I. Title

Images of Light in Adam of Saint Victor’s Sequences:
The Holy Spirit in Liturgy and Life

II. The Problem

A. Introduction
The School of Saint Victor in Paris was a great center of learning, one of the schools that contributed to the emergence of the University of Paris over the next century.\(^1\) Two Victorine thinkers, Hugh of Saint Victor († 1141) and Richard of Saint Victor († 1173), have long been seen as significant medieval theologians. However, their companion Adam of Saint Victor († c. 1146) has been overlooked. He wrote liturgical poetry with music. These writings provide a window into the life and liturgy at Saint Victor, and thereby into the lived experience of the dominant Victorine theology.

A comprehensive study of Victorine life, incorporating spirituality, theology, liturgy, and the common life of service, has yet to be written. Adam’s liturgical poetry is a unique source that combines many of these elements. They foster a liturgical spirituality, intending to raise the heart and mind to thoughts of God. In their content, the poems proclaim the benefits and purpose of common life. Because the common life of service defines the lifestyle of Victorine canons, it colors all that they write. In this life, the Holy Spirit plays a key role. Adam’s writings on the Holy Spirit accent the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of the abbey. Adam uses liturgical poetry and spirituality, and draws from Victorine theology and exegesis to support the common life and express the canons’ dependence on the Holy Spirit. However, his rich theology of the Spirit is articulated in vivid images that have not yet been examined.

**B. The Victorine Life**

Life at Saint Victor was not that of the monastery, but rather the common life of canons regular. Canons were clerics, and as such they committed themselves to the sanctification of the

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\(^1\) Stephen Ferruolo in *The Origins of the University: The Schools of Paris and Their Critics 1100-1215* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1985) discusses the development of the University of Paris, which was a “university of masters” by 1215. He includes a chapter on the School of Saint Victor; however, he acknowledges that there is a debate among scholars about whether Saint Victor was one of the schools that became the university.
human community, through administration of the sacraments and preaching the Gospel. Their name *canonici* came from the fact that they were listed in the books of the cathedral.\(^2\) Regular canons, in comparison to secular canons, additionally embraced a life of common property and shared community, following the *Rule of Saint Augustine*.\(^3\) They understood their common life as Augustine did: it was an imitation of the Apostolic life presented in the Gospels. Canons regular, then, balanced their commitment to spreading knowledge of the Word throughout the world (or at least among their Parisian parishioners), through the sacraments and preaching, with their commitment to living a full common life with their brothers. Thus, they distinguished themselves from both the secular canons, who did not live in community, and the cloistered monks, who were not focused on preaching to those outside their walls.

This common life of service included a commitment to the sacraments and to the liturgy of the church. The liturgy included the daily celebration of the Mass and of the Divine Office, and all liturgy was sung from memory. Life at the abbey of Saint Victor was bound up in this liturgical passage of time by the hours, saturated with the Psalms and Scripture, and with the symbolism of the actions and parts of the liturgy. All of these things, along with constant Scripture study and reading, aided in the spiritual life and development of the canons.

In addition to its position as an abbey, Saint Victor also acted as a school where boys, both those in formation to become canons and those from the greater community, would come to learn the liberal arts and sacred studies. An idealized outline of the educational program at Saint


\(^3\) What the canons considered the Rule of Saint Augustine was probably a compilation of a number of different writings by the saint, put together soon after his lifetime. See Dickinson.
Victor is found in Hugh of Saint Victor’s *Didascalicon*. This work emphasizes that all learning is useful, for all of creation can aid the human being in knowledge of God. Thus, the liberal arts are used as a means to understand Scripture. This higher study of Scripture also became a distinct attribute of the abbey. Following the patterns and guidelines set out and demonstrated by Hugh, the later Victorines continued to undertake this enterprise of exegesis.

C. The form and significance of Adam’s writings

As stated above, Adam’s works are liturgical poems that reveal details about the spiritual and liturgical life at the abbey. Adam wrote forty-eight sequences. A sequence is a poem composed to be sung during the Mass, between the Alleluia and the Gospel reading. The sequence developed from the ninth century forward. Connected at first to the Alleluia, which is proclaimed before the Gospel during the Mass, the sequence retained this position in the order. It is thought to form a bridge between the Old Testament / Epistle readings and the Gospel, a connection formed both literarily and musically.

During Adam’s lifetime, the development of the sequence was at its height. It had a determined form and regular rhyme scheme. This highly developed type of sequence is referred to as a late or second epoch sequence. Most late sequences consist of a number of strophes, each divided into two sections of identical rhyme and meter. The strophes are arranged to music that consists of repeated lines, with each half-strophe assigned to one repetition of the line while the

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5 The number of Adam’s authentic works is difficult to establish, and throughout the centuries numerous other works have been attributed to him that are not authentic. For the purposes of this work, I will be using the list of authentic sequences established by Josef Szővérfy in *Die Annalen der lateinischen Hymnendichtung: Ein Handbuch* (Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag, 1965), 107-108.
next strophe receives new music. The length of the strophes and of the sequences as a whole varies widely. The highly developed and repetitive rhythm of the poem is masked by the musical shape given to the text.

Sequences formed an intimate part of the liturgy in the Middle Ages. They functioned to transition the congregation from the Old Testament readings into the proclamation of the Word. It has been argued that this is why the Victorines develop them so thoroughly: as canons, their role involved proclaiming the Word, and this proclamation of the Word during the liturgy demanded appropriate preparation.  

The forty-eight sequences composed by Adam in music and poetry were written for particular feast days. Of the extant sequences, there are twenty-four sequences for feasts of saints, fourteen for Christological feasts, six for Marian feasts, three for Pentecost, and one for the Trinity. Of the sequences for saints, eleven address New Testament saints, particularly those who proclaim Christ as Lord (including John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, and many for the Apostles). The other sequences for saints are primarily monastic figures and French saints who are also renowned for their preaching and holiness. All of these sequences emphasize the *vita apostolica* that the canons regular highly value.

The fourteen Christological sequences commemorate Christ’s birth, the visit from the Magi, his circumcision, the transfiguration, the cross, and Christ’s resurrection and ascension. Christ is clearly central to the lives and message of the Victorine life, and complementing this is praise for his dear Mother. The Blessed Virgin Mary is honored for her unique role, for her purification, and for her assumption into heaven. Finally, pertaining to my specific interest, Adam composed three sequences for the octave of Pentecost and one for the celebration of the

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Trinity. These four sequences stress the necessity of the Holy Spirit in human life, especially in the lives of those who are called to preach and live the Gospel. In addition, they express a uniquely Victorine understanding of the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit in daily life and prayer. The sequences on the Holy Spirit provide important insights to the implied theology in the other sequences, forming the core of my research.

D. Themes in Adam’s sequences

Adam’s sequences in general reveal a number of important themes that illustrate the dominant ideas of Victorine life and theology. Primarily, Adam’s poems demonstrate the Gospel holiness of certain figures and illustrate ways in which these saints followed the life of the Gospel. In the sequences for saints’ feasts, the apostolic life is upheld, particularly its goal of preaching the Gospel, spreading the message of Christ throughout the world. Several images are used to emphasize this goal, including images of harmonious music, tongues of fire, and praise on the tongues and in the hearts of the apostles. These images, while demonstrating the proclamation of the Word, also show the benefits of a common life in the Spirit: all must live in harmony (between mind and body, the self and others, and heaven and earth) in order to meet their goal. Also, all of the sequences reflect the Victorine approach to the Scriptures, through allusions to Old Testament stories combined and alternating with allusions to the New Testament. Clearly, the two testaments are believed to contain the same message, in words and

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7 Ibid., 269.

ideas that must be explained and explored by exegetes so that all may understand their significance.

Adam illustrates these Victorine themes of Gospel preaching and common life in the Spirit through the image of light. This image of light pervades these themes and provides a deeper understanding. In the Pentecostal sequences, the image of light is dominant, shining throughout the poems. Light symbolizes knowledge and understanding of the Word, and it indicates that the proclamation of that Word illuminates the darkness. Examining this image of light opens a greater understanding of the Victorine theology of the Holy Spirit, especially the role of the Holy Spirit in the life of a canon, in administration of the sacraments, preaching the Word, and living the common life. While the Holy Spirit is seldom mentioned in non-Pentecostal sequences, this image of light is used and applied throughout most of Adam’s sequences. The plethora of references to light helps guide the reader to understand the role of the Holy Spirit’s light in human life. The members of the Victorine community memorized their liturgical texts, including the sequences, so in singing of light throughout the liturgical year they would recall those same images provided in the Pentecostal sequences.

E. Medieval Theologians on Light and the Holy Spirit

Medieval theologians inherit theology of the Holy Spirit from the church Fathers, and they apply and expand it to suit their own needs. In addition, light images are applied to God and to each of the persons of the Trinity from the earliest days of Christianity. In these two areas, pneumatology and light imagery, three primary influences impacted Adam of Saint Victor:

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9 See James 1:17, which is cited by both Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius.
Augustine, Pseudo-Dionysius, and Hugh of Saint Victor. Hugh himself shows the influence of the other two, but Adam certainly knew the works of all three theologians.

Augustine is regarded as an innovator in the field of Trinitarian theology. He emphasizes both the unity and the Trinity within the Godhead, attempting to balance these two contradictory images. He asserted that the three persons of the Trinity share in one single substance. He used the category of relation as the only way to distinguish between the persons of the Trinity. Addressing the difficulty of this category’s application in explaining the procession of the Holy Spirit, Augustine finally determines the term “gift” best expresses the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit is the Gift of the Givers, Father and Son. Adam retrieves this language and these images from Augustine.

Augustine uses the image of light in his *De Trinitate*. The Son, he states, flows out from the Father not like water from a rock, but rather like light from a light. The Son, whether he is called brightness or light, is the same light as the Father. In addition, the Holy Spirit is light. Augustine states: “... whether the being of the Holy Spirit should be properly and distinctly indicated by some other name, it is still quite certain that he is light because he is God, and because he is light he is certainly wisdom.” Shortly thereafter, Augustine reiterates that the Holy Spirit is light, unchanging and spiritual light just as the Father and the Son: “But now, what is wisdom but spiritual and unchanging light? The sun in the sky too is light, but physical light; the spiritual creation is also light, but not unchanging. So the Father is light, the Son is light, the Holy Spirit is light; but together they are not three lights but one light ...”

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11 *The Trinity*, VII.6.

12 Ibid.
Augustine is a useful image to describe God’s unity, and Adam’s imagery parallels his usage of the image.

The image of light also emerges in Augustine’s *De doctrina Christiana*. In this work, knowledge of God is called light. He states that, “since we are meant to enjoy that truth which is unchangeably alive, and since it is in its light that God the Trinity, author and maker of the universe, provides for all the things he has made, our minds have to be purified, to enable them to perceive that light, and to cling to it once perceived.” Thus these two images of light, light as knowledge and light as God, are present in both Augustine and in the works of Adam of Saint Victor.

Pseudo-Dionysius is another innovative theologian with wide influence throughout the Middle Ages. Because he was falsely identified with the follower of St. Paul, his writings were considered highly authoritative. Pseudo-Dionysius’s work *The Divine Names* compares the Godhead to the sun:

> The great, shining, ever-lighting sun is the apparent image of the divine goodness, a distant echo of the Good. It illuminates whatever is capable of receiving its light and yet it never loses the utter fullness of its light. It sends its shining beams all around the visible world, and if anything fails to receive them the fault lies not in the weakness or defect of the spreading light but in the unsuitability of whatever is unable to have a share in light.

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14 Adam is certain to have been familiar with the works of Pseudo-Dionysius. Hugh comments on the *Celestial Hierarchies*, indicating its presence in the abbey library and its influence on the Victorine thinkers. Paul Rorem addresses the medieval influence of the Dionysian corpus in *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to their Influence* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). The influence of *The Divine Names* is discussed on pages 167-181.

The light unifies whatever it touches and draws all back to its Source. The Good is called “light of the mind,” “beam and spring,” “overflowing radiance.” It rids the mind of ignorance, and renews the powers of the mind. Most especially, it is a unifying force of all things rational: “it is the presence of the light of the mind which gathers and unites together those receiving illumination. It perfects them. It returns them toward the truly real. It returns them from their numerous false notions and, filling them with the one unifying light, it gathers their clashing fancies into a single, pure, coherent, and true knowledge.”

Secondly, Pseudo-Dionysius begins his Celestial Hierarchy by discussing God the Father of lights, who is the source of all light, and who passes the light down through the hierarchy to us. This light makes known to us the hierarchies themselves. Both of these brilliant light images from Pseudo-Dionysius influence Adam as he applies light to the Holy Spirit and to the Trinity as a whole.

A third influence on Adam comes from his own abbey. Hugh of Saint Victor’s writings are well-known even today, and his reputation as a teacher elevated the abbey before and during Adam’s tenure there. Hugh’s works, which themselves are influenced by both Augustine and Pseudo-Dionysius, provide a source of explanations for those things that Adam does not openly delineate. Throughout the dissertation, the works of Hugh will be used to fill out Adam’s sparse poetic language. Hugh’s major work, De sacramentis Christianae fidei, provides a summary of Christian knowledge. This work contains a lengthy section on the nature of God as three and one, but Hugh states very little about the Holy Spirit in particular. Hugh stresses the unity and

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16 Pseudo-Dionysius, Divine Names, 4.6.
the Trinity of God, and he states that this Trinity is reflected in the human soul. He explains that the three persons are related because of their processions: the Son is from the Father and the Holy Spirit is from the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit has a particular purpose in the economy of God: “. . . faith wished to distinguish one person in the Trinity when it called Him Holy Spirit. For it is He who is given for sanctification when He is inspired into those to be sanctified. And yet He does not come without the Father and the Son, since the Trinity is undivided.”

Hugh discusses light in the context of the creation. God created light first, so that he, who is truth, would not have to work in darkness. God created visible light, to illumine the corporeal things of creation, but he also created the invisible light of spiritual creation. Hugh teaches that the visible light and darkness were separated at the same time as invisible light and darkness, for the good angels and the fallen angels. Light in these contexts refers also to knowledge. In this same section of the De sacramentis, Hugh states that the sinful soul is in darkness, and “it can not emerge from its confusion and be disposed to the order and form of justice, unless it be first illumined to see its evils, and to distinguish light from darkness, that is, virtues from vices, so that it may dispose itself to order and conform to truth.” Like the writings of Augustine, the soul/mind needs light to gain knowledge.

F. Holy Spirit in Adam

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19 Hugh, Sacraments, I.3.6.
20 Hugh, Sacraments, I.3.23.
21 Hugh, Sacraments, I.1.8.
22 Hugh, Sacraments, I.1.12.
Adam expresses his theology of the Holy Spirit in four sequences. One of the sequences addresses the Trinity and three were written for the octave of Pentecost. These four sequences taken together reveal Adam’s comprehensive theology of the Holy Spirit. In the Trinitarian sequence “Profitentes unitatem,” Adam affirms that the Holy Spirit is one of the three persons in the Godhead, and each of the three is consubstantial with the others. God’s unity is expressed using the terms “unus,” “unitas,” and “simplex.” These three terms occur a total of seventeen times within this one poem alone, each time emphasizing the simplicity of God, leaving no doubt that the three persons in the Godhead are but one substance. In addition to these terms of oneness and simplicity, there are terms that emphasize the unity of God by expressing the equality of the three persons. There can only be one being that is the greatest of all beings. Because God is the highest being and greatest of all, each person of the Trinity must possess the same greatness of God and therefore of each other. Adam uses the terms “compar,” “pari,” and “equalis” several times throughout this sequence to stress the equality of the persons.

Adam addresses the three persons of God in this sequence as well. Drawing on Augustine, he states that the three are only distinguishable by their relationships to the others. Thus, they are intimately related to each other. The Holy Spirit, also following Augustine, is considered the Gift of two Givers, Father and Son.

The three sequences for Pentecost reveal a number of other characteristics of the Holy Spirit, as espoused in Victorine theology. First, the Holy Spirit is foretold in the Old Testament. The sequences “Lux iucunda” and “Simplex in essentia” draw on biblical typology to show the

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24 “Lux iucunda,” verse 19. “Tu qui dator es et donum” (“You who are the giver are also the gift”).
relationship between the coming of the Holy Spirit to Jesus’ disciples and the coming of the Law of God on the mountain to Moses. The Spirit came upon the disciples on the Jewish feast of Pentecost, a celebration of the giving of God’s Law to Moses. This parallelism is traditional in the Christian understanding of Scripture. The third Pentecost sequence, “Qui procedis,” moves in a different direction and praises the gifts and benefits of the Holy Spirit. In this sequence, the poet proclaims the greatness of the Spirit, who teaches, warms, comforts, eases the heart, and overthrows wickedness.

These three Pentecost sequences are saturated with light imagery. The Holy Spirit is described as the “dear light, clear light,” that “puts to flight the darkness” and cleanses sinners. He is the light of knowledge and the purifying fire. The Holy Spirit is the delightful and remarkable light that sent the flame to Christ’s disciples, harmonizing their hearts and “warming” their tongues. These images of light are paired with the divine knowledge imparted on human souls and the cleansing of human hearts and impurities. The Holy Spirit enriches the sacraments of the Church, brings grace to believers, and fills all with the renewal offered by Christ.

Images of light are found in almost all of Adam’s sequences. Most often these images refer to the pure light of Christ, the Sun, and to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Star of the Sea and

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25 For example, Adam states, “Lex praecessit in figura, lex poenalis, lex obscura” (“The law preceded in figure the light of the Gospel”) in “Simplex in essentia” verse 3; and verse 5 “Lex de monte populo, paucis in coenaculo nova datur gratia” (“Law (comes down) from the mountain to the people, new grace is given to the few in the upper room). Sources: “Lux iucunda,” *Analecta Hymnica* vol. 54, 239ff; Misset and Aubrey, 191 ff. (music) and 264 f. (text); “Simplex in essentia,” *Analecta Hymnica* vol. 54, 243ff.; Misset and Aubrey, 194 ff. (music) and 269 f. (text).

26 “Qui procedis,” *Analecta Hymnica* vol. 54, 241ff.; Misset and Aubrey, 192 ff. (music) and 266 f. (text).

27 “Qui procedis” and “Simplex in essentia” use these images numerous times.

28 See “Lux iucunda.”
carrier of the Sun. Light refers to knowledge, purity, and good. Saints are praised by comparing them to the light of Christ, and martyrs are often surrounded by light at their deaths. Holy preachers impart the light of knowledge on their followers. These many uses of the image of light make complete the picture offered by Adam of the Holy Spirit: the Holy Spirit as light is knowledge and holiness, charged with spreading the light of Christ throughout the world through the work of Christ’s preachers. The canons of Saint Victor, as preachers imbued with the graces of the Holy Spirit, find their purpose within the beauty of this light image.

G. Conclusion

Clearly, Adam considers the common life of Saint Victor to be enhanced by the work of the Holy Spirit. The image of light expresses this work of the Holy Spirit in human life, especially among the Victorines. The light of Christ, as distributed through the Holy Spirit and demonstrated by the saints, is the knowledge at the core of the Victorine mission. The Victorines see themselves as carrying on the work of the Apostles, which is to spread the light of Christ. Thus, Adam connects the light of the Holy Spirit, the great Teacher, to the light of Christ, the subject-matter to be taught.

This dissertation, after outlining the purpose of Adam’s works in a general way, will specifically examine his theology of the Holy Spirit in the sequences and then demonstrate how this theology applies to Victorine life. Thus, this study will illustrate that, for the Victorine school, the Holy Spirit is the font of all life, and that He serves as the source and power of the abbey’s shared religious life. The Holy Spirit leads and guides the life of worship, learning, and teaching at Saint Victor. In order to accomplish this, I will analyze the rich light imagery Adam employs in all of his sequences. I will focus on his sequences
on the Holy Spirit, which explicitly connect images of light with the Holy Spirit. I will also examine those same images of light in all of the remaining sequences, arguing that these same images in the other sequences communicate an implied theology of the Holy Spirit throughout the liturgical year. Thus, Adam’s sequences offer an applied theology of the Holy Spirit.

III. Bibliography

Primary Sources


Secondary Sources


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Chevalier, Jean S. *Augustin et la pensée grecque: les relations trinitaires.* Fribourg: Librairie de l’Université, 1940.


IV. Review of Related Literature

A. Holy Spirit in the Middle Ages

Medieval theology of Holy Spirit is rarely discussed by modern scholars; most simply assert that the medieval thinkers did not say much about the Holy Spirit. Thus, the most recent
survey of medieval pneumatology is found in the three volume work of Yves Congar.\textsuperscript{29} The first volume focuses on the Scriptural sources and early Christian writings on the Holy Spirit. The second volume examines the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church and personal life. The third volume of this work examines a number of medieval writers on the Holy Spirit, including Augustine, Anselm, Richard of Saint Victor, and Thomas Aquinas. This source is invaluable for tracing the development of a theology of the Holy Spirit in the Middle Ages.

Surveys of the history of Trinitarian theology in the Middle Ages are also scarce. The most useful of these is Edmund Fortman’s \textit{The Triune God}.\textsuperscript{30} Fortman presents a history of Trinitarian theology, beginning before the Council of Nicaea and concluding with contemporary views from both Catholic and Protestant perspectives. While his work is not highly detailed, it provides a helpful overview of the major medieval figures and developments.


B. Saint Victor

There are a number of references helpful to determining the history and scope of the Abbey of Saint Victor. Although it is not necessarily the most authoritative, the most complete history of the abbey dates from the early twentieth century. This history in two volumes by Fourier Bonnard draws on a variety of early printed and manuscript sources to pull together a picture of the history of the abbey from its beginning in 1108 to its demise with the French Revolution. It is a wealth of information, including numerous reproductions of texts otherwise only available in unpublished manuscripts. More recent and accessible sources for the early history of the Abbey of Saint Victor are found in John C. Dickinson’s *The Origin of the Austin Canons and Their Introduction into England*, Margot E. Fassler’s *Gothic Song: Victorine Sequences and Augustinian Reform in Twelfth-Century Paris*, and Penny McElroy Wheeler’s “The Twelfth-Century School of Saint Victor.”

As stated above, the biblical exegesis of Hugh and the School of Saint Victor is distinct and important to their mission of preaching. This exegesis is explained well in two works in particular. Henri de Lubac and Beryl Smalley both devote chapters to Victorine exegetes in their influential studies. De Lubac explains the connection between spirituality and exegesis. He emphasizes that the twelfth-century conception of theology does not yet separate Scripture study. His two Victorine chapters illustrate the contributions of Hugh of Saint Victor followed by a

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study of some of Saint Victor’s less-known figures. Smalley first approaches the Victorine school in general, then has a chapter on Andrew of Saint Victor.

C. Works Specific to Adam

Several secondary works address the sequences of Adam of Saint Victor directly, but few consider the theology espoused in the sequences. Margot E. Fassler, Nancy Van Deusen, and John F. Benton all discuss Adam’s writings as musicological specimens. They primarily examine the music of the sequences and only secondarily use the text to support their findings. Fassler, however, at great length explains the way of life and theology of the abbey, especially how these factors influence the melodies that Adam and his followers created. In her doctoral dissertation, she perceives the sequences in a series of “families,” each representing a particular melodic line. These families, she asserts, are representative of the ecclesiastical hierarchy as it is understood in the theology of Saint Victor. In addition, the sequences represent the place of the canons of Saint Victor within that hierarchy, as proclaimers of the Word, through their preaching and administration of sacraments. While Fassler’s work provides a framework to understand the sequences of Saint Victor, it also leaves a number of theological questions open for development. By placing the canons in the ecclesiastical hierarchy as preachers and administrators of the sacraments, the role of the Holy Spirit in preaching and sacraments is open for discussion.

A number of articles view Adam of Saint Victor’s poems from a literary or philological perspective. Walter Ong examines the use of literary devices such as puns, rhyme, and wordplay

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in Adam’s explorations of difficult theological mysteries. Eugene Cunnar examines the rhyme scheme of one of Adam’s sequences. Frederic Raby, who highly regards Adam’s poetry, devotes a chapter to Adam of Saint Victor and the Victorine sequences. He states that Adam “set forth in verse what Hugh and Richard expounded in prose.” His work examines the symbolism in the poetry, with special emphasis on the symbolism of the Blessed Virgin.

The most important work on the images found in Adam’s sequences comes from the turn of the last century. Misset and Aubrey, in the lengthy introduction to their edition of the sequences’ text and music, describe the most important ideas and themes found in Adam’s writings. Although somewhat outdated, elements of their work can provide a stepping-stone for my own work. The editors examine thoroughly a number of ideas and images that are found throughout the collection of sequences. They discuss in turn Christ and the Blessed Virgin, then the Holy Spirit and the Church. The image of light is one of the most important among those they discuss, signifying the Trinity as a whole and each of the three persons individually. Christ is the Sun. Other images of Christ include earthly images of the walnut, the lily, and the dove. In discussing the Blessed Virgin Mary, the image of light again emerges, for if Christ is the light then the Virgin gave birth to the light. Images of the Virgin include the moon and a star. She is also symbolized by a flower, the vine that is the source of Christ the grape of wine, and the olive


37 Raby, 348.

tree from which the oil Christ came. Adam’s imagery most often places the Virgin in relationship to her Son.

Misset and Aubrey, in the second half of their introduction to Adam’s works, address the imagery that Adam employs concerning the Holy Spirit and the Church. They determine that the fire mentioned by Adam is the light of souls, that chases away interior darkness, consuming passions and sins. The Holy Spirit is oil, measured out to the world to purify hearts. The Holy Spirit is the sweetness that makes human effort joyful. Unfortunately, the editors do not dwell on the image of light in relationship to the Holy Spirit. The symbols of the Church employed by Adam mainly derive from the Old Testament typologies: Christ is the spouse of the Church just as Abraham and Sarah are united. The temple of Solomon is a symbol of the Church, an image that is carefully explained both here and in Hugh of Saint Victor’s work. Throughout all of their discussions, Misset and Aubrey recall that the images employed here are also representative of the Old Testament typologies prevalent in biblical exegesis at the Abbey of Saint Victor.

Thus far, only one article has been written concerning the Trinitarian or Pentecostal sequences of Adam. This article, by Albert Fries, is an attempt to assign the sequence Profitentes unitatem to Albertus Magnus rather than to Adam of Saint Victor.39 In this work, Fries analyzes several passages of the sequence, comparing them to Albert’s work, and to the work of other 12th and 13th-century writers. His arguments on authorship are based on terminology and language rather than theological ideas.

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V. Procedure

This work will be a theological analysis of the sequences of Adam of Saint Victor, with special attention given to the Trinitarian and Pentecostal sequences. I will examine Adam’s theology of the Holy Spirit as given in these sequences. Then, I will examine the use of light imagery in his other sequences as a means to open up the four central poems. The Holy Spirit, as illustrated through these images, is the source of all life and power, especially at the Abbey of Saint Victor.

This dissertation will be historical in that I will seek to demonstrate that Adam’s use of light images does not develop in a vacuum, but rather emerges in a society and theological atmosphere fascinated with light. Light is the driving force behind the development of Gothic architecture, which is emerging in Paris at the same time that Adam is writing about the Holy Spirit as light. The theological connections made by Adam are merely representative of the developing theology present in his context.

As the collection of Victorine sequences is not available in an acceptable translation, most of the translations will be my own. Some English versions will be cited as needed. The critical edition of the sequence texts, found in the Analecta Hymnica, while a century old, is the best text available today. In using additional primary sources, I will use Latin editions and available English translations as needed.

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40 At least two scholars have translated the sequences for prayerful use, but their translations do not reflect the detail and specificity of the original Latin. However, their texts are interesting from a literary point of view. They are found in Prosper Guéranger, The Liturgical Year, 15 vols, trans. Laurence Shepherd (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1948-50); and Digby S. Wrangham, The Liturgical Poetry of Adam of Saint Victor, 3 vols. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, and Co., 1881).

41 Fassler translated a number of the sequences for her doctoral dissertation and subsequent book, “Musical Exegesis” and Gothic Song, and these translations are faithful to the Latin.

VI. Probable Contents

I propose a dissertation of approximately 225 pages arranged in the following way:

I. Introduction. Approximately 25 pages giving the context of Adam’s sequences, including the history of Saint Victor and the liturgical place of the sequence.
   A. Image and its importance in the sequences.
   B. Brief history of the Abbey of Saint Victor
   C. The sequence and its liturgical significance

II. The Sequences of Adam of Saint Victor. Approximately 65 pages.
   A. Overview of the forty-eight sequences
   B. Themes and recurring images in the sequence repertory
   C. Light images in the sequences

III. Trinitarian Theology in the Sequences. Approximately 65 pages.
   A. Adam’s understanding of the Trinity in the Godhead
   B. Adam’s language and sources

   A. Images of the Holy Spirit in Adam’s sequences
   B. Holy Spirit in the Sacraments
   C. Holy Spirit in life at Saint Victor

V. Conclusion: 15 pages.

The dissertation will begin by placing Adam of Saint Victor within the context of the Abbey of Saint Victor and Paris of the twelfth century. I will emphasize the academic and liturgical situation in which Adam lives. The abbey, with its dedication to preaching and the sacraments, provides a backdrop for these liturgical poems and the theology of the Holy Spirit that emerges from them. The sequence itself has a history and a liturgical context that will also be explored. All of these contextual elements are greatly enhanced by a variety of secondary material.

Then, I will move to the heart of the dissertation: the theology of the sequences by Adam of Saint Victor. First, the sequences as a whole will be examined for their contents and thematic. Their contents stress the apostolic life that the Victorines highly esteemed, and they used a number of images to illustrate the purpose of that apostolic life. In particular, the image of light
as knowledge of Christ, dispersed throughout the world, will be examined in the many ways it is manifested throughout the sequence repertory. Additionally, the Victorine exegetical tradition offers numerous other ideas and themes, particularly paralleling the Old Testament with the New Testament.

Next, I will consider Adam’s Trinitarian theology. Adam espouses a traditional understanding of God and the Trinity of persons, but he expresses it in a new way through poetic imagery. Special attention will be placed on the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. The sources of Adam’s thought will also be examined.

Finally, the Pentecostal sequences offer a more complete view of Adam’s pneumatology. These three sequences will be examined in detail. Their images relate to images found in numerous other sequences. The connections between these sequences will be drawn out and explored to bring further meaning to the theology of the Holy Spirit. Through these three sequences and parallel images in other sequences, I will illustrate the function of the Holy Spirit in the sacraments and in Victorine life, which parallels all human life. The Holy Spirit provides unity among the community, and it enlightens minds to see Christ.

I will conclude by briefly surveying the material and by restating the argument to demonstrate that Adam’s pneumatology is illustrated through images of light, showing the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church’s sacraments and in the world. Finally, I will offer questions for further research.
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