrounded by clouds stands, unusually, on a circular, not a crescent moon, has 15 stars about her head, which exceeds the scriptural number, 12.<sup>15</sup> Crouching on a ledge at bottom right is the seven-headed Dragon which has attacked the woman. Angels are raising the boy up to God's throne, top centre. Another phase of the attack on the Woman, emphasised here, is the gush of water from the mouth of the larger lion-head of the Dragon, which misses its mark, the cavernous earth swallowing it up (Apocalypse 12.16). It accomplishes the opposite of what is intended and helps the Woman, the faithful ecclesia.

One third of the stars in the heavens are brought down to the ground by the Dragon (Apocalypse 12.7, 9). Two tiny human figures on the horizon, between the earthly and the heavenly zones, observe the scene above; one with outstretched arm pointing to Michael who is in the celestial zone, raising his sword as if he were about to strike the Dragon, which he in fact does in the course of the 'war in heaven'. He holds a processional cross, pointing its head in the direction of the Dragon, negating it as Christ and therefore confirming it as Antichrist. Meyer shows in the Dragon the 'satanic power of Antichrist' which is actually identified as Antichrist,<sup>16</sup> and his seven heads with crowns are said to stand for his riches, his vices and his great power. This attribution of riches, the seven vices and Satanic power, conform to typological identities of Antichrist.

In the second of the pair (Plate 95 b), the Ship of the True Church, on which Christ stands, is large, central and secure. Christ, with a gesture of blessing and peace as he controls the waves, is surrounded by a cirlet of cloud signifying his 'heavenly', spiritual presence, in keeping with 'lo I am with you even

to the end of the world (Matthew. 28.19-20). Many believers are in the ship and five bearded figures are at his side. Four apostles stand elevated, two on the bow, two on the prow, each holding an attribute - the sword of the Word, an eagle's foot, an ox foot, and Peter with a key. The ship's cabin is a small church building through which the mast stands up like a steeple and to which the sails are attached.

Two much smaller ships at the top left and right corners are respectively Turkish and papal. In the Turkish vessel the Sultan, wearing a combination of turban and crown and holding a sceptre, is accompanied by a turbaned soldier holding a sword. Another smaller figure beyond him appears to hold a book, probably the Koran. The pope, a cardinal and monks make up the complement of the papal vessel. Both ships are trying to sink the ship of Christ with blasts of air directed at the sails from the mouths of two winged devils. They are countered by spirit power from the two angels aboard Christ's ship. That the Turks should attack the Christian ship is no surprise. Classed as the infidel, enemy of the Christian cause, with a record of military aggression and incursion, including the 'sacred' territory of the Land, they share the fate of Antichrist. Meyer's *Commentary* contains numerous allusions to the Turk as a major enemy of the Christian church.<sup>17</sup> A sinking ship in the foreground, breaking amidships, contains Jews, customarily presented as Antichrist's followers, and unbelievers, and a dog, often included, swims strongly away. A cardinal and a bishop, from the ship whose mast only is visible, swim helplessly in the tide, while three monks cling to its mast. The Ship of Christ is surrounded by its antagonists - papal, Turkish, and unbelievers.

This scene is a rejection of papal status and authority, reminiscent of John Bale's, *The Images of Bothe Churches* (c.1545), who, as Gerung, identifies the Woman clothed with the Sun as the True Church, not the papal.<sup>18</sup> The papal interpretation of the apocalyptic vision of the Woman Clothed with the Sun was as a depiction of Mary, bringing forth the infant Christ and typifying the Catholic Church. The second image, the Ship of Christ, representing the True Church, demonstrates in the then familiar imagery of the Ship of the Church, that the papal ship was a different vessel, assuming an opposing role in relation to the True Church and meeting disaster.

### **c. The Witnesses and Antichrist Enthroned**

*John Measures the Temple of God* (Apocalypse.11.1-14), which is paired with *The Two Protestant Preachers and the Throne of Antichrist*, Abb. 16b (Plates 96a, 96b). In the first woodcut John has a reed given him by the angel for measuring the Temple of God. Gerung's 'temple' is a typical German, Catholic early Gothic church building. It shows only the exterior of the apse, or chancel end of the building, and reflects more accurately than previous illustrations the inside ('innere'), i.e.the equivalent of 'the temple and the altar and those that worship therein', as distinct from the 'outer court' (Apocalypse 11.1, 2). Other depictions have shown a narrow, gaunt interior, free from images. In earlier interiors (Plates 79 and 85), the chancel as the focus of influence from an allegedly false leadership, has not been addressed as clearly as Gerung does in the church exterior. The two preachers are being attacked by the Beast of the Bottomless Pit identified in the chapter (Apocalypse 11.7), frequently shown as a human Antichrist. Gerung here retains the beastly form, as Cranach does in Plates 79 and 85, and places a

papal triple tiara on its head.<sup>19</sup> The Two Witnesses are also shown lying dead in the road beyond the church. As the text states, 'and their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the city which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt where also our Lord was crucified'. In this way the two preachers are related to the work of Christ. Their divine authority is authenticated by the flames of Holy Spirit power issuing from their mouths as in Cranach, Plate 85, and one of them holds a Bible, which makes a point about the source of their teaching as Protestant preachers.

A vertical division separates the Roman Catholic Church and the Papal Beast on the left from the two preachers on the right, establishing a denominational distinction between opponents, with the latter on God's side. Above the preachers, a verdant landscape with trees rises to a steepled church and a towered fortress on the hill, a typical setting for a theme where spiritual aspirations are relevant. They are not named Enoch and Elias, but presented as two Protestant preachers', reflecting protestant conclusions that the work of opposing Antichrist, formerly attributed to Enoch and Elias, was in fact being done by Protestant preachers. They re-appear in the lower scene of the second woodcut where the theme of preaching is sustained and to which the title *Two Protestant Preachers* is given.

The second scene, *Two Protestant Preachers and the Throne of Antichrist* (Plate 96b), represents the preachers and Antichrist in horizontal antithesis, Antichrist is given a beastly form with two long tails, supported by two two-horned devils, one female. He has a lion's face, clawed feet and hands, and wears a crown. The *Commentary* text refers to his 'tiara', but though a papal tiara appears in several examples, a crenelated imperial crown is used of the type worn by the emperor in a previous woodcut. Antichrist is therefore presented as a political figure in beastly mode, enthroned like an emperor, effectively representing Antichrist as a tyrannical ruler; but being buttressed on each side by senior papal clerics, a cardinal and a bishop, his priestly role, as head of the false church, is explicit.

By his right foot, there is a fierce two-horned beast showing a hooved foreleg which again indicates a treading down process. With Antichrist's clawed feet and lionine ferocity, the beastly pair, seemingly working in concert, share some of the characteristics of the pope in Gerung's depiction of Roman clergy in the Bottomless Pit (Plate 89). Antichrist occupies a large canopied throne, which along with his crown presents him more as an emperor than a pope. There are secular persons present, notably the emperor (*kaiser*), wearing a crown and chain who moves his sceptre away as if to counter Antichrist's out-stretched arm. This movement shows pope and emperor in conflict and points to the perennial cause of controversy, the papal grasp at imperial power and political control. (See Plate 66 and relevant text, which are about similar struggles). All these figures, both political and clerical, around the enthroned Antichrist occupy subservient positions to him, giving a powerful representation of Antichrist, widely influential in both religious and political spheres.

A similar denominational opposition between papal and Protestant of the first image of the pair is also retained in the second image. As is usually the case in Gerung's *Commentary*, the clear indication is that

the papal and the Protestant represent respectively the false and the true Churches. It may be that as Antichrist is presented as a strong political power, his 'tiara' is more emperor-like than papal.

Below, the Two Protestant Preachers, enclosed by a cloud barrier, are preaching the Word in opposition to Antichrist. Their position in the clouds appears to illustrate Apocalypse 11.11, 12, where, after a symbolic period of three days and a half, the spirit of life from God would enter into them and they would ascend up to heaven in a cloud and their enemies would behold them. It is therefore significant that Antichrist occupies the higher altitude and that Antichrist's tails are twitching in anger, a reaction to the events in the scene below. The text states that Antichrist observes what is happening in the 'heavens' with 'sceptical anger'.<sup>20</sup>

Swathes of cloud at the lower level enclose the preaching scene where supposedly heaven's work is being done. Both Witnesses, in keeping with depictions of Protestant preachers generally, preach from open Bibles. The audience is attentive and includes the poor and humble. One man holds a flail, indicative of a judgmental process (see Plate 101). The two hooded persons, bottom-right, are familiar figures in scenes of evangelical preaching, corded and secure against the onslaughts of the Evil One and presumably the influence of false teaching. Where the Two Preachers are at work is portrayed as a heavenly scene, without a landscape background. They are not named Enoch and Elias but are doing the work of the Two Witnesses, which is why there are two of them. The identity of the preachers as Protestant, (Apocalypse 11.3-7), as distinct from Enoch and Elias, is a development which was recognised in some *Biblia* illustrations of the 1520s (see Plates 79 and 85).

Antichrist is presented as the supreme ruler, impliedly an upholder of false religion, Catholic as distinct from Protestant. This pair of woodcuts, as the previous pair, make the point that the Papal Church constitutes the opposition.

#### **d. Vices: the Revelling Clergy**

*The Pouring Out the Vials of Wrath*, dated 1546, is paired with *The Gaming Table of Blasphemers*, dated 1547, each bearing Gerung's monogram (Plate 97a and 97b). The first illustration portrays the seven vials being poured out by each of the seven angels upon the earth, the sea, the rivers and fountains of waters, the sun, the seat of the beast, the River Euphrates and the air (Apocalypse 16.1-17). The afflicted group of three persons, one leaning against the broken tree-stump with spots on his leg have suffered under the first vial. They are the category who bore the Mark of the Beast and worshipped his image (v.2). Gerung depicts a seven-headed Beast with animal heads suffering under the fifth Vial. A frog emerges from each of three sources, according to the text (vv. 13, 14), from the main head of the Beast (a lion), from the Dragon head which arches above the lion-head; and from the mouth of the False Prophet who stands on the left. They are the 'spirits of devils working miracles that go forth to the kings of the earth ...to gather them to the battle of the great day...' (vv. 13, 14). An earlier illustration of this theme by Hans Holbein (Plate 84) in a 1523 version of Luther's 1522 New Testament (Plate 81), gives a clearer presentation of the subject. Holbein follows the imagery of

Luther's September Testament, and depicts the Beast of the Bottomless Pit which has one head. The vial is clearly poured out on its 'seat', the throne on which it is perched, and, contrary to the text, all three frogs emerge from this one head identified as papal by its tiara. Holbein depicts three foremost figures - an Emperor, a King and a *landsknecht* with towering plumes, who are exposed to the Fifth Vial's outpouring on the Beast and susceptible to the influence of the frogs.

The depictions of the second image (Plate 97b), of the Gerung pair, occur beneath a wide band of dark clouds, implying the outpouring of divine judgments. A conflict rages in the landscape, which includes papal forces on the left. Three leading figures sit together on the far side of the table; from left to right - the emperor, a king, and the pope. The pope, centrally placed on the far side, his arm in a sling, his tiara on the table, put off because of head wounds, is already implicated in the action. Three frogs emanate from his mouth, as they did in Holbein's depiction of the Vials, which attaches blame to the pope as the chief *provocateur*. The frog-like spirits in this second image, shown moving off towards the scenes of battle in the landscape, are connected with the process of gathering the kings of the earth to the battle of the great day of God Almighty to which the prophecy refers (Apocalypse 16.14). The pope is in a sorry state, with a bandaged head and his arm in a sling, a much handicapped and afflicted man. A robed theologian who offers him refreshment lifts his hand to his face expressing concern, perhaps fearing the pontiff's imminent demise.

A symbolic group of items above the pope's head, include two documents with seals, referring to the papal practice of issuing indulgences, allegedly usurping the prerogative of Christ to forgive sins, whose benefits are by grace. The chalice lying on its side spills its contents and hints at Christ's blood being shed in vain. The shepherd's staff (or a long-handled spoon), refers either to the false shepherd who fails to lead, or misleads the flock, or even abandons it; or the spoon's connotation with a worthless enterprise, which in the context could allude to the falsity, even futility of forgiveness granted by an Indulgence.<sup>21</sup> This collection of papal artefacts point to ecclesiastical faults, including the issues of Law and Grace.

The emperor's crown rests on the table; the king wears his crown and chain as they join each other in a game of backgammon. Under his robe the emperor is wearing the garments of a *landsknecht*, a mercenary soldier, implying his participation in battle and perhaps the support of a cause from motives of material gain. Judging by the patch on the king's face, he has been in the wars. It is significant that the crowns of the two outer figures have been removed, but not the king's. The explanation would appear to be that there are more judgments to come upon the central figure. A tree-trunk reaching up into the dark clouds, resembling the outpouring of a vial, and in particular the three unattached weapons, a sword, an arrow and a dagger, all pointing towards him, signify this. The sword proceeds from the rampant lion wearing a triple tiara in the landscape; top left, the arrow comes from heaven (cp. Plate 92b), where the angel holds one in each hand, signifying divine disapproval, and the dagger hints at a close and treacherous enemy. His downcast eyes, the finger of his right hand pointing down, and a gesture of 'measure', signified by the stretch from thumb to forefinger of his left hand on the table,

suggest the brevity of time that remains. The tree above the emperor, extreme left, has already been truncated, his power impliedly curtailed, which may explain why his crown rests on the table. Further judgments are imminent, yet the three leaders are already in extremity. The fears and implications of eschatological fulfilment embraced by the prophecy are all too evident and the judgments are being brought to bear upon the alleged contradictions of the papal mix of politics and false religion

In the landscape, the scene is of strife between the forces. The papacy to the left shows the papal lion, rampant, wearing a tiara, an accompanying two-horned devil, the customary association with Evil, whose bared claws on a stretching arm parallel a forward-pointing spear. The pope is not alone, but accompanied by a bishop, a cardinal and a monk. Papal soldiery, with a crucifix held aloft, are strung out behind the tall tree and move towards the lake; the winged figure being carried may be an image or the Virgin. The papal cause is being demonstrated as a spiritual one, worthy of divine assistance, but according to the apocalypse message as applied by Gerung, the very opposite is the case. The opposing force on the other side of the lake which moves in from the right edge, as indeed the papal group also do, from the left, imply larger contingents. A crowd of folk on the right appear to be fleeing and some have jumped into the lake and are swimming across..

The three principal figures at the table are with senior and junior clerics and their associates. Their indulgent lifestyle is evident. A heap of coins in front of the pontiff, a commonplace feature in anti-papal images of the pope, denote his avarice. He fingers coins with his right, his only usable hand, indicating a false sense of priorities in the circumstances, like the dying in an *ars moriendi* scene, reluctant to let go material riches. There is much reliance on hand gestures. Pointing to heaven by the winged man middle right, who with the other hand points to the woman he admires, indicates a crucial choice he must make. A game of cards between a bishop, who holds a cup looking like a chalice, strikes an unseemly note. To the left of the bishop, a cardinal embraces a smallish woman with both hands. Bottom left a monk and a nun fondly touch each other, the monk perhaps offering a gift, and the woman shyly declining. Below, a baby tucked away from view under where they are sitting makes reference to a familiar theme of seduction, immorality and illegitimacy, especially among the lower clerical orders which had earlier found its way into anti-papal imagery.<sup>22</sup> Gerung depicts a worldly, vice-ridden papal leadership, currently involved in politico-religious intrigue and conflict. In spite of time running out, the revelling continues.

Antichrist as leader of the vices, a type which rings true in all his manifestations, including the papal, is here depicted not as an individual pope, but as a religious leader with senior clergy and political leaders, all of whom engage in permissive conduct of one form or another. It is a revelation of the false church of the papal Antichrist, setting the wrong example and leading others into the same errors. It incorporates the modes of conduct which endorse the various typological aspects of Antichrist's make-up - false priesthood, involvement in warfare, tyrannical rule, political intrigue and indulgence in the vices.

*Revelling Catholic Clergy* (Plate 98) by Gerung is not part of Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*,<sup>23</sup> but also depicts the alleged permissiveness of the papacy - money-bags full to overflowing, coins on the gaming table, drinking to excess, philandering, women the centre of attraction, fine clothes, and a palatial setting. A drinking vessel, resembling a chalice, imports a sacrilegious turn of meaning.

The figure on the left-hand side wearing a doctor's hat is the pontiff himself, buttressed on each side by a devil, one hovering above, holding his triple tiara, giving a three-fold emphasis on the customary association of Antichrist with the diabolical. The doctor's hat and robes and the beaked devil on the left-hand side are very close to Wolgemut's, *Preaching and Fall of Antichrist*, from the Nuremberg Chronicle and suggest influence from that source (Plate 26). Though the Pope is present, he does not participate, but looks, pointing to the scene of revelry with his right hand, indicative of approval. Though leader of the vices, Antichrist is not always shown actively participating, but, as here, providing opportunity for participation. A *landsknecht*, identifiable by his slit garments, is again present, as in the two examples above of the pouring out of the vials. The entire event is an exclusive affair for a privileged class, exposing papal extravagance, an indulgent life-style, a taste for palatial venues, clearly a failure to uphold Christian precepts and to withstand temptations common to man. In several respects it presents the themes of Cranach's *Passional* of 1521, more than two decades earlier.

In the landscape background, seen through the arches of an impressive colonnade, are scenes of violence and a pitched battle between armies including a murderous attack on an individual, evidence of social and political unrest, and the gathering of armies for their end-of-time battle. The clergy's revellings are again shown to continue, oblivious to and unmoved by the state of the world and judgment to come.

#### **e. Babylon links and the Destruction of the Catholic Church**

*The Destruction of Babylon*, (Apoc.18.1-24) is paired with *The Destruction of the Catholic Church*, both dated 1547 and with monogram (Plates 99a and 99b). The first is not a depiction of the destruction of ancient Babylon, but of apocalyptic Babylon, which is Rome. Apocalypse 17 explains the link between the Woman and Babylon the Great (vv. 3-6), the seven heads of the Beast she rides are seven mountains on which she sits (v.9), and 'the woman is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth' (v.18). These had previously been interpreted as identifying Rome, already detailed in Part IV, chapter 2 (Plate 83). This identity was well established among Protestants and familiar, if not accepted, within a much wider circle.

Apocalypse 18.1-24, identified in the title, is packed with detail about Babylon's fall. 'She shall be utterly burned with fire' (v.8), her inhabitants 'bewail and lament when they see the smoke of her burning' (v. 9), and cast dust on their heads; the kings of the earth who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, 'merchants made rich by her', ships and sailors, all suffer the afflictions that have overwhelmed her. The language here and in other scriptural texts concerning the fall of Babylon is spectacular: 'Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming...' (Isaiah 14.

9). Both depictions are end-of-time judgments, and in line with previous method, the second image is an application of the message of the first, which is construed as a judgment on the papacy, the Church of Rome. The apostle John separated by a cloud sits top left and watches the prophecy unfold. Of the two angels, top right, one is about to release the millstone while the other cries, 'Babylon the great is fallen ...' (vv. 2, 3).

Gerung selects a few salient points from Apocalypse 18, depicting in the first woodcut Babylon on fire and a small group of people in the foreground, representative of different classes, troubled and aghast as they look down at Babylon in flames. They include rulers ('the kings of the earth'), a Turk, wearing a turban surmounted by a crown and holding a sceptre, two merchants seated, one weeping, the other casting dust on his head and a cardinal representing the Catholic Church. All are portrayed as contemporary sixteenth century figures in a medieval town, and confirm the eschatological placing of the event.

Gerung does not however choose to introduce Rome's landmarks to establish Babylon-Rome links which were introduced in Luther's 1522 September and December Testaments (Plate 83). Landscape and seascape with ships (Apocalypse 18.17), recall Bosch's, Dürer's, and others' representations, who had earlier associated them with impending judgment and end-of-time events.

In the second image (Plate 99b), Gerung's allegorical portrayal of the destruction of the Catholic Church is explicit. On the left, a packed crowd stare up to heaven terror-stricken as the analogy of the apocalyptic millstone, the Bible, falls from heaven with destructive force to bring about the downfall of the Catholic Church itself.<sup>24</sup> This is a further demonstration of the power of the Word enforced in judgment against those who misrepresent it, which was the subject-matter of the Jeremiah quotation in an earlier sub-chapter on The Word, Law and Grace.

Three devils destroying the Gothic church buildings resemble Signorelli's depiction of the devils destroying the masonry of the monastery of St. Oliveto in the fresco cycle of the *Life of St. Benedict* (c.1497-98). The pope lies dead on top of his triple tiara and processional cross. A monstrance, a chalice, an indulgence document and additional artefacts, reiterate the accepted protestant iconography for identifying what were regarded by Protestants as indicative of false doctrine and practice, here sharing the destruction. Clearly, not just the pope, but the papal hierarchy, the church building, its icons and other artefacts are littered among the casualties.

The picture is of the collapsed building with a small part of one end still standing. Among the ruins and debris are those holding papal office who have taken the brunt of the punishment. A mixed crowd of citizens front left, including the emperor, watch the continuing devastation. A plumed *landsknecht*, often present in anti-papal scenes, with his arms wide apart and head thrown back, resembles those human figures witnessing or suffering acts of divine judgment against Antichrist and his supporters in

the late fifteenth century depictions of his fall - by Wolgemut, Signorelli and in *Le livre de la Vigne de nostre Seigneur* (Plates 26, 28 and 45).

Gerung presents the judgment on Apocalyptic Babylon as a typological analogy of the fall of the Catholic Church of Rome. This was understood and accepted in Protestant circles. Gerung now goes a step further than Cranach's identity of Babylon as Rome in the September Testament (1522), with an explicit image of the Church's fall. The false church having been identified and made known, its judgment was believed to be not only inevitable, but imminent. There is no explicit identification of the pope as Antichrist in the picture, but basic Antichrist types are represented - priest, leader of the false church, devil associations. Shades of the Superbia-like fall of Antichrist is applied to the Catholic Church as a whole with the collapse of a Catholic Church building and the death of its leader among the ruins. There are two broken pillars, as in Duvet's depiction of Babylon's fall and Signorelli's, *End of the World* (Plates 62 and 51).

#### IV Chapter 16. Antichrist and the English Reformation

English Protestantism claims to have restored pure imperial religion by acknowledging and establishing the supremacy of the Sovereign over both Church and State. These were the basic factors determining the status of the Church of England that underpin Tudor policy from the 1530s, in the reigns of Henry VIII and his successors, excluding Mary. In England connections with the Papacy were severed, and the monarch, as Defender of the Faith, became the new ecclesiastical head of the realm.<sup>1</sup> The supremacy of the English monarch over both Church and State was recognised, where previously papal power had exceeded that of the monarchy in ecclesial affairs. By the Donation of Constantine (the first Christian Emperor), later proved to be a forgery, political powers had in measure been granted to the pope.<sup>2</sup> In other ways too the drive towards papal supremacy had challenged the powers of emperors who had by their generosity strengthened the pope's position and influence, which in turn had led to abuses in the church itself.<sup>3</sup> In terms of religious integrity, the church was allegedly pure under pagan persecution and the early Christian emperors, but became impure when the power of the bishops of Rome increased.<sup>4</sup> As the pope was viewed as Antichrist and head of the false ecclesia, separation was considered to be necessary.

*A lively picture describyng the weight and substaunce of Gods most blessed word, agaynst the doctrines and vanities of mans traditions* (Plate 100 ), printed by John Daye (1576), *Cum gratia & Privilegio Regiae Maiestatis*, appears on the last page of the first volume of John Foxe's, *The Booke of Martyrs* (1576).<sup>5</sup> Blind Justice on a pedestal centrally placed between Christ and the pope, holds up the scales in her left hand, the erect sword of Justice in her right. On Christ's left, the sinister side and the side of those in the category of the rejected, is the pope. The content of the two pans register their true worth; God's Word, '*Verbum Dei*', on one pan, tokens of papal authority and practice on the other. Identified by his triple tiara, the pope tips a container of communion wafers onto the pan which is laden with decretals, rosary beads and incense burners. These items drew criticism from Protestants in England and elsewhere, typifying the subordination of God's Word to the authority of papal decrees and what were thought to be vain human practices, which are seen to carry no weight against the Word of God. A collection of similar artefacts is a recurring iconographical feature of English Protestant imagery.

The pope, assisted by a two-horned winged devil, establishes Antichrist's diabolical links. As the devil strenuously pulls down the pan with his long arm, one of two monks assists him, resting his hand on the beam of the balance, adding his weight to the load. The pope conforms to the iconographical types of Antichrist as a false priest, working in concert with the devil, and practising deceit, one of the vices of which Antichrist is the leader. He is not alone, nor singled out as a sole offender, but accompanied by senior and junior clergy - a bishop, a cardinal, both with appropriate headgear, and a tonsured monk. They represent the Church of Rome as the false church, doing the devil's work, which fits the English Protestant stand against it. It is significant that the false priest does not hold a book. The book here is the Bible and is associated with the non-papal side, having acquired a special significance in reformist

thought and imagery, and particularly in England. For Protestants, the Word of God, the Book, was the bedrock of true religion and practice.

Supporters on each side further define the aims and attitudes of the competing parties. At the centre of a flurry of activity are pope, cardinal, bishop and monk; but the presence of papal clerics and the bulk and mass of activity count for little. Headgear and robe refer to ecclesiastical authority; processional cross and crozier both held high, hint at false shepherding. All this contrasts with the composure and orderliness on the other side where the True Shepherd is singled out by his halo and stigmata, differentiating between the genuine, the true, and mere tokens of spirituality and authority. Apostles Peter and Paul are at the front of a group of followers, all without distinction of office. In the background, the flourishing tree in full leaf and the bare twigs and branches of the barren tree reinforce the contrast between left and right. Familiar emblems - the figure of blind justice, the balance, and the moralisation of the landscape (*paysage moralisée*), are incorporated.

In weighing the souls of the dead, the balance was a means of depicting the good or evil character of the dying which, in the Christian context, allegedly determined their ultimate destiny and ownership, heaven or hell, Christ's or the devil's. Its use in this example upholds the same conclusions in that the pope is on Christ's left. He works with the devil and hell is his destiny. Its further usefulness as an iconographical motif arises from its concern with the last things, death and judgment, heaven and hell, appropriate to the eschatological aspects of Antichrist's rule.

In antiquity, Justice, one of the four cardinal virtues, was clear-sighted and presenting her blindfold was introduced as recently as the 16th century. Justice had long been depicted as a human figure holding a sword in one hand and a balance in the other. As a punisher of wrong she holds a sword. The image of the balance, used as a means of weighing the souls of the dead, the Psychostasis, dates back to ancient Egypt (c.1400 B.C.).<sup>6</sup>

On the title-page of an anti-papal pamphlet (1525), the scales are held by God's invisible hand as Christ is weighed against the pope and a cardinal. The downward thrust registered by Christ flings the papal pan up into the air and inverts it, showing the respective merits of the two modes of forgiveness, Christ's by grace, the papal by an Indulgence.<sup>7</sup> The devil's ready acceptance of the latter supplies the diabolical element, associating it with papal practice. Being a familiar topos, and for a very long time part of the iconographic language of artists, the potentialities of the balance were admirable for depicting aspects of the Antichrist theme.

*The husbandman. Doctor Martin Luther. The pope. The cardinal* (Plate 101), a broadside for an English ballad (c.1550), presents a simple antithetical image of Luther and the Pope in conflict. Luther uses a Christ-like mode of defence and attack by pen, and therefore by word.<sup>8</sup> He is also depicted as the defender of the labourer, typifying the simple folk who listened to Christ and made up the bulk of his followers. Luther's teaching appealed to the poorer classes, particularly in North Germany, who

were stirred by what he said.<sup>9</sup> The labourer is on the fruitful side where the wheat ripens ready for harvest. He is using a flail, a threshing instrument that separates the grain from the chaff. It is placed on the Lutheran side because it is a godly process, appropriate for the preparation and selection of the faithful, and contrasts with the stony, unproductive ground on the papal side. Luther's methods were essentially by word and by pen and it was the defining moment in Protestant history when he 'nailed' his ninety-five theses to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg, 1517. Though intended to form the basis of academic debate, they made an impact far greater than Luther might have imagined. It was the arrival of a papal hireling, the Dominican Johann Tetzel in Saxony in 1517, helping to raise funds for rebuilding St. Peter's, Rome, by selling Indulgences, that sparked off Luther's reaction.<sup>10</sup> The pope's pose with the sword, a means of attack and defence, is a threatening gesture which carries a double implication - its use as a weapon in the papal armoury in dealing with offenders, and the pope's falsity as a representative of a man whose teaching denied all forms of force and violence. Luther, and others before and after, suffered in various ways from papal threat and action - imprisonment, excommunication, martyrdom at the hands, for example, of the papal Inquisition for suppression of alleged heresy.<sup>11</sup>

Papal bulls and decretals were of course enforceable and the presence of the sword implies this too. A cardinal holding up a sealed document, an Indulgence, is therefore appropriate, and also because it was Luther's denunciation of this practice, following the visit of Tetzel, which sparked off his protest. Bulls were issued against Luther himself in 1520 and in 1521; the bull, *Exurge Domini*, imposed the Ban on Luther - excommunication on forty-seven counts of heresy.<sup>12</sup> Luther's righteous stand and support of the poorer classes imply papal neglect, if not the persecution of this class.<sup>13</sup> The woodcut is clearly anti-papal; the pope threatening with a sword is a false priest. By its content and wider implications it can be construed as an Antichrist image, and the Catholic Church by reason of these methods is similarly implicated, implying its falsity.

In the Beatus prototypes, Antichrist as priest (Plate 5) is dressed in a long garment and holds a book. As a Warrior King (Plate 4), he is dressed like one and raises his sword. The woodcut conflates the two - the pope wields a sword while dressed as a priest. An example by Gerung (Plate 67), shows him wearing a triple tiara, holding a sword and wearing armour, and the slit garments of a *landsknecht*. The conflated iconography of the sword-wielding pope presents the warrior king, false priest, and lays the foundation for the wider charge of his being the head of the false ecclesia.

Often noticeably large in the hand of Antichrist, noted in Beatus manuscripts and elsewhere, the sword was a continuing iconographical motif. As a false priest, leader of a false church, whose methods were tyrannical and anti-Christian, the woodcut portrays Antichrist, and in the contemporary setting would be recognised as such. *Pope Clement IV preparing to behead Emperor Conradin IV* (Plate 102), depicts a sword-wielding pope, which is noteworthy in its replacement of the customary cross on the top of the pope's tiara with a two-horned devil, conforming to Antichrist typological links with evil. By

contrast, the cross appears on the pious Emperor's crown. This example and the woodcut imply acts of violence carried out on the pope's behalf. Antichrist too worked through his agents.

*Time and the Pope* (Plate 103), an etching by the Bohemian engraver, W. Hollar,<sup>14</sup> attributes the removal of the papacy from England back to Rome to an exercise of divine authority, an act of mercy towards God's 'deare Vine', his faithful Church. This refers to faithful Protestant witness, one of many references, particularly in English Protestant imagery, to God's awareness of what is happening in His faithful Ecclesia. Emblematic language is often used to show that God sees and acts - the eye of providence, beams of light, an arm extended from the clouds are used in later examples, but here the reference is verbal.<sup>15</sup> God's assessment of papal practice and its teaching is recorded in three explanatory verses:-

*When Times Great Maker (the most high Eternal)*

*In mercy looked from his Throne supernall:*

*And saw the Evils which began to grow*

*In his deare Vine here Militant below,*

*He to his daughter Truth! gave straight Command*

*That she those dang'rous Errors should withstand*

*Then up I tooke upon my aged backe,*

*This load of vanity, this Pedlers packe*

*This trunke of trash & Romish Trumperies*

*Deluding showes infernall forgeries*

*And therefore am I hence in post thus riding*

*To Rome again for here is no abiding*

The mention of spreading evils in the Church, 'dangerous errors', 'a load of vanity', 'infernal forgeries', itemise the church's failings. 'Deluding showes', 'infernal forgeries' bear testimony to its alleged deceit, a fundamental element in the make-up of a pseudo-character and a false institution. The falsity of the church as a whole, represented by the pope, is again implied. A somewhat different assortment of papal artefacts than is customary are being carried:- a tiara, a processional cross, keys, and a leather purse. A purse points here to papal avarice, a criticism frequently levelled particularly in connection with the sale of Indulgences. It also relates to Antichrist as leader of the vices. The image and its accompanying verses are specific about the vices of avarice and deceit. Logically they derive from the nature of Time's 'packe', the pontiff being the 'pedlar' of them. Time, elderly and bearing his attributes of an hour-glass, wings and a scythe, and nude except for a loincloth, strides out on his journey carrying the pontiff back to Rome, 'for here is no abiding'. Removal back to Rome identifies the territorial focus of the false church of Antichrist and the English Church's break with Rome.

God has commanded Truth to resist dangerous error in the English Church, his 'deare Vine' below. So Truth opposes error and Time assists Truth by transporting it back to where it came from. The use of these figures represents a variation from the norm. Truth, the daughter of Time (*Veritas familia temporis*), familiar in Renaissance usage, expresses the idea of Time drawing aside the veil which reveals naked Truth. Time's attributes of wings and an hour glass were introduced by early Renaissance artists; but the scythe replaced the sickle, an attribute of Cronos, the Greek god of agriculture, resulting from a confusion with chronus, the Greek word for time. The Romans identified Cronos with Saturn, god of agriculture, who also had a sickle as his attribute. In due course the sickle was replaced by the scythe. Truth is found in classical literature where she was associated with nakedness and simplicity, and was unadorned. She does not make her appearance in Christian art in this mode till the 14th century, when she appears with several other virtues in depictions of Psalm 85.10.

The contemptuous assessment of papal artefacts as 'trash', 'trumperies', and 'vanities' is consistent with other English satirical imagery. Scenes from John Foxe's, *Actes and Monuments* (1563), illustrate the religious attitudes and transformations of Edward's reign, national sentiment and in particular, the low estimate of papal aids to worship. 'Shippe over your trinkets and be packing ye papistes' and 'The papistes packing away their paultry' (Plate 104), relate to a ship being loaded with papal artefacts to clear the way for religious reform. As part of the process, images are burned and pulled from their niches in church walls. The temple is consequently 'well purged'. 'Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted shall be plucked up', hints at papal shortcomings, judgment against contrary forms of religion, and the implication of divine favour towards the Protestant Church. The ship of the church, another ready-to-hand iconographic formula, which frequently features in reformist imagery, is here uniquely employed as the means of transport back to Rome, its place of origin. Iconographically the image incorporates the standard types of Antichrist as false priest, leader of the vices, and by reason of its evil influence and divine condemnation, head of the false church.

*The Images of Both Churches. Actes and Monuments* (1570), the true and the false churches (Plate 105) are set in contrast and defined at the foot of the page as the 'persecuted' and the 'persecuting' churches. Christ as judge sitting on the rainbow ark at the top of the page, establish Last Judgment associations. He is the one into whose hand all judgment is given, which has serious implications for Antichrist, the 'man of sin' (II Thessalonians 2.8, 9). Christ points upwards to heaven with his right hand, down to hell with his left, receiving those on his right with the words, 'Come ye blessed...' and condemning those on his left, 'Go ye cursed...' (Matthew 22.34, 41). Trumpeting angels at the top on both sides, give praise to Christ. Below the separating cloud barrier, are three successive pairs of contrasting images.

On the right, the sinister side of Christ, the trumpets point downwards and are held by those *en route* for the Pit, among whom is a two-horned devil, denoting Antichrist's diabolical associations. Next, below, a priest elevates the host, not to Christ, but to the devil in the scene above. Antichrist is identified with the Catholic Church. Furthermore, the trumpet-sounding attendants resemble tonsured monks, and are so much like the trumpeters in the scene above, that within the larger context it would

be logical to give them the same identity. Bottom right, the devil's presence, a horned satanic figure similar to the one above, over-reaches the picture frame on the right, encroaching on the lower scene, where members of the congregation finger rosaries, a Roman Catholic practice. A priest gestures from a pulpit, the absence of a book indicating that he is not preaching from the Bible. Protestant preachers have more often been clearly shown to be preaching from it. A *Corpus Christi* procession, shows a cross and a string of clergy carrying an image, a crowd of worshippers following on behind.<sup>16</sup> Another elevated image, perhaps a shrine to which the procession is heading, can be seen behind the lectern. Again, there is a reference to those aspects of Roman Catholic worship of which Protestants were critical.

On the other side, on Christ's right, where the call is 'come ye blessed...', the trumpeting kings bearing palm branches are the redeemed. Their faithfulness as martyrs, tied to the stake and burnt, is graphically presented in the picture below, their trumpeting indicating a 'sacrifice of praise'.<sup>17</sup> It carries a stigma against the 'persecuting church' of Rome concerning its punishment of those alleged to be heretics. As true martyrs, there is here a topsy-turvy factor, showing how Antichrist turns things upside down.<sup>18</sup> At bottom, the scene depicts the faithful, the 'persecuted church', as a large and attentive congregation, some seated, many standing, listening intently, with the preacher instructing from the Word, and at the base of the pulpit members of the congregation following the text, Bible in hand, young persons also present. It resembles other scenes from Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, which imply the willing attention and sincerity of the congregation, the Bible itself as the source of instruction, and the opportunity and desire to hear it.

As the title indicates, it is the 'persecuting Church', not the pope, which is depicted, but the Church is papal, and the pope is its leader; the two priests in the left half are ministering on its behalf. They are dispensing a mode of worship which Protestants had denounced, and the church itself is faulted by being on Christ's left. It is significant that the iconographical motifs used to depict Antichrist are being used to depict the persecuting church - satanic ties, a devil at every stage, tyrannical conduct in the treatment of opponents, shown as Protestant martyrs. The 'Persecuting Church' is identified as Antichrist and papal.

This illustration in Foxe's *Actes and Monuments* (Plate 105), resembles the portrayal of the two Churches, the True and the False, in John Bale's, *The Images of Bothe Churches* (c.1545). These are two of the most influential English works.<sup>19</sup> The antithesis is drawn between the True Church and the False Church by using two simple woodcut depictions of the Apocalyptic Woman and the Whore of Babylon. Quotations from the relevant chapters, Apocalypse 12 and 17, appear below the two woodcuts. Apocalypse 17 refers to the red beast she rides, her names of blasphemy and jewelled attire and the kings' of the earth's whoredom with her. The Whore is in opposition to the pure woman, which the papacy associated with Mary and the Catholic Church.

John Bale's title-page woodcut in *Summarium*,<sup>20</sup> portrays Anne Askew and contrasts her legitimate defences of Bible and pen against physical attack and falsehood from the dragon wearing a tiara, an application of Apocalypse 12.1-4. Her defence is the Word, to which she remains loyal. The papacy is represented as an enemy of the truth, in opposition to God. She represents the besieged church and the true believer.

*The Four Evangelists Stoning the Pope* (Plate, 106a), by the Italian artist, Gerolamo da Treviso, who was in the service of Henry VIII,<sup>21</sup> depicts a sprawling pope under attack from the Four Evangelists, identified by inscriptions on the stones they cast upon him, from left to right - John, Matthew, Luke, Mark. Death by stoning, a sentence prescribed under Jewish law for serious offences was carried out to the death. This illustration, as explained below, has been influenced by *The Stoning of the Blasphemous Man* (Plate 106b), which explains why this form of punishment is being implemented as well as other implications about the pope himself. The pontiff has been identified as Paul III on account of his long beard. During his pontificate (1534-1549), he excommunicated King Henry VIII and was instrumental in the establishment of the Roman Inquisition (The Holy Office), with extensive powers of censorship and prosecution.<sup>22</sup> In the current politico-religious environment in England, the picture would be seen not only as an anti-papal allegory, but as a depiction of the papal Antichrist, and the false church. The papal items which litter the ground - a cardinal's hat, a rosary, a holy water scoop and Indulgences, are a small but significant selection, signifying the papal hierarchy, its religious practices and teaching - the holy water possibly suggesting a false miracle, the Indulgence implying the usurpation of divine prerogative regarding forgiveness, and the vice of avarice, a reference to the granting of Indulgences which attracted revenue for sins absolved. Resulting from the efforts of the Council of Trent, called by Paul III in 1545, the traditions and beliefs of the Catholic Church which Protestants had denounced and rejected, were strongly re-affirmed.<sup>23</sup>

The Pontiff's undignified fall parodies those obliged to prostrate themselves before him and signifies Antichrist's final fall - not the calamitous fall of Phaeton, nor even the fall of *Superbia* from a horse, but more like the stumble of Judas, who fell headlong into the field bought with the price of Christ's blood (Acts 1.18).

His associates, Hypocrisy and Avarice, upon whom the same judgments fall, the headgear worn by senior clerics, and the collection and significance of the papal artefacts which litter the ground, widen the application to embrace the church as a whole. The city above which the candle shines in the background, parallels the triumph over papal darkness which obscured the Light of God's Word.

Several Antichrist types are represented:- false priest, the pope as head of the false church, leader of the vices, in particular hypocrisy, avarice, and blasphemy. The latter vice is in the title of the next illustration, *The Stoning of the Blasphemous Man* (Plate 106b), a woodcut from the translation of the Bible into English, 1536, which bears a marked resemblance to the Treviso painting. In both examples the principal figures are presented in the same poses, replicating the sprawling figure of the pope, the

arm positions of the evangelists and the carrying out of the sentence with rigour. There is however more than a formal resemblance. The episode of the *Blasphemous Man* illustrates the passage from Leviticus 24.10-16, where the son of an Israelitish woman, while in conflict with a man of Israel, had cursed God. The offender's mother was from the tribe of Dan (the same tribe as Antichrist according to medieval legend), his father an Egyptian. Egypt is a scriptural type of bondage to Sin; Pharaoh, king of Egypt, a type of Antichrist. Moses, the Jewish High Priest who delivered Israel from their Egyptian bondage, is a type of Christ. The blasphemer had been active in the midst of Israel as, according to Protestant belief, Antichrist was then active within the papal Church, and was allegedly guilty of blasphemous conduct. It draws a parallel between the Blasphemous Man and the pope. There are several significant points of similarity between the woodcut and the Treviso painting, which can be read as a simile of divine judgment against Antichrist, and as Protestant, evangelistic witness against papal error.

This allegorical painting, *Edward VI and the Pope* (1548), Plate 107, artist unknown, is firmly anti-papal laying emphasis on the authority of the Word and the pre-eminence of the English monarchy over the papacy. It belongs to the tradition of artistic productions, including the series of royal portraits, issued under the auspices of the Crown during the reigns of Tudor monarchs.<sup>24</sup> Henry VIII on his deathbed, top left, gestures approvingly towards the already enthroned Edward VI beneath the royal arms, holding the sceptre, affirming the continuity and triumph of the Protestant succession over the papacy. By setting the royal coat-of-arms and the open Bible higher than the enfeebled pope, and contrasting his transient mortality with the permanence of the Word in two apt references - 'All fleshe is grasse' (Isaiah 46.6) and 'The word of the Lord endureth for ever' (I Peter 1.23-25), on the open Bible, the maximum impact is achieved. The implication in the I Peter text concerning failure to be born again of the 'incorruptible seed ... of the Word of God', also points to papal shortcomings and inevitable corruptibility. A long-sleeved garment worn by the pope resembles a monk's habit and is tied round the waist with a cord; but it has failed to safeguard him from the intrusion of evil. On the edge of his cloak the vices of 'IDOLATRY' and 'SUPERSTICION' indicate the alleged failings of the papacy, its cultivation of image worship, and misdirected reverence towards the irrational and the mysterious. His cloak, fastened below his chin with a jewelled broach, hints at riches and the vice of avarice and may be intended to cast further doubt upon the piety of the wearer. The processional cross he holds leans away, accentuating his decline. The tiara inclined sideways, one of a number of variations, particularly in English illustrations, depicts a defeated papacy and adds a derogatory touch.

At the pontiff's left two tonsured monks flee, as if abandoning 'ship'. One looks back at the slumped figure of the sick Pontiff with a hopeless expression. Next to Edward, on much the same level, is Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford and Duke of Somerset, who became Lord Protector and Governor of the king's person on Henry's death. The figures lower down, members of the Council of the Protectorate, have been identified as Dudley (Earl of Northumberland), Cranmer and Cuthbert Tunstall. There is a noticeable uniformity in their forward looking eyes, each in a relaxed pose with hands resting on their laps. Those on the pope's level would appear to represent a different outlook, a degree of papal

support, and different viewpoints about Protestant reform. The hands of the one on the left are raised in dismay at the declining pope, the other two who look at each other have different expressions, the one on the right showing surprise. Variations in the poses of the different groups indicate differing attitudes towards protestant reform.

Intolerance of idolatry and the work of the iconoclasts is graphically presented in the 'window' scene, top right, in which two men pull down a statue of the Virgin and Child from its pedestal. Protestants lacked the enthusiasm of Catholics for the exalted role of the Virgin. Additional to the destruction of images is the destruction of the church itself, which appears to be the intended message of the background scene, where among the smouldering ruins reminiscent of Rome, is the fate of the Church itself. Castel Sant' Angelo's toppling mass recalls the apocalyptic fall of Babylon, its papal Rome affiliations, and depictions of Rome's landmarks in Bible translations of the 1520s. The foreground scene of the inset is closely similar to Signorelli's painting of monks destroying idols in the St. Benedict Cycle at Mont Oliveto, and may well be a quotation (Plate 108).<sup>25</sup> These correspondences and quotations indicate the influence of Italian artists engaged in the service of the Crown at this time.

The Church of Rome is depicted as false in contrast to what was thought to be the true. Papal symbols are positioned below the Protestant. Its corruption - 'idolatry and superstition', mortality and decline, confirmed by the enfeebled pontiff, combined with the inset picture, point to the church's decline to extinction, the fate of the Antichrist and the false ecclesia.

The cult of the monarch as Defender of the Faith, which eclipsed the traditions of the medieval church, was upheld in the triumphant reign of Edward VI, to whom the dying King Henry VIII points. After the reversals of Roman Catholic Mary's reign, the old traditions were renewed in the reign of Elizabeth I.

Within the range of Protestant belief, Antichrist references are given papal identity; the sins of idolatry and superstition are named, and acts of separation and rejection considered necessary. A noteworthy element is the introduction of a 'window' scene to confirm the thematic implications of decline towards overthrow and judgment on Rome, the latter-day Babylon. Scriptural truth upholds the monarchy in its treading down of the old religion represented by the pope, and God's Word is depicted as triumphant. Antichrist types and associations indicate a false priest, influence of the vices and, in the window scene, the impending downfall of the Catholic Church, allegedly the church of Antichrist.

A woodcut broadside of 1643, *The Kingdoms Monster Uncloaked from Heaven* (Plate 109), reveals the various evils against the English Church and Kingdom to be papist-inspired and known to God whose arms pull back the cloak, revealing the identity of the monster at work. Pope and bishop with clerical headgear are among many heads and powers with whom they work to fulfil their aims:- Irish, Jesuits, Cavaliers. The tri-cephalous creature with the dove of the Holy Spirit on its neck has trinitarian associations, here detrimentally as a trinity of evil, an anti-trinity. It signifies the false nature of the 'spirit' influence at work over the entire body of the Kingdom's Monster. The triple-headed form,

familiar in Antichrist imagery, stems from apocalyptic multi-headed beast symbols. A sealed pardon, or Indulgence, implies forgiveness of the sins that are being committed, and a rosary and crucifixes further identify papal practice.

The *misericord*, normally indicative of a charitable process going on under its protective care, has been drawn aside to reveal the true nature of what is happening. England is seen to be bedevilled with papist-inspired plots and alarms. On the monster's elongated neck, the culprits are identified. Scenes of their operations are all land-based - 'parlement', church, 'cittye', town and countryside (burning haystacks). Old St Paul's, on the north side of the Thames, corresponds to Visscher's depiction of Old St. Paul's, London, from the south (1616), and confirms both landmarks. The kingdom is under attack, the established political and religious orders are being subverted. Murder, hanging, arson, causing explosions, define the nature of the offences committed by the 'Kingdoms Monster'. Its evil deeds are patent and endorse Antichrist's acknowledged diabolical associations and tyrannical rule. The papal identity is clear - the papal triple tiara, the bishop's mitre, the cardinal's hat and the Jesuits, and other papal associates whose acts enjoy papal support if not instigated by the papacy. Here is a unique combination of visual forms, resembling in subject-matter and in some formal aspects, *The Double Deliverance*, considered below, in respect of the 'parlement' building (the scene of the Powder Treason); the possible presence of Faux (one of the heads among the conspirators); divine intervention, implying that God sees and knows. A new brand of multi-headedness is just one indication of the inventiveness of the artist. Each of the triple heads is composite, and made up of various types, all wearing contemporary headgear. God's arms outstretched through the cloud-barrier by drawing back the cloak, reveal the sinister enterprises of the 'Kingdome's Monster'.

*Misericord* has several meanings; the more familiar one - to give support and help, stems from the idea of becoming associated with the Virgin as protectress and intercessor under whose tutelage and protection, in the 13th and 14th centuries, individuals, Confraternities and Mendicant Orders placed themselves. A type of devotional image was developed to express this relationship, called 'Virgin of Mercy', the '*Madonna della Misericordia*'. In it the Virgin stands with arms outspread holding her cloak as a shelter for kneeling devotees, also acting as a shield from falling arrows. Popular in the 13th to the 16th centuries, it joins other iconographical formulae in an Antichrist context. Its use in this image is unique. Though resembling the *misericordia* cloak, it is a travesty of its first meaning and an example of topsy-turvyness, as the 'monster', from whom his victims need protection, is himself concealed by the cloak! It is more in line with another of its meanings - a dagger used to administer the *coup-de-grâce*, which may also explain the bladed weapon in the Monster's lower, left hand. The sealed papal pardon, or Indulgence, hanging from the lower right arm in juxtaposition with the hand-held fuse, cynically hints at forgiveness. A rosary hangs on the arm above, crucifixes may have intentionally been given an appearance of weaponry, or *vice versa*. This is an attempt to maximise the incompatible, the hypocrisy of violence used in the furtherance of religion, an insistent theme in Cranach's *Passional*. The upright sword, which could represent the sword of the spirit, is more likely to be the sword of state, of temporal power, which the pope was often accused of wielding and who

defended his right, allegedly granted by Constantine. Taken together, the objects held in the upper arms, right and left - the sword, the axe and the lighted torch, smack of the instruments of the Passion attached to the outstretched arms of the cross.<sup>26</sup> This would be consistent with the good-evil ambivalence of some of the other subject-matter. The figure is two-sided. A pardon and the sword are on the 'Papal side', the Cavalier's spur, axe and torch are on the other side. Between the monster's legs, the lower end of a weapon resembling a 'tail' is a derogatory reference to the male member. The more blatant weaponry on the left, dagger, axe and lighted torch, underlie the duplicity of the image and the vice of deceit.

Antichrist is not mentioned by name, but the Devil's work is being done and the medieval devil creature is on the Papal, or ecclesiastical, side of the monster. The things that are done are recognised Antichrist deeds:- subverting the kings of the earth (and their kingdoms), usurpation of political power, tyranny, false religion, religion as a cloak, deceit, conforming to iconographical types of false priest, tyrannical ruler, diabolical associations and promotion of the vices. God unmasks the Man-of-Sin and the fact that He sees this monster for what it is gives the promise of deliverance. Only the 'saving arms' from heaven show this. They add what must be regarded as the expected and necessary element in what might otherwise be a virtually unrelieved representation of evil. In the context of a religious image, or one of serious moral import, this factor is important. To ignore it, would be a denial of the omnipotence of God Himself to control and ultimately subdue the powers of evil in the world. In the examples by Wolgemut, Signorelli, Dürer, God's triumph over evil is overwhelming; Bosch however more realistically weighs the power and omnipresence of the Evil factor and presents the conquest as a grim struggle.

In this example of English Reformation imagery, the bestowal of divine favours takes on a national significance and embodies the concept of the English as the elect nation.<sup>27</sup> Papal identity is clear, and its affiliations too are specific - the Irish, Jesuits, Cavaliers. These are not strange bedfellows. It expounds papal involvement in acts of force, its political involvements, participating with secular powers in the perpetration of evil.

*A Papal Tableau in an Accession Day Procession*, in picture and verse, registers the pontiff's outcry about the final pope-burning episode of Accession Day events (Plate 110), a popular national tradition.<sup>28</sup>

Has all ye Devills no helps, and must I burn? <sup>29</sup>  
Dam'd Heritiks twill shortly be your turn,  
But you, deare children, shall maintain yr Cause  
In spite of Gospell, Reason, rights and Laws.  
Stab Murder, Burn, or Torture Oh! twill bless  
My soule in Hell to heare of your success.

Sitting under a canopy on a float in an Accession Day procession, the pope wears his triple tiara, holds papal keys, and a horned devil with his tail silhouetted is seen at his right-hand. Two assistant clergy, one holding an incense burner, utter words of adulation, 'This is the King of Kings'; 'Thou art our God the Pope'. These quotations point to the usurpation of divine authority, similar to the forecasts of II Thessalonians 2. 4, 'Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.' Antichrist's association with the devil at his right hand conforms to general iconographical treatment, which has many variations in the number and positioning of the diabolical figures. The text of the verse makes an appeal to these powers, further stressing his association with them, and even recognising hell as his ultimate destiny. Mitred bishops in attendance carry croziers, and a king, who has laid aside his crown and sword (seen leaning against the side of the throne), prostrates himself under the pope's foot, signifying his usurpation of political power and authority over kings. The familiar face of papal pride is paraded through the streets and testifies to English Protestant convictions about the pope and the Catholic Church.

'Pope-burning' came at the end of the Accession Day procession and in the accompanying verse the pope makes his plea to 'Devils' for deliverance from destruction by burning. This significant plea to diabolical powers, and the horned devil next to the pope, endorse a key aspect of his alleged Antichrist identity. There is an acknowledgement in the text of the burning of 'Heretiks', the English martyrs of the day, of the repeated charge against papal tyranny.<sup>30</sup> Atrocities named in the text recall the evils perpetrated by *The Kingdome's Monster*. The attendant humiliation of crowned heads of state, oppression of faithful martyrs as heretics, and the command to perpetrate barbarous acts, make up the horrendous tale of the papal Antichrist's alleged *modus operandi*. This depiction of the pope confirms the recognised typological associations of Antichrist's joint operations with the devil, his tyrannical rule, false priesthood and usurpation of authority, both political and ecclesiastical.

The engraving (Plate 111), *Britannia receiving the Last Rites*, by R. White, sculptor, portrays Britannia languishing, attended by a Roman Catholic priest holding a crucifix and a string of rosary beads, who points towards her as he administers the last rites. It is an act of hypocrisy, as the languishing of Britannia, the afflicted nation, has been brought to this state by the alleged actions of the papacy and its allies, whom the priest represents. He has been given two faces and two hats and is able to look the two-horned devil, standing behind him, full in the face and converse with him. This is a variant of the devil whispering in Antichrist's ear, seated on his shoulder, or standing nearby. Duplicity, deceit, two-facedness, are all too evident in this officiating prelate's preparedness to take instructions from the devil and advance his evil cause. Each has a cloven hoof, signifying dountreading and it is the closed Bible which has the cloven hoof of each party planted upon it, indicating a shared contempt for the Word. On the voluminous left sleeve of the priest are frog patterns, which may hint at the armies gathered for battle in the background, a function of the three frogs' spirits of Apocalypse 16.13, 14. (They emerge from the mouth of the ailing pontiff in Gerung's *Apocalypse Commentary* illustration, abb.20b, Plate 97b.)

Two crowns, a mitre, a coat-of-arms and *Magna Charta* litter the foreground at the feet of Britannia, which typify the disastrous effects should her enemies prevail. *MAGNA CARTA*, the Great Charter of English liberties granted by King John in 1215 under threat of civil war, was a guarantee against oppression to each generation, promising protection of its liberties. Consisting of a Preamble, the first of its clauses concerned the Church, asserting that the English Church was free, its rights undiminished and unimpaired and confirmed for ever. Confirmation of its terms were obtained from Pope Innocent III.<sup>31</sup> The encroachments from the papal source and its allies are shown to be in denial of a solemn undertaking. An earlier reference concerning the breaking of agreements was noted in Cranach's *Passional*.

A conflict rages in the background; cavalry and the slain lie on the ground; fire rages and buildings burn. The entire scene suggests chaos and political and religious crisis in England, the threat of conquest, papal complicity, and the papacy as the enemy-in-chief. From the eye of God set in the clouds, a beam of light falls on Britannia's head and the hand of God is extended, afflicting England's adversaries in battle. God sees and acts; his light dispels the darkness. *The Kingdome's Monster*, *The Double Deliverance* and the verse content of *The Pope's Cabinet* refer to similar acts of treachery, and assert the claim that God knows and is England's saviour.

Britannia is depicted on Roman *capta*, coinage which acted as vehicles for imperial propaganda. One of the earliest representations of her seated on rocks is on an Emperor Hadrian coin (117-138). Britannia, in the title-page of Camden's *Britannia* (1609), is seated by the shore on rocks with water and boats, above a map of England, Scotland and parts of Ireland (Hibernica). She holds a shield, a long spear and a sceptre. Old St. Paul's, London, the church which appears in the Britannia image, is the same as the one sketched in *The Kingdom's Monster* (Plate 111), which was destroyed by the great fire of London in 1660.

False priest, deceit, devil controlled, an association with various forms of tyranny and the pursuit of political and ecclesiastical power, fulfil Antichrist's typological heritage and reveal Antichrist at work in the activities of the Church of Rome in the Kingdom of England.

'*Run for the Protestants Life & Estate too, because this PLOT has e'en beggar'd them and, that the more may view it, to serve the Papal interest, the Printer affords you this sheet for 1d*', makes reference to the Popish plot (Plate 112). The latter occasioned alarm, consternation and accusation, but was ultimately recognised as false and resulted in the imprisonment of the accuser, Titus Oates.<sup>32</sup> It sets Antichrist against Christ using the analogy of the hunt, a traditional English pastime. In presenting the pope as Christ's opponent, he is Antichrist and the enemy of Christ's Church. The pope identified by his tiara leads the hunt, and the quarry is the Christian lamb, appropriately representing Christ, the Lamb of God, who is protected by a wall of fire. 'I will be to them a wall of fire roundabout' (Zechariah 2.5). 'The Anti-Christian Crew' are opposing those who are receiving the benefits of divine protection as the

all-seeing eye of God, top left-hand corner, watches over the scene, along a path of light with the assuring message of divine oversight, *video coveris*.

Antichrist's supporters are a motley crew, fitting previous imagery in the variety of head-gear worn by the members of the hunt, including the papal tiara, cardinal's hat, bishop's mitre and monk's cowl, mostly associated with the Church of Rome. The animals are mainly dogs, frequently present in anti-papal imagery, but usually singly. They are numerous in hunting pursuits and act as adversaries, to harass, track down, and destroy the quarry. There are also a donkey, two horses (ridden by the Pope and Strange ),<sup>33</sup> who carry hunting horns. The horse, once trained, is content to carry out obediently what it has been taught to do, like those whom Antichrist has conditioned to perform his will. References to the horse in Signorelli's, *The Rule*, have applied the principle concerning the need to curb prideful conduct. Horns sound a rallying call appropriate to the hunt, but logically applicable where there are forces that need to be coordinated, as in warfare. An elephant and a pig, or wild boar, are unusual in this context, though the former is used for hunting dangerous animals, and may be intended as an absurdity. The elephant's foot in the 'Papal Ass' is interpreted to mean oppression.<sup>34</sup> On account of its classification as an unclean animal, the pig was able to add an unsavoury touch to any Antichrist enterprise. As a wild boar, usually the quarry of the huntsman, it can be seen as a topsy-turvy ploy, where the hunted becomes the huntsman, like sheep chasing wolves. Bottom right, the Turk, identifiable by his turban and shown brandishing a scimitar, is not unique as he was closely identified and widely associated with the work of Antichrist, and opposition to the Christian religion, but rare in English examples. Antichrist inevitably lacked the Christ-like virtues. As leader of the vices, avarice, pride, lust, appropriately label the pope Antichrist's tiara and equally appropriately all who follow him in the hunt are linked with vices. The dogs are inscribed as Thine (is) Mine, Self-interest, Murder, Adultery, Treachery, Hypocrisy, Idolatry, Ignorance, Ambition. The vices characterise his followers as well as their leader.

Truth, imprisoned in her cave by the Hydra of Rome, is under attack in *Elizabeth I as St. George liberating Truth from her cave by defeating the hydra of Rome*. The engraving dated 1625, by Thomas Cecil, was 'inspired by the cult of the virgin queen' (Plate 113). There would have been fatal consequences, but in accordance with the tradition of the legend of St. George and the Dragon, the Beast is slain and trampled underfoot.<sup>35</sup> The Seven-Headed Beast of the Apocalypse representing the Hydra of Rome is depicted in its final throes.<sup>36</sup> The 'Hydra', which in Greek mythology is a serpent with many heads which grew again if cut, implies in this engraving connotations of sin and evil, which came via the Edenic Serpent, and in turn supplies the diabolical affinities and associations of Antichrist typology. Linkage with Rome is not so much to the city itself, but to Rome as the seat of the papacy, the Catholic Church of Rome.

Truth, present in other examples considered in this chapter, *Time and the Pope, and Diana and Callisto*, is being liberated and is the one that holds the book labelled 'Truth', which represents the Bible. Her nakedness depicts Truth's unsullied character.<sup>37</sup> As Defender of the Faith, the Queen of England was its promoter, defender and the guarantor of its truths. She opposes Rome because Rome

allegedly opposes Bible truth of which Elizabeth is the champion.<sup>38</sup> Elizabeth bears the sword, but not the Bible, and uses the sword in her capacity as Defender of the Faith. She also holds a shield; the shield of Faith. There are important implications here of the Protestant religion as true, Rome as false, and the triumph over untruth through faith. Also, as the former defeats the latter, so the Papal will be vanquished. The book symbol is again associated with the opponent of Antichrist and in anti-papal illustrations in Protestant polemics, the book acquires a special significance, pointing out the firm basis of Protestant convictions against Papal neglect of the Word. The English monarch very often holds the Book (Truth holds it here), and Protestant preachers are usually shown preaching from it.

Elizabeth, styled Queen of Anglia and Hibernia, is backed by naval and military power, with clear references to the defeat of the Spanish Armada, a contributory factor to her paramourcy. She is depicted as a powerful and triumphant ruler and a champion of Truth expressly related to her deliverance from papal dominance and the intrigues of Spain in concert with Rome. There was a conviction that all was under divine influence and that England as the elect nation was the instrument of divine will in bringing about the defeat of the papal Antichrist. This element is presented in various modes by text and emblem in other examples, indicating that God knew and was overseeing the events.

The amalgam of humanist, biblical, classical and legendary elements is indicative of the spread and influence of artistic taste and fashion into the polemical language of protestant art, creating an affinity with contemporary trends. *Queen Elizabeth and the Pope as Diana and Callisto* (Plate 114), an engraving by Pieter van der Heyden is equally wide-ranging and combines mythological, apocalyptic, historical and ecclesiastical elements, and where Truth is again revealed by Time. Elizabeth I, as Astraea, wearing a crown with surmounting crucifix, appears in the role of the chaste Diana, attended by her maidens.<sup>39</sup> As naked Truth, she brings to light through Time, pictured with attributes of the scythe, wings and hour-glass, Callisto's (the pope's) unchastity, following her (*sic*) adultery. The engraving is based on Titian's portrayal of the myth.<sup>40</sup> Truth, lifting the robe of the lewd nymph, represented as the semi-reclining pope, reveals a brood of eggs, the evidence of her adultery. In the accompanying text they are 'the eggs of the Antichrist'.<sup>41</sup> She wears the garb seen in both papal and Antichrist depictions. A jewelled brooch holding together a voluminous robe, easily put on and suggestive of concealment, is an advantageous disguise in her current state. In her left-hand she holds a purse, signifying avarice. Her association with sin is represented by the 'serpent' held above her head, and by the serpent offspring emerging from the eggs. Various evils begotten by her include a dragon (Gregory XIII), a second dragon (the Inquisition), Mort van Paris (the St. Bartholemew Massacre), 'Capucynen' (the religious order of the Capuchins), Balthasar (murderer of William the Silent).<sup>42</sup> These deeds are evil and oppressive and reflect the Papal Antichrist's tyrannical mode of rule, albeit in support and in concert with political powers and other associates. They are broadly similar to evil deeds referred to in *The Kingdom's Monster, Britannia...*, *The Pope's Cabbinnett*, and *The Double Deliverance*.

Antichrist's types are well represented - priest, tyrannical ruler, leader of the vices - immorality, lewdness, and avarice (the purse in her left hand), and diabolical associations. The Babylonian Whore is Antichrist. Here she is not just the city of Babylon, or Rome, or the Adulterous Woman, but the Papacy.<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth's domination of the scene is enhanced by the long upright spear she holds, the shield in her right hand bearing her coat-of-arms. She points upwards, laying claim to her integrity as head of the Church in her own right, following an act of separation from Rome, and her womanly virtue, which give her an ecclesiastical and moral victory over the pope. The four nymphs around her (Diana) in Titian's depiction have become the provinces of the Netherlands in revolt from Roman Catholic Spain. All of them hold shields representing Dutch States - the shield under the queen's left arm, a lion above the waves, is the province of Zeeland. These four, her attendant maidens, similarly naked, indicative of their chastity, contrasts further with the Pope's lewd exposure and immorality. It depicts the triumph of the royal Elizabeth over the pope, and touches upon the issues at the centre of the later example, *The Double Deliverance*, in connection with the papal backed Spanish attack and the Armada victory.

Elizabeth's help had been sought by the Dutch in their dispute with Philip of Spain, 1588.<sup>44</sup> In the accompanying Dutch text, 'Through Time with Truth we are shown the harmful nest...', there is reference to the 'brood showing itself out of the eggs of Antichrist' and to the Dutch states 'staying together out of great troubles', the enthroned one having committed many evil deeds, 'one has seen her wink at the murder of Paris'.

An engraving accompanied by two verses and an explanation of the 'emblem', *The Pope's Cabinet*, (Plate 115), bears the stamp of humanist portraiture and as such also accommodates to artistic fashion. The pope, depicted in his cabinet, a small private room, affords a parallel with *Ghirlandaio's St. Jerome*. The pope, *'The Devil's Darling'*, is writing to the Jesuits to be diligent in carrying out 'the Plott'. His 'crone', a small devil-like creature, calls from the bookshelf above, 'friend, Oates is behind you', who looking over his shoulder sees all his 'Contrivances', his schemes and plots.<sup>45</sup> The Pope's sudden turning dislodges his tiara, which is shown at a rakish angle and the angle of the dislodged tiara is one of several telling tiara 'adjustments' in English imagery by which the pope is dishonoured in some way and becomes more than a means of identity. Oates has a replacement headgear with three bells, more fitting than the tiara. The attribution of folly by the alternative headgear, cap and bells, appears in other examples.<sup>46</sup> The 'blot' on Rome could imply that Rome was once thought to be unblemished. (There is a hint at this in *The Pope's Pyramids*, 'Tyber is now tainted with her poison where once her snowy flocks were tenderly cared for and heavenly music rang'.) Primarily an anti-Papal portrait, the imagery and the accompanying verses embody important Antichrist characteristics making it possible to construe it as an Antichrist image, identifying the pope as such. It conforms to the types of Antichrist as false priest and tyrannical ruler, associated with the work of the devil.

Antichrist's diabolical associations are endorsed in the accompanying verses where the pope is described as the 'Devil's darling' and his crone is depicted as a devil-like creature on the shelf.<sup>47</sup> The

Pope's alliance with the devil is said to be against 'our King and Protestants', i.e. the English monarch and the Protestant Church; the papal Antichrist is therefore active in the political and religious spheres of power. The pope's title of 'Supremacie' extends into areas of political influence and intrigue. The first verse expands upon the nature of the plotting, their joint enterprises, the 'Romish stratagems', which are with blood, treasons, murdered kings and flaming cities. These are similar charges to those in *'The Monster Unclothed from Heaven'*. Here, the contradictory make-up of Antichrist, priest and religious leader and tyrannical ruler, are brought together. He is ready to resort to force, and to perpetrate gross evils to accomplish his purposes with the aid of his Jesuit accomplices.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore his plots and stratagems, against Church and State are known to God and perceived as being of evil intent. As the second verse states, God's concern is to expose them and to deliver England from them and the claim is made that Oates has been sent by God as a timely instrument to accomplish this and prevent England's ruin. Several English examples either in imagery and, or in accompanying text, testify to God's awareness and His will to act in England's favour. This example imparts a measure of originality in its use of familiar types and motifs; some such as 'crone' and 'Oates' have essentially English connotations. The vices are active, but not named, but the pope's alleged conduct is consistent with his being the leader of them.

A pyramid of serpents, a broadside picture by Hendrick Hondius, *The Pope's Pyramides*, dated 1599 (Plate 116), is buttressed by six verses of rhyme, forty-eight informative lines in all. The identity of Antichrist is again established in word and image. 'This hateful brood of Antichrist', are the offspring of the horned serpent at the head of the pyramid. 'The sins begotten by Antichrist' are the 'fruites of Rome', the papal tiara worn by the horned serpent at the head of the stack making the connection. It is further strengthened by the site of the pyramid itself, in a landscape of seven hills, a topographical characteristic of Rome mentioned in Apocalypse 17.9.<sup>49</sup> The large horned serpent's numerous offspring, 'poisonous brood', interlace the parent's body, each showing its papal identity by means of a tonsured head, or clerical headgear of cardinal, or bishop. Clearly the papal clergy are included and again the message can be construed as applying to the Church of Rome. This formula reiterates the sin-evil connotations of the Edenic Serpent as applied to Antichrist.

Papal practice and belief are represented by an assortment of papal artefacts littering the ground, including a holy-water bucket, rosaries, keys, a monstrance, a papal bull, an Indulgence, communion wafers, a crozier and a chalice. These items as in other instances hint at the nature of papal worship and practice, which drew adverse comment from English Protestants on various grounds: that it lacked the substance of a true Bible-based religion, made false claims and taught erroneous doctrine. These matters are amplified in the accompanying verses. False miracles are implied in the expression 'holy water' and the claim that trans-substantiation of the bread and the wine into the body and blood of Christ took place.<sup>50</sup> 'Horned blasphemy - what is it else when he makes believe he can give salvation in heaven, hell and purgatory?' This takes up recurring criticisms about papal excesses of authority in Bulls and Indulgencies and the doctrine of Purgatory.<sup>51</sup> A relevant portion of the accompanying text reads, 'bulls, pardons, Peter's keys are sold - with Christ himself - for gold', and adds, mockingly, 'He

can do much, even more than God can do! The former sustain the charge of avarice frequently made against Antichrist and the papacy and the latter hints at the usurpation of divine power and authority.<sup>52</sup>

Antichrist's customary association with the vices as leader is applied to the papal hierarchy and every serpent's mouth holds a ribbon on which a vice is written, thirteen in all, exceeding the customary seven of the *Psychomachia of Prudentius*. Antichrist's diabolical links, sin and evil are by multiple references to the serpent through parent and offspring. 'Empeiring over all', is a reference to the pope as a horned serpent wearing the tiara at the apex of the structure, a source of universal 'infection', like the Cerastes, 'threatening speedy death if unawares we come within her breathe'. As a serpent he 'lies in wait for the children of the Light', impliedly to poison, envelop in darkness, causing the faithful to perish.

'Tyber is now tainted with her poison where once her snowy flocks were tenderly cared for and heavenly music rang', speaks of her former purity; but now, 'this hatefull brood of Antichrist doth dwell there'. 'The fruites of Rome' and 'sins begotten by Antichrist' not only confirm the identity and actions of the Man of Sin, but widen the basis of guilt involving the Church under its Antichrist leader. He deprives Christ's flock, given to his charge, who lack food, are naked and are left to the world's mercy or the wolves cruelty, the traditional and natural enemy of the flock, featured periodically in reformist art.<sup>53</sup> There is a reference to 'heretiques' as 'God's children', whom she holds in her grasp, 'when she her selfe the roote of error is'. This points to the Protestant martyrs who, in *The Images of Both Churches* (Plate 105), were treated as heretics by Rome, but appeared on the side of the faithful Church. While punishing true believers, she is guilty of the 'grossest heresies'. 'Hypocrisie' is indicated by teaching fasting, but buying 'to please taste and serve gluttony', and advancing her pride by acquiring great estates, issues taken up in Cranach's *Passional*. She puts on a show of holiness masked by the Church's title, glorious outside to the eye, when her devotion is but 'Hypocrisie'.

'Tyranny' has 'reached our Britany'. The tyrannical nature of Antichrist's infamous mode of rule was among the earliest types to be acknowledged. The last verse beneath the illustration describes God's Word as a double-edged sword coming from the skies, and is 'seen' to inflict a deadly wound upon this Serpent, the papal Antichrist. The 'fruites of Rome', sins begotten by Antichrist consolidate the charges brought against the pontiff. The concluding lines are an injunction to pray that the Lord would send his grace and instruct the reader in His truth, in order to escape the evil influences of Antichrist and the false church. Antichrist is twice named in the accompanying verses.

This somewhat later example, c.1599, is one of the more original applications of established Antichrist iconography, and its accompanying verses are comprehensive in their range of issues identifying him, delineating his character, his deeds and those of the papal false ecclesia. It is adroit and explicit in its citation of instances where the one identified as being the head of the false church has allegedly demonstrated who he is by the church's actions.

An inscription in Latin and English across the top of *The Double Deliverance* (Plate 117), reads:

*'1588 To God. In memorye of his double deliveraunce from ye invincible navie and ye unmatcheable powder Treason, 1605'. A deliverance from the Two Great Perils for which Parliament gave thanks in its daily prayers.'*<sup>54</sup>

Spanish galleons are shown under sail in horned crescent formation and a single fire ship is driven by winds towards them. On the right is 'Parliament House' to which Faux advances, lantern in hand. Iconographical features of note at the top are the preferred use of the tetragrammaton, a means of circumventing the creation of a likeness in the representation of the Godhead, and a curvilinear barrier of cloud pierced at three points by emblematic symbols, two wind-heads and the eye of God. The former, accommodating Protestant sensitivities, uses Yhwh, the four-letter Hebrew Name of God, which is set in a sunburst. Explanatory phrases spell out the divine responses - 'I blow and scatter', in reference to the belief that providential acts led to the destruction of the Spanish Armada in 1588, and 'I see and smile' on the beam of light from the eye of God, which focuses on the conspirators of the Gunpowder Plot in the cellar of the Parliament building. Faux himself is identified approaching the entrance.

That God Himself, who both saw and acted, bringing deliverance to England on these two infamous occasions, is set against the powers behind the perpetrators below, who sit plotting round a table under the central canopy. There are three principal conspirators. They include the two-horned devil as the presiding middle figure, the pope, significantly placed on the devil's right at the end of the table, wearing his triple tiara and holding a processional cross. The King of Spain is seated at the other end. There are attendant figures on both sides. As a meeting of the devil with his 'disciples', who is seated facing the viewer at the centre of the long side of the table, it bears some comparison with Last Supper depictions of Christ with his disciples.<sup>55</sup> Inset, above the canopy, is a diminutive portrayal of Tylburie Camp where ranks of pikemen are visited by the Protestant Queen Elizabeth, a momentous occasion in Elizabeth's reign.<sup>56</sup> They were there to withstand an attack from the Duke of Parma, whose dispatch to England's shores was contingent upon the success of the Armada attack. The pope in league with the Devil is shown to be working contrary to God's will, plotting a work of darkness. Antichrist is not named, but there is only one figure in whom the basic types meet:- priest, religious leader, acting in concert with the Devil, conspiring to bring about political acts of an evil and tyrannical nature. He is the pope, who, with others, notably the Catholic Spanish, as the text below records, moves against a land at peace. God's manifest disapproval is such that He allegedly acts for its defence, reiterating the Englishman's belief in the intervention of providence on the nation's behalf.

Light, seen in emanations from divine sources in the heavens, contrasts with the black clouds above the Parliament building, presenting the event as '*Opus tenebrarum*', a work of darkness.

## Notes on Part IV

### Chapter 13, *Passional Christi und Antichristi* (Lucas Cranach)

1. Published by J.Grunenberg, Wittenburg. Cranach adopted a form bearing some resemblance to a *Passional*, a devotional type of work, which usually contained pictures of Christ, Mary, or the Saints and had a moralistic content. Cranach's is much more structured, with a vital and sustained moral message and fully illustrated. Cranach's *Passional Christi und Antichristi* goes well beyond the intention and scope of a traditional *Passional*.
2. A papal 'bull' derives from '*bullo*', a seal, which authenticated the content; later the term applied to the whole document in papal Latin, which was identified by its opening words. Maxwell-Stuart (1997), p.129, compares it with a decretal; illustration, p.176. Bulls of excommunication had been issued against Luther by Leo X in 1520 and 1521 and after ratification by the Emperor Charles V, Luther went into hiding at the Castle of Wartburg under the protection of the elector, Frederick the Wise of Saxony. Luther was later excommunicated on over forty separate counts of heresy and from that time imagery became more anti-papal, except for a short cut-back in the December Testament, 1522. After the Diet of Worms, when Emperor Charles V endorsed the bull of excommunication and publication of Luther's works in the Holy Roman empire were banned, his activities attracted wider public attention. Carey (1999), p.162.
3. Luther's 1520 manifesto, nailed to the door of the Castle Church at Wittenburg, listed 95 theses, raising points of argument in particular about the practice of granting indulgences and the abuses of the process.
4. Philipp Melanchthon and lawyer Johann Schwertfeger were collaborators with Luther and Cranach in the preparation the *Passional*, the two former being jointly responsible for the commentary appearing below the woodcuts. Carey (1999), p143.
5. *Contrapposto* denotes opposition, conveyed by the depiction of a figure or its parts so that they are balanced around a central vertical axis. Christ depicted in this way conveys his alienation to the idea of his being made king at that time. The benefits of this mode of depiction were developed by Classical Greek sculptors in their efforts to avoid stiffness and rigidity. It was revived during the Renaissance. Once again it demonstrates that Antichrist imagery participated in the processes of contemporary artistic development.
6. Constantine, the first so-called Christian Emperor, was the alleged authority for the pope's claim to political power, exercised first by Pope Silvester (314-335), upon whom the grant was conferred. See note 14 below and relevant text. The claim, based on a forgery, is mentioned in the accompanying notes of the *Passional* in connection with recent publicity in Germany. Scribner (1994), pp.150, 287, n. 8.
7. Papal use of force is brought into focus in reference to the reputation and actions of Popes Julius II (1503-13) and III (1550-55). They both threatened and took action against national enemies, the former making threats and prosecuting war against Venice and France, and personally taking part some of the time. An illustration, *Julius III as Demonic Warrior*, Berlin Y A, depicts him as a contradictory figure, dressed in armour, raising the huge double-edged sword above his head, as if about to strike, another at his waste, and wearing his triple tiara surmounted by a cross. Faces at elbow and knee-joints and on the breastplate, establish his diabolical links and the text below identifies him as Antichrist. The supporting text in a broad-sheet of the period, refers to Julius III's appearance on a coin, bearing his likeness and an inscription, which appears in Isaiah 60.12, 'the nation and kingdom that will not serve me shall perish'. This appeared to substantiate his opposition to Germany's northern protestant states, arousing the expectation of papal action against them - 'one must fear he will fall upon Germany with legions of Turks and destroy it by fire and sword'. Scribner (1994), p.128. The preparedness of the Papacy to resort to force to protect its political and ecclesiastical powers is referred to at several points in the *Passional*.
8. The contrast of papal methods with Luther's use of the pen is seen in *Luther, the Pope and the Cardinal* (Plate 101), and discussed in chapter 16 below.
9. Kaminsky (1965), p.39, *The First Table of the Old Colour and the New* (English translation), 6.

10. Dogs may be included to contribute to a domestic scene, but meanings vary. Here there is a stark contrast between the apparent affection for the dog, but cruelty towards the prophet of God. Isaiah 56.10,11,12 compares the unfaithful to dogs - dumb, so do not bark; neglectful because sleepy; indulgent because greedy. The analogy is easily applied to neglectful clergy - as depicted within the walls of *Arimons Civitas*, MS Casanatensis (Plate 17).

11. The Pope enthroned on one of the Accession Day floats (Plate 110), with inscriptions - 'this is the King of Kings', 'thou art our God the Pope', places his foot on the neck of a prostrated monarch, his regalia laid aside. A more famous example, in Luther's *Depiction of the Papacy* (1545), is of Pope Alexander III in 1177 similarly treating Emperor Frederick Barbarossa. The episode has been discredited. See K.Stadtwald, 'Pope Alexander III's Humiliation of Emperor Frederisck Barbarossa as an episode in Sixteenth-Century German History' (*Sixteenth Century Journal*, 1992, 23, pp.755-68).

12. Apocalypse 13. See Poesch (1981), pp. 15-18.

13. On the use of the ban, *D Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, (Weimar 1883-1978), vol. 6, p. 455.

14. Kaminsky (1965), *The First Table*, 6 (p.39).

15. The papal tiara was a symbol of papal power and authority, from 1400 it symbolised the power of pope over heaven, earth, and hell. Originally one coronet, a second, then a third were added. Under Julius II, it became a richly jewelled work of art. Maxwell-Stuart (1997). The use of the triple tiara in anti-papal propaganda, dating at least from the late 15th century, became profuse in the 16th and is depicted falling off, inverted, or broken, showing dishonour. It is also become a recurring iconographical feature in English anti-papal imagery where rejection and overthrow of papal authority had taken place. The Papal coat-of-arms, consisting of two keys, to open and to shut, was allegedly given by Christ exclusively to the Apostle Peter to exercise spiritual and supernatural power, 'I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven' (Matthew 16.13-20). The claim that it gave supreme authority to Peter, and also to his successors in office, was seriously challenged. Protestants did not recognise the primacy of the Apostle Peter and rejected the authority claimed for the Pontiff. Opposition to principles upheld by the Roman Church (p.27), negate the idea of its being the one universal church founded by Christ and that it has been granted the power of the keys. See also chapter 2, p. 22, n.14.

16. Crossed keys and sponge. See chapter 16, n.26, on the instruments of the Passion.

17. Zechariah 9, Mathew 21, Mark 15, Luke 23, John 13, Isaiah 41, Matthew 11. Only Matthew 21 and John 13 duplicate the many references in the *Passional*. Master Nicholas of Dresden's *Tabule* similarly has an even greater number of texts which form the basis of its anti-papal charges and criticisms.

18. Its contradictory meanings are meekness and humility, stubbornness and folly. In the latter sense particularly, it has acquired papal-Antichrist connotations. The head of the Papal Ass, stood for the pope; the rest of the body for the papacy. It signified that the ass's head on a human body depicted the incongruity of the pope as head of the papacy. This remark is made by Melancthon in his description of the Papal Ass. See Scribner (1994), p. 131. Those with long ears in Plate 93, *Doctor Brants Narrenschiff*, 1499 (B L 1A, 37957, f. Siii), choose in their folly to clamber aboard Antichrist's sinking vessel.

19. The controlling factor is II Thessalonians 4.8, 'the Lord shall consume with the breath of his mouth and destroy with the brightness of his coming', to which exegetes have attached various shades of meaning. The idea that he cannot be destroyed by ordinary human power, only by a power under Christ's control, prevailed. This included the spirit of Christ's mouth, which might be depicted as a sword, or by Christ's agent - an angel, the Archangel Michael (often the case), or Gabriel, even by Christian preachers filled with the power of Christ's mouth. Sometimes a windhead or lionhead was employed in the hands of Christ, occasionally he was struck by lightning. The setting is not always when Antichrist attempts the ascension from Mount Olivet; sometimes he is struck as he sits enthroned in the Temple of Solomon (Plates 11, 12, 23).

20. Depictions of Antichrist's fall are traceable from the *Passional Christi* (1521), through earlier examples:- Casanatensis (1420-1440); Wellcome (1420-1425); *The Book of Antichrist* (a German block book), c.1470-75); Wolgemut (1493); Signorelli's, *The Rule* (1499-1504).

21. See Scribner (1994), pp. 164-167, where examples are cited.

22. Sandro Botticelli's *Mystical Nativity*, c.1500 (National Gallery, London), has been interpreted as being influenced by Joachimist teaching. 'Peace on earth to all men goodwill', the angels' tidings of the first nativity, are here applied to the realisation of the ultimate peace promised by the angels when Christ was born. The rejoicing in heaven and on earth, the embracing of men and angels, the celebratory round of the twelve celestial beings above the manger, the devils, either dead or put to flight and seeking refuge beneath the stones, celebrate the victory over the forces of evil, interpreted as the conquest over Antichrist. The scene viewed through the trees depicts the radiance of the dawn of the new age. It is rooted in the troubles in Italy in the years before and after 1500, which were so fearful as to be deemed to match the dire events of the 'second woe' of Apocalypse 11.14.

23. Saxl (1942), p.132. Paul's prophecy 'has been more truly fulfilled in the Papacy than we can comprehend' (a reference to II Thessalonians 2.4).

#### Chapter 14. Apocalypse illustrations in 16th century Bibles

1. The nature of these transformations are described and illustrated by Poesch (1981), p.18 *et seq.*

2. Restrictions were imposed on printers and publishers and there were benefits to be gained by adopting a more moderate form of visual polemic. The relationship between the parties was an influential factor. When the Emperor was more reasonably disposed towards the evangelical movement and there was the prospect that the terms of the Edict of Worms against Luther might not be implemented, it made sense to adopt a milder form of criticism. When such prospects had passed, restraints came off. Scribner (1994), p.173.

3. A Spanish Apocalypse, Morgan Beatus M 644, The Numbering of Antichrist, f. 171v, Apocalypse 13.18, gives the various equivalents of 666 in the arches of an arcaded diagram of which the first four are Antichrist, Teitan, Diclux, Gensericus.

4. P. Schmidt, *Die Illustration der Lutherbibel 1522 bis 1700* (Basel 1962), 122-127, p.105.

5. Two of the figures, Archduke Ferdinand on the left and the mercenary leader, Georg von Fronsberg wearing the plumed headgear, appear in Apocalypse 16 of the September Testament (Schmidt (1962) p.108). The implication is that they were exposed to the influence of the frog-like spirits, from the papal source, a single as distinct from the three sources of Apocalypse 16.13.

6. *Libido* (lust), is unbridled passion, like *Ira* (rage).

7. Schmidt (1962), pp.105-111.

8. Mayo (1973), p. 62 and n.117.

9. The true ecclesia is the prospective Virgin Bride of Christ (Apocalypse 19.7); the false ecclesia can be nothing more than the false church of Antichrist, necessarily adulterous. Jezebel typifies the corrupting influence of the spiritual fornicator in the Ecclesia (Apocalypse 2.20). As a type of Antichrist, she came from an alien source, became Queen of King Ahab of Israel, introduced ungodly ways into the rulership of the kingdom, her life ending as the result of an ignominious fall, her body trodden underfoot and eaten by dogs. (I Kings 21; II Kings 9.30-37)

10. The pamphlet, *Des papst ...*, was written by Cammerlander, 1546; the woodcut (Plate 67), was by Matthew Gerung in the 1540s.

11. Castel S. Angelo, a papal prison used by Pope Alexander VI, has papal associations and in depictions of the Papal Ass flies the crossed keys motif of the papal arms. *The Papal Ass*, in M. Luther, *Abbildung des papstums* (1545), f.1., BL.

12. Schmidt (1962), p.109.
13. Schmidt (1962), p.111.
14. See chapter 11, n.26 and relative text.
15. Schmidt (1962), p.216.
16. Schmidt (1962), p.192.

#### Chapter 15, a, b, c, d, e. Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*

1. Matthew Gerung (1500-70), was the illustrator of Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*, work which was carried out under the patronage of the Palatine Count Ottheinrich, who had formally embraced the Reformation in 1542 and with whom he had worked from the age of 25. They were never published with the Count's commentary and Gerung's woodcuts were mistakenly attributed to Mathias Grüninger because of the monogram, MG. He had previously undertaken a Catholic commission before the Count's conversion to Protestantism. His later work on Meyer's Commentary shows 'creative talent for satirical imagery', surpassing previous efforts in quantity and originality, though the influence of Dürer and especially Cranach is nevertheless apparent. Meyer was a preacher-reformer in Bern; his anti-papal commentary was published in Latin in Zurich (1539). In 1544, Gerung's patron, Count Ottheinrich, commissioned a translation of his commentary into German and called upon Gerung to design illustrative woodcuts. Fifty-nine had been produced by 1558, but the work was never completed, or published - possibly because of the Count's demise in 1559. Carey (1999), pp. 164-65.

2. *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John* of the Bernese preacher Sebastian Meyer:- Petra Roettig, *Reformation als Apokalypse. Die Holzschnitte von Mathias Gerung im Codex germanicus 6592 der Bayerischen Staatsbibliothek in München, Bern, Berlin, Frankfurt am Main* (1991). Regarding Gerung's woodcuts previously familiar as independent items, see n.23 below.

3. It follows a scripted title, which appears three times, one of which seems to have occurred accidentally during the printing process.

4. One such example appears in *Britannia receiving the Last Rites* (Plate 111), which depicts a Catholic priest with his foot on a book labelled 'Bible'. Another example, Holzschnitt in Rudolf Gwalter, *Der Endchrist* (Zurich 1546), depicts Antichrist in many respects like Gerung - a beast with a lion head, two horns, clawed paws and hooved feet, one planted on an open text, the other on a closed one, most likely the Bible, and wearing a papal tiara with crucifix. Gerung's pope figure has clawed feet and hooved paws, one of them on an open text, but is a less threatening figure. The example from *Der Endchrist* has a raised sword in his left hand and holds up a sealed indulgence in his right hand, thus upholding papal authority and practice while at the same time trampling God's word underfoot. The date of each is 1546. Roettig (1991), *Abbildungsverzeichnis*, 30.

5. Melancthon's description of the Papal Ass, whose left foot is an elephant's, was interpreted as signifying the servants of spiritual power who oppress. See Scribner (1981), pp.131.

6. Poesch (1981), pp.15-18 on the identity of the Beast of the Bottomless Pit as Antichrist by Hippolytus and Victorinus, from as early as the third century A.D. .

7. Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger...' (John 6.35)

8. The power of the Word as a hammer is in the hands of the one who is 'the Word made flesh' (John 1.14), to punish offenders who misrepresent it.

9. Depicting those under the altar as children is unusual. Dürer depicts them as adults in his 1498 woodcuts, number 4 (*Apocalypse*, 6.9-11).

10. P. Schöffler, *Die Luterisch Strebkatz* (Worms 1524). What was familiar as a game of tug-of-war became a contest between Luther and the Pope; the former grasps a large crucifix, denoting the champion of his cause in the contest between the true doctrine advanced by Luther and the false by the pope. Supporters of each of the contestants were also depicted. Scribner (1994), pp 60, 61.
11. The theologian, Hochstraten, 'king of the rats', appears as an opponent of Luther in polemical prints of the 1520s - Hans Holbein the Younger, *Luther as German Hercules* (Zurich 1523), Appendix no. 43. P. Schöffler, title page to *Die Luterisch Strebkatz*, (Worms, 1524), *The Triumph of Truth*, Germanische National museum, Nuremberg. Appendix no. 48.
12. Reformation propaganda followed mediaeval methods in the use of animal allegories. D. Schmidtke, *Geistliche Tierinterpretation in der deutschsprachigen Literatur des Mittelalters* (Berlin 1968).
13. Christ was the 'Lion of the tribe of Judah', the one fit to open the sealed book in the hands of the Father. (Apocalypse 5.1-5)
14. Ezekiel 1.10-12 gives a description of the Cherubim in action, identifying their four faces, their forward movement and their lightning speed..
15. Presumably it was an oversight. A note round the edge in the manuscript points out the error.
16. '*In dem drachen sieht dagen die 'satanische macht' des Antichrist.*' Roettig (1991), p.176, line 5.
17. The concept of Antichrist attracted many identities of evil persons, including Christians and others, among whom was the Turk, an opponent of the Christian faith and a territorial aggressor in Christian lands, frequently represented in reformation Antichrist imagery. In Gerung's anti-papal depictions for Meyer's apocalypse commentary, where the pope is consistently depicted as Antichrist, the Turk often appears. Both are occupants of hell in *The Pope and Turk as Demons Enthroned in Hell* (abb. 18b), where devils hold their headgear, tiara or turban, above each, denoting their Antichrist links, and whose tails intertwine. Their Apocalypse 13 identity as the seven-horned beast of the Sea and the two-horned Earth beast bring each within the framework of the Apocalypse. Their diabolical ties are equally prominent in *Pope and Turk as Demons Dragging their followers to Hell*. They share the same body from the waist upwards in *The Chariot of the Pope and the Turk*, which is pulled in opposite directions. Papal artefacts - the indulgence, the monstrance and banners at a *Corpus Christi* event are paralleled with the weaponry of the Turk and the barbaric practices of the infidel. The apocalyptic style imagery associates both parties with multi-headed beasts of the Apocalypse and with the Last Judgment, signified by the hand of God emerging from the clouds clutching a sword. The false religion of the Catholic Church is depicted as equally life-threatening as the Turk's. Gerung's frequent allusions to both the Turk and the pope in the same image, can usually be construed as a means of vilifying the papal Antichrist by placing them in the same category, implying that there is little to choose between their origins, the offences they commit and where they lead their followers. *The Ship of Christ* (Plate 95b), considered in the chapter, includes the ship of the Turk. A study of the Turk as Antichrist is not within the scope of the thesis, though the Turkish presence in the selected imagery usually draws comment.
18. John Bale's woodcut, *The Images of bothe Churches*, (London c. 1545), S.T.C. 1302, Bodleian Library, Oxford, contrasts two images - The Woman Clothed with the Sun (Apocalypse 12), and the Woman who rides the Seven-Headed Beast (Apocalypse 17), representing respectively the Woman in the Wilderness and the Whore of Babylon. The first depicts the poor persecuted Church of Christ, the second the proud persecuting church of the pope or 'synful synagogue of Sathan'.
19. Cranach's reversion to a beast form was thought to be related to the nature of papal opposition at the time (Scribner (1994), p.174); whether or not this was Gerung's estimate of the current situation, it fits his more frequent use of beastly forms in depicting the papacy.
20. '*mit skeptischem Zorn das Geschehen im Himmel*', Roettig (1991), p.167.
21. Spoon-work was useless, or of little or no value. The metaphor was applied in criticism of the monastic orders for the low estimate of its functions. Scribner (1944), p.41). A spoon placed adjacent to the Indulgence document would imply a similar assessment of its value as an instrument of forgiveness.

22. Criticism was directed at the lower clerical orders, monks and nuns and monasticism in general. Two images, both 1523, *The Monk and his Maid*, and *The Monk and his Ass*, refer to immoral practice. The former depicts a monk negotiating a monetary arrangement with a father for his daughter to become the monk's concubine; in the second, a monk carries a basket on his back containing a nun, hinting at the same immoral conduct. Leonard Bech, *The Monk and his Maid* (1523), Berlin. Hollstein II 169 (no.8). Leonard Bech, *The Monk and his Ass* (1523), Gotha. Hollstein II, 163 (no.1).

23. Three anti-papal woodcuts, not connected with the *Commentary*, but thought to belong to a series illustrating the life of Antichrist, are *The Birth of Antichrist* (B.M. 1976-1-31-3), *The Baptism of Antichrist* (B.M. 1976-1-31-2) and *Revelling Catholic Clergy* (Hollstein 68), (B.M. 1910-4-18-4). Dates 1544-48. Carey (1999), pp.167, 8.

24. Roettig (1991), p. 214, refers to Meyer's scornful prediction of the downfall of the Catholic Church and its no less dramatic destruction in Gerung's woodcut, abb. 22b. *Wo in optischer Analogie zum apocalyptischen Mülstein* (where in the optical analogy of the apocalyptic millstone), *nun das Buch des Evangeliums* (now the book of the gospel ) *drohend auf die katholische Kirche niederstürzt* (they are now threatened by the downfall of the Catholic church). *Antichrist* (B.M. 1976-1-31-2) and *Revelling Catholic Clergy* (Hollstein 68), (B.M. 1910-4-18-4). Dates 1544-48. *The Apocalypse and the Shape of things to Come*, B M (1999), pp.167, 8.

24. Roettig's (1991), comment p. 214, refers to Meyer's scornful prediction of the downfall of the Catholic Church and its no less dramatic destruction in Gerung's woodcut, abb. 22b. *Wo in optischer Analogie zum apocalyptischen Mülstein* (where in the optical analogy of the apocalyptic millstone), *nun das Buch des Evangeliums* (now the book of the gospel ) *drohend auf die katholische Kirche niederstürzt* (they are now threatened by the downfall of the Catholic church).

## Chapter 16. Antichrist and the English Reformation

1. By the Act Supremacy, 1534, Henry VIII became head Church of England. 'It is as successors to divine imperial power that kings' (including Henry VIII), 'claim the right to throw off imperial suzerainty.'

Yates (1947), p.39. See I. Basire, *Ancient Liberty of the Britannic Church* (London 1661), p.44.

2. Citations are in Master Nicholas of Dresden's *Tabule*. See previous reference, chapter 2, n. 3. Dante's *Monarchia*, p.10, denies the validity of the Donation. For Foxe's account of Dante's views on this and kindred matters in *Acts and Monuments*, see Yates (1947), p. 45.

3. 'Popes owe their...position to the kindness of devout emperors.' 'Later popes having grown rich and powerful through imperial kindness turned proud ... and became oppressors of the emperors to whom they owed everything.' Yates (1947), pp. 43, 44.

4. These are Foxe's statements in *Acts and Monuments*, as defined by Yates (1947), p. 43.

5. 'The end of the first Volume of the Booke of Martyrs' (p.771), has a printed passage beneath the title, 'The Image of Antichrist exalting himself in the temple of God '. See Plate 100. In it the Pope speaks of his great revenues from various sources and that the whole world is his diocese, and ends, 'Wherefore as I began, so I conclude, commaunding declaring and pronouncyng to stand upon necessitie of salvation for every humane creature to be subject to me'. This reads as an example of Antichrist 'exalting himself in the temple of God', exercising authority over those he claims are subject to him, even claiming world-wide suzerainty. Pope Boniface is named in the sources printed in the right-hand margin. 'Exalting himself in the temple of God ' is a reference to II Thessalonians 2. 4.

6. Familiar religious symbols often have pre-Christian origins, Michael's holding a balance being a case in point. Festivals, cults and temples were taken over and adapted to Christian use, retaining some of their pagan characteristics. A detail from the *Demidoff* altar-piece (1476), by Crivelli, depicts Michael holding a balance containing diminutive human figures representing the souls of the departed. National Gallery, London.

7. Title page to *Ein schöns tractetlein von dem Götlichen und römischen Ablas*. J. Schmidt (Speyer 1525). (BL 3910. aaa.36.)

8. In *Milestones of History*, vol. V, *Reform and Revolt*, ed. Neville Williams, (London New York 1974), a concise and well-illustrated chapter, 'The Ninety-Five Theses', gives an account of Luther's non-violent approach, which includes a depiction of him holding a giant quill as he stands at the church door at Wittenberg, assisted by other protestants holding on to the vanes of a large 'feather'. In the title-page of John Bale's *Summarium*, Anne Askell, the English martyr, is depicted 'in evangelical pose', holding a quill pen in her left hand, the Bible in her right. J. N. King (1982), p.73.
9. In spite of Luther's non-violent mode of witness, the background conflict of the illustration (n. 8), may be intending to point out that many were stirred to violence by it. An indication of God's knowledge and favour is conveyed by the tetragrammaton at the centre of an effulgence of light in the sky. The chapter gives details of the civil strife engendered by Luther's witness. Williams (1974), p.14.
10. Tetzel's visit was particularly provocative to Luther because of its blatant exploitation of the Indulgence for raising money, ostensibly to secure forgiveness by a money-gift, denying the principle of faith and other moral duties. It was the more obnoxious because it included an arrangement to enable Tetzel to discharge his indebtedness to the banking house of the Fugger family for a loan raised to pay for Papal dispensations. Williams (1974), p.15.
11. Luther and others suffered from papal threat of imprisonment, excommunication, martyrdom and allegations of heresy at the hands of the Inquisition. See note 22 below.
12. Pope Leo X issued a bull against Luther in 1520, who burnt it, stating that Antichrist sits in the temple of God and that the Roman court is the synagogue of Satan. A second bull excommunicated Luther. Maxwell-Stuart (1997), p.175.
13. The implied papal indifference to the interests of the poorer classes is represented in Cranach's *Passional* which contrasts the imposing papal settings with the humble depictions in which simple folk are taught and healed by Christ, and who are also seen to follow him.
14. Wenceslaus Hollar (1607-77), acknowledged as a skilled Bohemian engraver, was resident in England during two separate periods and used his Christian name in an anglicised form. It was customary to supply the engraver with the 'idea' who then worked out the detail.
15. The art of the emblem an element in Italian renaissance symbolism was popularised by the *Emblemata* of Alciati (published 1531), which permeated English satirical art in the 17th century, following Geoffrey Whitney's, *Choice of Emblems* (1585)
16. The Catholic feast of *Corpus Christi*, commemorates the institution of the Eucharist. Urban IV ordered its observation from 1264, allegedly in response to hearing of a miracle mass at Bolsena. It was an early Christian custom to carry the consecrated host in procession, a practice which gave rise to the use of the monstrance. Peter and Linda Murray, *Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art* (Oxford 2001). For more about the miracle mass at Bolsena, *Corpus Christi* (and links with Orvieto), see Riess (1995), p.10, 85.
17. Their trumpeting, a sacrifice of praise, Hebrews 13.15. 'By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips'.
18. Isaiah 5.20: 'Woe to them that call good evil and evil good, that put darkness for light and light for darkness'. *The Pope's Pyramids*, Plate 116, makes reference to heretics, though the Church of Rome 'the root of error is' (verse top left, line 3). Similar occurrences over centuries, where things are 'turned upside down', are well represented in the topsy-turvy effects of Antichrist's actions.
19. See Paul Christianson, *Reformers and Babylon* (Toronto 1978), pp. 20, 21, 37, 40, 41, 46 which are about the two works by Bale and Fox.
20. The title-page of John Bale's *Summarium*, which among other issues gives an account of Anne Askew's sufferings, depicts her as described in n.8, under attack from a dragon wearing the papal tiara, signifying the true church under attack (i.e. the Woman Clothed with the Sun under attack from the dragon). King (1982), pp. 71-73.

21. P. Pouncey, 'Gerolamo da Treviso in the service of King Henry VII', *Burlington Magazine*, XCV, 1953, pp 208-211. In 1547, the four evangelists casting stones upon the Bishop of Rome, hung in the long gallery. (*Three Inventories of the year 1542, 1547, 1549-50 of Pictures in the Collection of Henry VIII and Edward VI*, ed. W.A. Shaw, Courtauld Institute of Art Text for the Study of Art History, I, 1937, pp.30, 35, 56.). BM Harlican MS, 1419A fol 246b.
22. The Pope has been identified as Paul III (1534-49), who excommunicated Henry VIII, in connection with his divorce from Catharine of Aragon. His most significant contribution to Church history was the calling of a General Council of the Church, later known as the Council of Trent, which met from time to time between 1545 to 1563. For its deliberations and pronouncements, see next note. He established the Inquisition (The Holy Office), giving extensive powers of censorship and prosecution, an ecclesial tribunal for the suppression of heresy which employed torture and execution.
23. The Council of Trent, called by Pope Paul III, led to the strong and long-lasting reaffirmation of the traditional beliefs and practices of the Roman Church, which had been challenged and were abhorrent to Protestants. This reaction, constituting the Counter-Reformation, set the two Churches in opposition. The effect was to define their essential differences and provide a reliable touchstone for comparison. Catholic beliefs about the nature of the sacraments, the presence of Christ at the Eucharist, transubstantiation, Purgatory, the veneration of images, relics and indulgences, were all confirmed. Its deliberations addressed criticisms about its own shortcomings, which had come from catholic sources. The education of both junior and senior ecclesiastics, the allocation of benefices and the avoidance of pluralities, the relationship between the curia and local administration, the low moral standards and incompetence among clerics and the practice of concubinage among the clergy, were investigated and remedial steps taken. See Williams (1976), pp.73-79.
24. Roy Strong, 'A Tudor Anti-Papal Allegory and its setting', *JWCI*, XXIII, 1960, pp.311-313, belongs to the series of royal portraits during the reigns of Tudor monarchs. The artist, Gerolamo da Treviso, a Florentine who, like Holbein, found service with King Henry VIII. See Pouncey (1953), pp. 208-11.
25. The pulling down of the statue appears as a background scene in *St. Benedict converts the inhabitants of Monte Cassino*, where the monks are seen pulling down a statue, 'destroying the idols'. The cycle is in the main cloister of the Abbey of Monteoliveto Maggiore and was painted by Luca Signorelli, 1497-8, just before he began work at Orvieto. The window image implies papal decline to overthrow and judgment on Rome.
26. The *arma christi*, the arms of Christ's triumph, or instruments of the Passion, consist basically of the cross, crown of thorns, nails, lance, sponge, and scourge, but quite a few more were added in the 12th century and later. Peter and Linda Murray, *Oxford Dictionary of Christian Art* (Oxford 1996). Their appropriateness in this instance is that they resemble the instruments of the enemy, and topsy-turvy-like are born by the offenders.
27. William Haller, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and the Elect Nation* (London 1963), p.225, said to be influential in prompting this concept, is seriously questioned by K.Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain 1530-45* (Oxford 1979), pp.106-9, 252.
28. The date of Accession Day, November 17th, 1580. The reference is to the English tradition whose Accession Day carnival ended in a pope-burning spectacle.
29. The pontiff appeals to his diabolical friends accompanying him on the float for help. An observation in Sheila Williams, 'The Pope-Burning Processions of 1679, 1680, and 1681', *JWCI*, XXI, 1958, p. 116, is that 'the Devil knew better than to be burnt. He attended his holiness to the brink of the flames and then escaped'. The pope also gloats upon the deeds his 'deare children' will carry out: 'stab, murder, burn, torture...' It will bring blessing to his soul in Hell.
30. The reference is to the English as heretics, an expression used of the 'persecuted church' in *The Images of Both Churches*. It also occurs in *The Pope's Pyramides* (Plate 116), where the counter charge is made in more accusatory terms, that 'she herself the root of error is'.
31. Pope Innocent III was also instrumental in defining its terms, expressed in 63 clauses.

It was accepted by King John in 1215, under pressure from the English barons, confirmed by his successor, Henry III, in 1223 and re-issued with alterations, attaining its final form in 1225. L. Pascoe, ed., *Encyclopaedia of Dates and Events* (London 1981).

32. Oates who claimed to have discovered the Popish plot (to murder Charles II and set the Duke of Norfolk on the throne), was imprisoned for perjury and later released. See S. Williams (1958), pp.104, 111. Plots, a theme of great moment in contemporary English politico-religious conflict, sparked fear and controversy. An elaborate print, c.1627, *Popish Plots and Treasons from the Beginning of the Reign of Elizabeth*; consists of a long series, mostly of assassination plots arranged chronologically, including the Armada, and the Powder plot. The last item is of the True Church trampling on the malignant Church of Rome and Spain, with the fires of Smithfield in the background, Civil War commotions as well as the achievements of Oates and Bedloe. M. D. George, *English Political Caricature. A Study of Opinion and Propaganda to 1792* (Oxford 1959), p.3.

33. Strange, who rides a horse, is no doubt Roger L'Estrange. He became linked infamously with the dog Towzer, often depicted in contemporary broadsides where L'Estrange is caricatured riding, facing the rear end of his mount, but not in this example, though it is noteworthy that a dog runs alongside Strange's horse. See Williams (1958), p.109, 110.

34. Animal metaphor had had a long history, and equally appropriate in Antichrist imagery in connection with the beasts of prophetic visions, especially in Daniel and the *Apocalypse*. Instances occur in chapter 15a, where references are also made to examples in protestant and papal polemics. See notes 10, 11, 12 and relevant text.

35. St. George and the Dragon had an early legendary source, but its original meaning was lost and the narrative in the thirteenth century *Golden Legend* became the accepted basis - the deliverance of a maiden who was being offered in sacrifice; features include the slaying and trampling of the dragon and the possible use of a lance, a sword, and a cord. In a situation where truth was under attack and needed to be delivered by conquest, the basic framework would be appropriate. Both of these aspects are apparent in the present example. See James Hall, *Dictionary of Ideas and Symbols in Art* (London 1996).

36. Connotations of the Beast's multi-heads, the Hydra of Rome, identify with the seven-headed beast of Apocalypse 17.3,10, which was identified with Rome by its rider.

37. Truth is unsullied and may be depicted naked. In *Diana and Callisto*, where the nymphs of Diana are unclothed. The virtue rests upon there being no additional adornment to the body.

38. Elizabeth, a champion of Bible truth, is a familiar theme in Elizabethan portraiture and literature. René Graziani, 'The Rainbow Portrait of Queen Elizabeth I and its Religious Symbolism', *JWCI*, 35, 1972, pp.247-59, identifies her many attributes, in particular as a defender of the Faith and as a monarch who trusted in God.

39. The Dutch print is associated with a phase in Anglo-Dutch history. Elizabeth, the chaste Diana, represents Naked Truth, the daughter of Time. She depicts the triumph of Protestant Truth in England over Papal untruth; as Queen with imperial powers, she triumphs over the Papacy. See Fritz Saxl, '*Veritas filia temporis*', in *Philosophy and History*, essays edited by R. Klibansky (Oxford 1936), pp.197-222, where Truth, the daughter of Time, and the critical response from the papal point of view are discussed. Elizabeth as Astraea is identified with the concepts of the golden age, imperial power, the role of shepherdess preserving her flock, leading her subjects to light, peace and prosperity in England. For Astraea's origins and additional Elizabeth I identities, see Yates (1947), who expounds the theme at length.

40. The engraving is based on selected features of the myth - the nymph Callisto's adulterous conduct and the physical exposure which reveals her guilt. The eggs and their representation of various evils are obviously additions. Titian's portrayal of the legend, as the Dutch print, is in line with the renaissance promotion of classical mythological themes in works of art in which Antichrist imagery also participated.

41. The text states that they are the eggs of Antichrist: '*Die eyeren van antechrist*'. (R.H. inscription, line 5.)
42. They refer to the evil deeds in which, to varying extent, the papacy was allegedly implicated.
43. Antichrist, who had laid the eggs, wears the papal tiara and is depicted as a whorish woman. This fits Antichrist's Babylo-Rome connotations and the identity of the Whore of Babylon. (Apocalypse 17.4, 5), which refers to her fornication and harlotry.
44. This tribute to Elizabeth in a Dutch print at this time had political aims, hoping to facilitate an alliance with the English. Both nations were harassed by papal policy and intrigue. The situation naturally gave rise to anti-papal propagandist imagery. Yates (1947), p.80.
45. See n.32 above.
46. The iconography of the fool which includes the 'cap and bells' is seen in images of folly. See Plate 93.
47. The etymology of 'crone' does not support the diabolical, nor is its recognised meaning of a withered old woman, or an old ewe (Concise Oxford Dictionary), supported by the image on the shelf. Its depiction here is possibly devil-like, which would fit the context.
48. Jesuits and other accomplices - the Irish, the Spanish monarchy, for example, were often the ones directly involved in the implementation of papal policy. See S. Williams (1958), pp.108, 112, 116, where current feelings about the Jesuits are publicised in the episodes of the Accession Day processions. The 'mock procession' of November 17th, 1579 included 'Pope, Cardinals and Jesuits'.
49. Apocalypse 17.9. 'I will tell thee the history of the woman ... and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. And here is the mind' which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth'.
- 50. Miracles claimed by the Catholic Church and those beliefs which contain a miraculous element which Catholics accepted, but Protestants rejected, come into the 'false miracles' category and form the basis of the Protestant charge.
51. The power of the pope to work wonders is an aspect of the previous note summed up in the expression quoted in the verses accompanying *The Pope's Pyramid* - being able to do 'more than God can do'.
52. II Thessalonians 2.4. 'Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped...'. Verse 9, 'with all power and signs and lying wonders.'
53. The wolf, the recognised enemy of the ecclesial flock, found its way into anti-papal imagery. Senior clergy, depicted as wolves, carry off the sheep, taking them away from the light of the gospel into darkness, which 'lying in wait for the children of the light' aptly describes. *The Spiritual Wolves* depicts the pope and a cardinal savaging the flock gathered at the foot of the cross. (Dahlem. Strauss - 1975: 3, 1364.)
54. Samuel Ward, an English preacher at Ipswich, invented the engraving, which was engraved and printed in Holland, 1621. M. D.George, *English Political Caricature. A Study of Opinion and Propaganda, to 1792* (London 1959). In reference to Parliament's giving of thanks in its daily prayers and the adaptation of such prints to accommodate new alarms of popery and invasion, see n. 27 above.
55. It is reminiscent of a 'Last Supper' format, and is another example of the use of a familiar religious theme as the context of an Antichrist message. This choice would be appropriate as the evil counterpart of an episode in Christ's ministry, the same basis of comparison followed by Cranach in *Passional Christi und Antichristi* and conforming to Antichrist's alleged practice of parodying episodes in the life of Christ. It also ties in with Leonardo's change of accent in his treatment of the Last Supper theme from the fellowship of the meal to treachery and betrayal. There are, however, only seven main figures. It could be argued that there are pagan precedents for the use of seven figures meeting together and

sharing a spiritual meal. Examples found in the catacombs are the probable sources of 'Last Supper' imagery. In a 4th century example in the catacomb of Praetextatus, Rome, there are only seven participants - priests of the Greek god Sebazius, joining in a religious meal. *Pontificia Commissione di Archeologia Sacra*. (See J Halls, *A History of Ideas and Images in Italian Art* (London 1997), p.75, illustration 3.7.

56. At Tylbury Camp an assembled army of 22,000 foot, commanded by the Earl of Salisbury, was ready to encounter the Duke of Parma should he disembark from the Low Countries. Philip II of Spain's plan for the Armada to escort a fleet of barges from the Spanish Netherlands to the coast of England could not be implemented on account of the advantages secured by the English. N. Hanson, *The Confident Hope of a Miracle: the True History of the Spanish Armada* (2003), arts telegraph, book review, 29.11.2003. Elizabeth visited the troops at Tylbury, riding through their ranks wearing armour, and there gave her famous speech, saying that she knew she had the body of a weak and feeble woman, but the heart and spirit of a king.

## CONCLUSION

An integrated study of Antichrist which takes in the traditional Catholic and Protestant points of view, their sources, iconography, and the fundamental stand of each, is necessary for an understanding of the subject, and one of the objectives is to make a contribution to knowledge in these respects.

The Antichrist types, basically seven, identified in Part II, are consistently applied as points of reference and are relevant throughout. They formed the basis of the traditional interpretation of Antichrist, and were wholly relevant to it. With one exception, all the main types are identifiable in the imagery associated with the Protestant point of view, but between the two viewpoints there are significant differences of interpretation. The exception is Antichrist's semitic identity which had no specific role in Protestant imagery.

Antichrist's efforts to prove his semitic origins are somewhat artificial, which logically would only be necessary if he were not a Jew. According to papal tradition, however, Antichrist is a Jew, associated with the hut, the temple of Solomon and the Old Law, yet he is depicted attempting to prove his semitism in various ways. It is submitted that this is one of the absurdities of the traditional viewpoint.

Prophet, priest and king are typical of Christ, and are therefore basic to Antichrist's typological make-up, concerning which he puts forward false claims. The prophet, which is a telling forth, sometimes, but not always of the future, appears not to have any specific recognition. Antichrist opposes the preaching of the Two Witnesses, and converts his followers, more by force and gifts than preaching. His neglect of preaching is how he functions as a 'prophet' type. However, there appears to be a move towards a manifestation of the prophet type in *The Preaching of Antichrist and the Two Witnesses, Liber chronicarum*, Nuremberg (1493), where false and true teaching between Antichrist and the Two Witnesses appear together, possibly for the first time. In the years that followed, Protestant reformists became active preachers and in the developing imagery, Protestant and Catholic preachers compete at close quarters. It is submitted that this development of the role of preaching advanced the prophetic type.

There are aspects of the other two main types, priestly and kingly, which are not sufficiently explained and call for clarification. With Christ, the priestly obligations came first and the kingly were not pursued. Christ actually resisted attempts to make him king. With Antichrist, the ambition to rule takes priority and the priestly is subordinate and false. There is no explanation offered why Antichrist's kingly role could be false, but it is because it fails to respect the priestly duties and obligations. Therefore it fails to develop fitness to rule, and for this reason it is 'false'. The priest-king mode of rule, the type of the rulership God promotes (Apocalypse 5.9, 10), and typical of Christ himself, is a combination of the two. It has been pointed out in the text that Samuel alone came nearest to this mode of rule, though not technically a king, and David, though not technically a priest, performed priestly acts for which (unlike Saul), he was not rebuked.

Nebuchadnezzar as a highly important Antichrist prototype is rarely sufficiently substantiated. The Daniel text provides a convincing basis of proof and it is felt necessary to draw attention to these elements in the Daniel text and to stress the importance of Nebuchadnezzar's prototype.

The Bible initiated the concept of Antichrist and is the prime source and authority on the subject and it is also the sole authoritative account of Christ and his associate types, of which Antichrist and his types are the opposites. Both word and image testify to the acceptance of the scriptural evidence by the two parties who advanced the conflicting points of view. While it is recognised that scripture needed to be interpreted, the picture the Bible presents has been distorted by imaginative and inapposite deductions, misinterpretations, selective treatment, the avoidance of prejudicial issues in Bible texts, and the acceptance and use of data from other sources, including pagan, recognised as equivalent. These instances are pointed out. Sources are fundamentally important; they have influenced viewpoint, the interpretation of the types, the resulting imagery and its development and have also been instrumental in bringing about the two conflicting interpretations.

There is a need for emphasis and explanation of the political framework Antichrist occupies by type and antitype. The significance of Babylon as a prototype of Antichrist's rule leads on through the two intervening kingdoms to Rome, which is also prototypical, then to Antichrist's rule, which is antitypical. The continuity of this development from Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom of Babylon to the end of Antichrist's rule, and of Nebuchadnezzar's attack upon Jerusalem as a type of Antichrist's later attack on that city, were recognised and depicted in the *Beatus* manuscripts and in *Liber floridus*, as part of the traditional view at that stage. These typological links between Babylon and Rome are also apparent in the conquest of Israel by Nebuchadnezzar and in the later attack upon Israel by imperial Rome (A.D. 70). The final attack by Antichrist against Jerusalem is likewise, true to type, directed against Israel. These linkages are rarely presented in the secondary literature, with the full support that scripture presents, except in instances where the Protestant viewpoint is being discussed. To name examples: Yates is concerned with the imperial aspects in particular; Wright and Mayo identify them in their *Beatus* and *Liber chronicarum* studies; Christianson and Firth take up supporting evidence from the findings of English theologians, and Cohn is exceptional regarding the prophetic-historical framework in Daniel.

An important stage was reached when imperial Rome began to be ruled by the first Christian emperor, Constantine. Pagan imperialism at the fourth kingdom stage was then superseded by Christian emperorship. This stage is the subject of II Thessalonians (2.3-11), which was interpreted to mean that when imperial pagan Rome ended, Antichrist could assert himself. His rule therefore subsumed the imperial and the papal claim that by the Donation of Constantine imperial powers had been granted, the papacy took upon itself the imperial mantle. In this way all the implications relating to the four preceding imperial kingdoms, Babylon to imperial Rome, became relevant. Hence the Babylon and Rome elements in some of the chapters of the Apocalypse. All these issues made their impact upon the imagery of Antichrist, its fuller meaning and its development.

As the fundamental relationships rarely achieve their full evidential value in the secondary literature, and are more often left out; overall, they result in a distorted and incomplete account of the subject.

By reason of the Bible's primacy and its initiatory function in introducing the Antichrist theme, where specific references have been made in text and imagery, the texts have consistently been taken up, often throwing new light on the relevant subject-matter. Such opportunities occurred particularly in Bosch's *Epiphany* triptych, and in Cranach's *Passional*.

There is continuous use of the Apocalypse visions as an imagery source for both viewpoints, particularly the Antichrist related chapters: 11, 13, 16, 17 and 20. As with the types, there are differences of interpretation and omissions. The earlier Apocalypse manuscripts advanced the development of the transitional stage from animal to human depictions of Antichrist, which tended to show some reluctance about using the term Antichrist in the image, being content to confine it to the Commentary. In Protestant imagery, the range is narrower and is concerned with Antichrist's identity as pope, Babylon as papal Rome, and kindred issues, which chapter 14, about sixteenth century *Biblia*, verifies.

Mediaeval illuminated *Apocalypse* manuscripts link in particular the style of the thirteenth century with the imagery of the fifteenth. The apocalypse block books continue to draw upon the same source. Apocalypse illustrations of Albrecht Dürer's predecessors were followed by his 1498 Apocalypse woodcuts and the long chain continues in the illustrations by Lucas Cranach, Hans Holbein, and others for the New Testament and *Biblia* translations by Martin Luther. Matthew Gerung's illustrations were for Sebastian Meyer's, *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*. There are many others too (Duvet for example), who continued to present the traditional or the protestant position in a wholly Apocalypse context during the sixteenth century and beyond.

Sometimes brief Apocalypse references are combined with material from other sources. Lucas Cranach's depiction of Antichrist's fall, the last pair of illustrations in *Passional Christi und Antichristi*, which mainly selects from gospel episodes, is a case in point. Among the numerous single-leaf woodcuts, broad sheets and engravings, are many apocalyptic themes where, for example, the seven hills of Rome (Apocalypse 17.9), form the base upon which the papal pyramid of serpents rests, and *Diana and Callisto*, which depicts Callisto as the apocalyptic Whore of Babylon (Apocalypse 17.9). The legend of St. George and the Dragon is combined with apocalyptic beast imagery in *Elizabeth I as St. George liberating Truth from her cave by defeating the hydra of Rome*. Some of the images for Meyer's, *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*, usually the first of each of the paired examples, are Apocalypse visions, the second is usually a polemical adaptation of the message of the first.

So far as the two viewpoints are concerned, chapter two set out the Protestant point of view and the relevant imagery is concentrated in Part IV. The principal distinction between the two is the papal identity of Antichrist, which carried implications regarding the falsity of the church. The authority of

the sources underlie the respective positions of the two churches, the Protestant respecting the sole authority of scripture, the Catholic regarding scriptural and non-scriptural sources, including pagan and sibylline, as equivalent and its own authority as paramount. These issues had, it was believed, determined the conduct of the Catholic Church during its history following the emperorship of Constantine. The right to exercise its own authority over belief, doctrine, practice and the right to 'override' scripture turns upon which authority prevails - scriptural authority, or papal authority.

Papal law, decretals and decisions on matters of doctrine and church practice, some contrary to scripture and those held by the Primitive Church, were among the citations from Master Nicholas of Dresden's, *Veteris et Cloris...* (c. 1410 ). By doing this the evidential value of a comparatively unfamiliar and rarely quoted source is enhanced.

The equivalence of pagan and other sources with biblical sources, a challenge to biblical authority, has been highlighted in connection with Signorelli's, *The Rule of Antichrist*, and in Meltzoff (1986), in particular. Claims to exercise the rights and liberties in question, re-affirmed during the counter-reformation by the Church of Rome, substantiated papal claims. These rights protestants contested.

The traditional picture was much influenced by the interpretations of the church fathers which by and large promoted the viewpoint of the Church of Rome and whose interpretations, whether from scriptural or non-canonical sources, were usually assimilated.

A sufficiently wide range of visual examples to fulfil the aims of the research was considered a necessity and this, it is believed, is achieved.

New material has been introduced from Matthew Gerung illustrations as well as the content of the German text for Sebastian Meyer's *Apocalypse Commentary*, not available in an English translation, to which Roettig's research (1999), regarding the pairing of examples has been applied.

Studies of Antichrist relevant to the English Reformation have suffered in the past from a limited range of visual material. For this aspect of the research, many less familiar and rarely used items provide a more comprehensive visual account of the subject than one has previously encountered.

The much restricted reference to *The Old Colour and the New*, in the secondary literature, mentioned above, almost substantiates the claim that this is 'new' material. As well as being valuable source material it includes views expressed by Wyclif, Tyndale, the Prague reformists, and it was pointed out that it anticipates in many respects the Lutheran stance of *Passional Christi und Antichristi* more than a century later.

All the visual examples, except those briefly referred to by little more than name, have been analysed in detail. Where more familiar images have been used, upon which others have commented, even written upon extensively, issues especially pertinent to the present enquiry have been followed up in a full analysis, notwithstanding the acceptance of individual points of view put forward by their authors. This applies to all the chapters and there are many instances where new aspects have been introduced.

In Signorelli's, *The Rule*, a different identity of the Temple, the one that Antichrist would build, according to the traditional view, was put forward. Antichrist's imperial stance was argued with support from additional sources, new observations were made about *The End*, the fresco adjacent to *The Rule*. The positioning of the audience in *The Rule* was compared with an imperial arrangement in the Forum (Plate 47), comparisons were drawn with the scene in the forecourt with that in *The Keys given to St. Peter*, by Perugino, and a possible interpretation put forward of the features of the background landscape of *The Rule*.

New introductions in connection with Bosch's Prado *Epiphany*, concerned the ass's role in redemption, data from the Old Testament about the Jewish High Priest relevant to the image of Antichrist, and many others connected with this image. Additional visual examples were used on specific issues, and references made to the alchemical transmutations which could be said to be taking place.

Dürer's treatment of the Antichrist theme in *The Martyrdom of John* was put forward as the most conclusive Antichrist image in Dürer's woodcuts, the identity being confirmed in that, unlike other groups admiring the Whore of Babylon, there are no other political leaders, or senior clerics present to whom this identity could apply. Dürer evidently chose to take an innocuous politico-religious stance, which would not offend anybody except the Turks who were widely regarded as anti-Christian.

All the Gerung images selected from Meyer's, *Commentary to the Apocalypse of St. John*, fourteen in all, present original analysis and interpretation, including references to additional explanatory imagery.

The same applies to the sixteen English Reformation images for the final chapter, where information from other sources was minimal. Explanatory scriptural clarifications were put forward in connection with the *Stoning of the Blasphemous Man*, who was from the tribe of Dan from which Antichrist was alleged to have come, according to the traditional view. The wall image in *Edward VI and the Pope* was identified as a fresco from *Stories from the Life of St. Benedict*, Mont Oliveto Abbey, Siena, by Luca Signorelli (Plates 107, 108), and Old St. Paul's was given as the identity of the church appearing in two of the images (Plates 109, 111).

Regarding iconographical development, the various chapters have provided their own testimony in relation to the images under consideration, but not easily summarised, though many observations are included. Most of the types developed new features from influences related to the Protestant movement.

Changes calling for particular comment concern the Two Witnesses, Antichrist's Fall, the Whore of Babylon, the Three Frog-like Spirits.

The Two Witnesses lost their Enoch and Elias identities and mode of depiction in both the traditional and the protestant examples, becoming respectively, members of the Spiritual Orders and Protestant preachers. These changes occur in the first quarter of the sixteenth century in Signorelli's *The Rule* and in examples by Cranach.

Additional points were put forward in Signorelli's, *The Rule* (chapter 11), in connection with the functions of the Spiritual Orders, its central focus and by the relegation of the Two Witnesses' episode to the fringes of the Mount Olivet setting, exemplified by the 'knot', which had reference to the work of the Spiritual Orders and their use of the tongue to overcome Antichrist's deceit. When the subject of the Two Witnesses occurs in Protestant imagery, they are not identified as Enoch and Elias, but as Protestant preachers sometimes depicted manifesting Holy Spirit power.

Further development stems from the bringing together of the true teaching of the Two Witnesses and the false preaching by Antichrist, in the same image. This has already been explained in connection with Wolgemut's *Preaching of Antichrist and the Two Witnesses* in the Nuremberg Chronicle with regard to the development of Antichrist as a type of prophet. The further development of the theme takes off in Protestant imagery, where Catholic preachers, including the pope as a false prophet-preacher, appear in apposition to true Protestant preachers, including Luther.

So far as the fall of Antichrist is concerned, the simple stumble, the consignments to hell, and the spectacular falls in the attempted 'ascensions' with rain of fire and accompanying devils, involved several different contexts. Wolgemut's treatment (Plate26), has been said to be the source of Cranach's 'fall' in the *Passional*, but earlier instances of at least some of the features are put forward in the relevant chapter and the constituents of a longer chain of development identified.

The contradictory conduct of the devils who sometimes fought off Michael and supported Antichrist in his ascent, or more frequently, enthusiastically beat him down to hell, was briefly investigated because the standard analysis appears to assume that this is the norm, which is not the case. Both the earlier simpler and the later spectacular depictions were in traditional settings, notably in *Signorelli's, The Rule*. In the latter, the mock death and resurrection do not precede Antichrist's ascent and his confrontation with Michael. In the *Passional*, Christ ascends, not Antichrist. There is no ascent depicted in Wolgemut. The point of view is expressed that these changes indicate a trend rather than coincidental occurrences, perhaps a realisation that later artists avoided the far-fetched notions encountered in the traditional view.

Interpretations of the Whore of Babylon were quite differently treated, the traditional disregarding elements of the apocalyptic data of Apocalypse 17, by presenting her as an evil woman, or an evil city,

following traditional interpretations and diverting the message to apply in circumstances not envisaged by the text itself. The Protestants based their interpretation on the specific details of the same chapter, where the Woman has the name 'Babylon' written on her forehead, and (verse 9), sits on the seven mountains, indicative of Rome. As such, Protestants gave her a papal Antichrist identity, as a false priest, representing the false church whose adulterous conduct (spiritual adultery), corrupted the church itself. The traditional view disregarded the offending elements and re-interpreted the chapter's warnings about the Woman, virtually dissociating it from the full message of the Apocalypse text by applying it to the moral guidance of sisters and clerics. The most complete depiction of the Whore of Babylon message (Apocalypse 17), is by Gerung in a publication by Cammerlander (Plate 67).

Errors, or liberties with the apocalypse message, were pointed out regarding the number, and the implications of the source and the destination of the frog-like spirits in *biblia* illustrations, chapter 14, and in Gerung's, *The Gaming-table of Blasphemers*. Several additional observations were made about their treatment in the contexts of Bosch's *Epiphany*, and where they were brought into line with current latter-day expectations in connection with the converging of armies for the battle of the 'Great Day'.

Developing artistic trends and traditions have been a means by which the imagery has been enriched and brought closer to the mainstream of art-historical development, countering insularity. Artists in whose works these influences occur are often the more highly esteemed of the day: Dürer, Cranach, Bosch, Signorelli, Gerung, Holbein, and to name some of the less known, Jan Wellens Cock, the Monogrammist HWG, Jean Bapteur, Peronet Lamy, and Jean Colombe.

Similarly, iconographical motifs of earlier, independent origin have provided a context which has enabled the character and rule of Antichrist to be more effectively advanced - the balance, the ship of the church, the misericord, *contrapposto*, internal and successive antithesis - a regular feature in Protestant imagery, the figures of Time and Truth and emblematic language, 'I blow and scatter', 'I see and smile', in conjunction with the Eye of Providence. Examples of *paysage moralisée* are in scenes by the artists just named, in particular, Jan Wellens Cock, the Monogrammist H G W, Jean Bapteur, Peronet Lamy, Jean Colombe, the background of the central panel and wings of Bosch's Prado *Epiphany triptych* and in *Livre de la Vigne* and MS Vitrina.

The embodiment of the Antichrist theme in traditional religious subjects, which became a feature during the fifteenth century, include the epiphany, the crucifixion, the Sermon on the Mount, the Ascension; those in the *Passional* - the crowning with thorns, the expulsion of the money-changers, Christ's entry into Jerusalem, a hint of the Last Supper in Samuel Ward's, *The Double Deliverance*.

Presenting the apocalyptic drama of eschatological events as part of the experiences of everyday life, by introducing realistic detail, identifiable items, persons and places, the sense of detachment and unreality has been counteracted, imparting a more convincing sense of expectation. Dürer's capacity and influence in these respects in his *Apocalypse* woodcuts is acknowledged.

The introduction of Roman and Greek elements, encouraged by humanist influences, were located in widely differing contexts. Signorelli's facility in presenting classical imagery is well represented in the Cappella Nuova of the duomo, Orvieto, and in his *Flagellation* (Plate 49).

Humanistic influences among English examples are the theme of *Diana and Callisto* and the humanist style portrait in *The Pope's Cabbinett*. The legend of St. George is also adapted to the figure of Queen Elizabeth trampling under foot the hydra of Rome.

National traits, quite marked between a number of German, Italian and English examples (the English hunt and the Accession Day events), seem not to have attracted much comment, but visual material from these sources, and one could add the Netherlands to the list, have introduced national themes and traditions which have coloured the imagery, given polemical variety and a measure of insight into underlying political issues.

Differences in viewpoint are obviously more to do with conviction than mere polemics and inter-denominational squabbles. It must be recognised that serious issues were framed in polemical discharges, sometimes ill-advised and of poor taste, by both contestants. Such examples have been avoided. However, the notion that polemics exploit an existing state of mind does not mean that the state of mind itself is not a genuine conviction believed to be soundly and justifiably based.

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- BL        British Library.
- BM        British Museum.
- BN        Bibliothèque Nationale.
- Dahlem    Staatliche Museen, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin-Dahlem, Kupferstichkabinett.
- CCL        *Corpus Christianorum. Series Latina.*
- JWCI      Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes.
- PL        *Patrologiae cursus completus. Series Latina.* Ed. Jacques Paul Migne, 221 vols. Paris, 1844-55.
- U.P.      University Press.
- WA        *D. Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe, 1883-1978.*
- Wickiana   *Graphische Sammlung Wickiana, Staatsbibliothek Zurich.*

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270b  
352  
Douce 134  
Douce 180

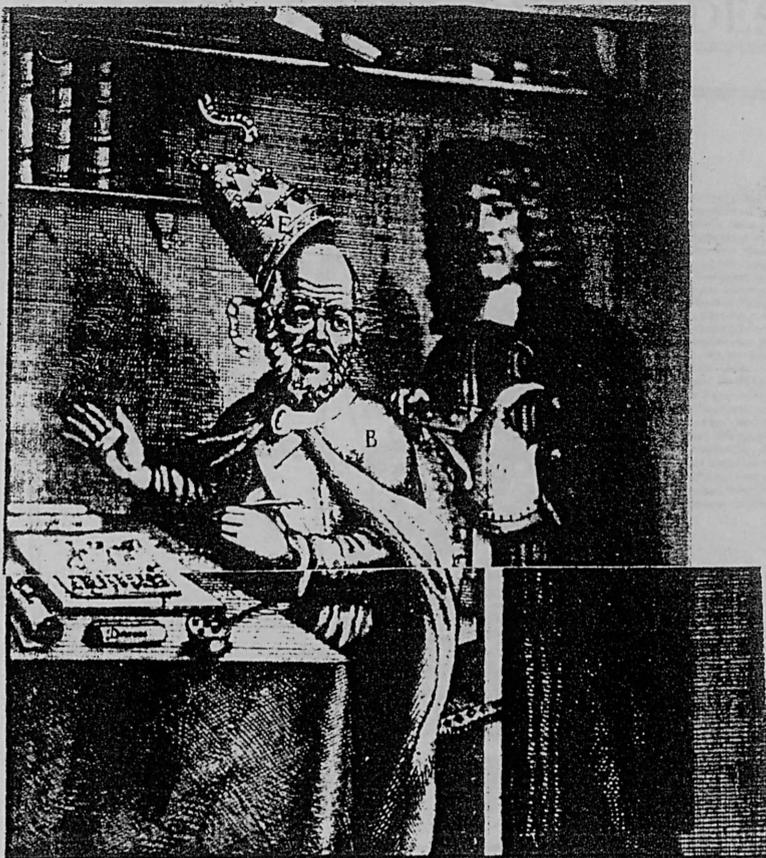
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See here this Devils Darling, plotting still  
 With Blood & Treasons all y<sup>e</sup> world to fill.  
 His Romish stratagems, Lo, Non can tell  
 Who canst fathom to y<sup>e</sup> Depth of Hell.  
 Nothing but Murder'd Kings can him suffice  
 And flaming Citys as a Sacrifice  
 Yet see behind his chaire Whom Heaven sent,  
 Whom God hath made a timely Instrument  
 Englands intended ruine to prevent  
 That which y<sup>e</sup> Devil & y<sup>e</sup> Pops combin'd  
 Against our King and Protestants decign'd  
 Disclard and frustrated by him wee find.

The Emblem Explayn'd

- A. the Pops Cabinet.
- B. the Pops writing to the Subjects to be diligent in the carrying on the Plot.
- C. the man who is come behind his shoulder to see all his Conspiracies.
- D. the Pops Crowe who cries friend Octavius is behind you.
- E. the Pops title of Supreme Pontiff.
- F. the Pops confession by his Holiness that he is a Slave to his Superiours.
- G. the Pops word Roman in his Letter.
- H. the Pops word Roman in his Letter.
- I. for his Holiness the former.

Plate 115. The Pope's Cabbinett (c.1678).



1588

DEO tri-<sup>um</sup> Britannis bis ultori In memoriam Classis invincibilis subvertat submergat | Proditionis nelande detecta dissecta.

To God, In memory of the double deliverance from y<sup>e</sup> invincible Navy and y<sup>e</sup> unmatchable powder Treason.

160



OCTOGESIMUS OCTAVUS *apud nos Janus*  
*Clade Pacificarum, tantis vitæ per*  
 In EIGHTY EIGHT *Spain: armed with potent might*  
*Against our peaceful Lads came as to fight*  
 The winder and waves, and fore in an confire  
 To help the ENGLISH, frustrate SPAIN'S desire

Peritiam prius hanc proditione petebant  
 Petitis veritas est prodis veritate  
 To find the POPE in Council sine  
 For sent rare stratagem they draw't their wits  
 NOVEMBERS 5th by powder they decere  
 GREAT BRITAIN'S STATE roman shall be

Festa et festi dies in aera QUINTA NOVEMBRIS  
 Anus subterreum rostrant uti nejas  
 But her whole crew slumbers EYE did view  
 The dire intruders of this damned crew  
 Did none prevent what they did think most fore  
 Thy success LORD for evermore endure. *Amended at 160*

Plate 117. Samuel Ward, *The Double Deliverance* (1621). Engraving. British Museum 41.