Problematics of European Literary History, 1348-1400

David Wallace

This essay mediates upon the challenges of formulating a collective literary history of medieval Europe. It grapples with issues of geographical extent and temporal span: where does Europe begin and end, and how many generations of literary activity is it possible to cover in a single manageable project? It argues for sequences of places, rather than of national blocks (English literature, French literature, Italian literature, etc.) as the best way of representing the complexities and connections of medieval textual production. The essay represents the state of thinking brought to the conference in Berne in October 2008; the project continues to evolve.

A literary history of medieval Europe has yet to be attempted, so far as I know, in the English-speaking world; an Advanced Search of the British Library's integrated catalogue of "literary history" and "medieval Europe" yields no returns. But we first might ask: why would we *want* such a thing? I would say that as scholars and students at work in some small philological corner or other we yearn for the greater picture; to relate familiar ground to a greater complex of issues and cultural relationships extending to all Europe. Such desire fuses with our current need to know how the cultural dynamics of certain localities today, or just yesterday – such as South Ossetia – form part of a greater whole; and how did such local differences of language and allegiance come to be that way? This immediately suggests a commitment to historical understanding in which literary history – the study of written texts, their gen-

eration, transmission and reading – has some part to play. It also provokes the largest and most basic question, one that seems especially appropriate to pose in Bern, Switzerland: where does Europe begin and end? This question has great resonance for us today, this week, this year, given recent adventures by Russia at and beyond its borders, the efforts to keep government secular in Turkey, fears of Islamization in north Africa, the status of Kosovo, worries about Ukraine, and so on. If we travel back some 650 years we find Europe and its constituent parts gripped by remarkably similar anxieties and questions; but also enlivened by literary cultures of extraordinary, regenerate power.

The desire to comprehend all Europe whole, in one volume, might seem grandiose, tied to or dragged behind some totalizing vision of *grand récit* history that is now, on many different grounds, discredited. Such ambition seemed honorable, historically speaking, in the immediate aftermath of World War II as the greatest generation of philologists engaged in various works that included literary history. Most ambitious of all was E.R. Curtius's *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, an attempt to rally European culture around tropes and *figurae* of western Christian (Germanic) *Latinitas*. In Florence, a group of intellectuals nursed equivalent but more local ambitions in founding *Il Ponte*. This literary critical periodical employed a famous and beautiful signifier of all things Florentine, the *Pontevecchio*, by way of suggesting how post-war Italians might *bridge* their way between glorious past and illustrious future. Political forces helped shape each of these initiatives. In Florence it was vital to demonstrate to the victorious allies, particularly the Americans and British, that Italy did indeed possess the cultural resources to refashion and sustain a vibrant, liberally pluralist culture: there were some among the allies who thought that Italy was best suited to dictatorship – albeit a milder form, one that the allies could control by choosing and controlling the right man.[1] Curtius's pan-Europeanism needed to distinguish itself from the militant nationalism that had framed his scholarship, as a university professor, in earlier decades; it was a source of later regret to Curtius that he succeeded to a chair at Cologne formerly occupied by Leo Spitzer. Spitzer decamped to Istanbul, where he was joined in 1933 by Erich Auerbach. Spitzer and Auerbach, as Emily Apter brilliantly suggests, propose different models of philological engagement at the limits of Europe: Auerbach, huddled with select masterworks of European literature, pictures himself as scholar-in-exile in completing his

---

[1] See *Il Ponte: Rivista mensile di politica e letteratura*. My understanding of the historical significance of this journal owes much to my University of Pennsylvania colleagues Fabio Finotti and Jonathan Steinberg.

mighty *Mimesis*; Spitzer, *au contraire*, learns Turkish and collaborates with philologically-minded locals.

It is their passionate attachment to language, their faith that analysis of *lexis* or syntax might open up social structures, that makes the work of Spitzer and Auerbach so differently compelling. And the gaps *between* their chapters or studies – of languages, or centuries – perhaps save them from *grand récit* strait-jacketing. Temporal span soon becomes critical in conceptualizing literary history. Can a feasible project really stretch from *Beowulf* to *Tirant lo Blanc*, from Charlemagne to Charles IV of Prague? This last possibility actually replicates the teleological strategy of an historical actor: for Charles IV changed his name from Wenceslaus to Charles precisely to suggest *translatio* from Aachen to Prague in the course of 555 years; he even named a university after himself, the Charles University, to accentuate this eastward *translatio studii*. Too long a temporal span, then, always risks tracking teleological *schemata* while proving plain unworkable: there's just way too much literature to cram in. Too *short* a span of time will not work either: for the notion of catching a snapshot of Europe in any endeavor at a single moment entertains the modern delusion of *space without time*: the notion that all may be revealed in an instant and scrutinized, like one of those super high resolution images of downtown Tokyo that captures every fold in a garment, every expression, every passing pigeon. There have of course been notable recent essays in synchronic literary study, such as James Shapiro's *1599*, Jean-Michel Rabaté's *1913* or Sep Gumbrecht's *1926*, but single-year history always needs longer temporal run-up or back-up to make sense of itself. Of course, it might help if history could *stop*, right across Europe, and then start again – providing us with an equalizing moment from which all might be narrated. This has happened only once: in 1348.

History did not, of course, *stop* in 1348, even though the writing of many literary texts – such as Giovanni Villani's *Chronicle* – is abruptly arrested that year; history simply becomes the business of dying, and of serving or watching or avoiding the dying. And there is a temporal sequencing even to the plague itself: beginning somewhere in the great and scarcely-known Eurasian landmass, it transmits itself to the Tartars and to the Genoese who enslaved them in the Crimea, spreads westward across the Mediterranean on Genoese and Venetian ships, and devastates the papacy at Avignon before moving on to England, Ireland, Iceland, and even eventually Greenland (see Wallace 184-7). Between one quarter and one half of Europe dies, and the common experience of disasters, of pandemic, generally unites peoples on a common ground of suffering. Much of the cultural regeneration that follows is achieved through writing. The most famed, immediate, and indeed iconic response here is the *Decameron*, a text written by the son of a Florentine sanitation official

who had died in the plague. Matteo Villani, in similar spirit, soon takes up the vocation of chronicling dropped by his brother Giovanni in 1348; his son Filippo continues, briefly, after him. Writing all across Europe then flourishes even as Europe is dogged continually by recurrences of plague, religious schism, economic stagnation, and by wars of religious invasion (in the east) and of territorial rivalry (in the west). The span of time that best reveals the outworking of such literary regeneration, I would propose, is two generations or fifty years. Such a timeframe enables us to observe locales across Europe, all at once, while yet affording diachrony, the passage of years that renders cultural development intelligible.

Choosing the temporal span 1348-1400 brings several advantages. Firstly, if strangely, it maintains ties to what we call in the United States the greatest generation: for their philological responses to World War II prepare decent if not wholly secure grounds from which to trace, two generations later, writing's regenerative work after 1348. Curtius's heroic reattachment of European cultural tradition to Rome-centered Latinity plainly bids to recuperate a western cultural *imperium* based on literary historical study. But its moment is past or passing even in articulation, as other texts come into view. In 1947, exactly six hundred years after the great pandemic passed into Europe, Camus' *La Peste* gives far different views of catastrophe and its afterlife. 1947 also brings Indian independence, the event that definitively ends the vision of Empire sustained by Winston Churchill throughout the war. Perhaps now we are better situated to notice that Europe does not come together post-1348 under a single overarching frame of the kind dreamed of by Curtius. Christendom, its largest concept, remains disastrously divided between east and west. Eastern orthodox Christians are pressured to bend to western Catholic paradigms and are not much helped as Mongols, Mamluks, and Ottomans bring other strains of religion deeper into Europe. Islamic cultures cannot, of course, be accounted *extrinsic* to Europe in this period as they are being developed and refined on European soil, at places like Córdoba and Granada. Lines of cultural transmission – linking Granada to Tunis and Cairo, or Budapest to Mount Athos and Moscow – reveal the folly of invoking any such place for purposes of counter-definition. It is too feeble to say that Cairo and Moscow are in *dialogue* with Europe, and its literary cultures. Texts and scholars perennially move between Cairo and Moscow and western Europe; they are integral to its cultural life. Imagining cultures beyond the pale, of course, has proved essential to the imaginative self-constitution of Europe, as of other spaces. But even as mere objects of imagining, such alien spaces prove necessary and integral to self-understanding; Europe cannot divorce itself from whatever it imagines to lie beyond its bounds, to form its outside.

A second advantage of the dates 1348-1400 is that they spell good news for England: for the years 1370-1400, along with *circas* 1580-1610 and 1790-1820, form one of the greatest of periods for England's imaginative writing. England after 1348, as host to a literary vernacular, is retarded and eccentric: eccentric as an island at the far western end of Europe, and retarded in producing its greatest poets – Chaucer, Langland, and the *Gawain*-Poet – long after the brightest lights of Provence, France, Germany, Italy, Iceland, Mallorca, *etc.* are dead. But this writing of European literary history for the half-century when English writing was strongest does have benefits beyond merely accommodating an English-reading world. Firstly, it counteracts the Victorian insularism still characteristic of much writing on Middle English: for it must be noticed that Edward III's first wife, and Geoffrey Chaucer's, were both women called Philippa from Valencienne, in French-speaking Flanders; and that Richard II's first wife, Anne, came to London and Westminster from the greatest cultural capital of post-pandemic Europe, namely Prague. Secondly, the struggles with English as a medium fit for intelligent patrons and readers, as ruminated by John Trevisa at Berkeley castle and by poets elsewhere, are experienced by writers across Europe committed to their local vernaculars. The status of translation in England, especially from Latin and the Bible, is of urgent topical interest. European comparisons are again instructive: why, for example, is translation from Latin such a priority in Paris, but of such little interest in Avignon? Thirdly, it is important fully to appreciate the extraordinary degree of travel undertaken by writers to and from England, and across the face of Europe: the carbon footprint of Philippe de Mézières, for example, would embarrass even Prince Charles and the current house of Windsor.

I speak of England here, but my concern is not with the territorial space of England, but with particular locales within this space. Chaucer, for example, is not a poet of England: he is a poet of the south-east quadrant of England, and more particularly of London, Westminster, and Kent. The space of medieval English territory extends beyond what is now England: Chaucer spent more time in Calais, which was an English colony, than he did in Bristol or Chester. And he owed more to writings from Reims, the coronation place of French kings, than to anything penned north of York. A literary history of Europe formed by a sequence of nation-chapters unthinkingly perpetuates the investments of nineteenth-century historiography. As *literary* history, this makes the unspoken assumption, again familiar from Victorian and Edwardian models, that all writing is *for the nation*. One sees this assumption governing the protocols of earlier, national literary histories: the medieval volume of the 1907 *Cambridge History of English Literature,* for example, actually suppresses linguistic difference by representing medieval texts in modern

translation. The scholars recruited to write the chapters of the 1907
Cambridge History form a philological rollcall of fame: H.M. Chadwick,
M.R. James, W.P. Ker, F.W. Maitland, J.M. Manly, and G.C. Macaulay.
But these great, multi-initialed scholars are denied the chance to demon-
strate their philological skills: all quotations from Anglo-Saxon, for ex-
ample, are given in the modern translations of the Rev. Stopford Brooke,
sometime chaplain in ordinary to Queen Victoria. All sense of linguistic
difference and local variation must be sacrificed to the cause of national
identity, sameness, and sure-rootedness.[2] This reductionism, and the
ways in which literary history is recruited to serve nation-based history, is
still with us. *The New Cambridge Medieval History* volume covering the
1300-1415 period, appearing in 2000, contains one (excellent) chapter of
literary history (see Havely 257-72). It occurs in Part I under a "General
Themes" rubric and considers "Literature in French, Italian, and Eng-
lish." Curtius's *Latinitas* is thus edged out by a vernacular trio in a move
that remains centripetal. It is not clear why these three lucky western
European languages should be so promoted when other contenders,
such as Spanish and especially Catalan, are not.

But the most fundamental argument against nation-based literary his-
tory stems from its promising a view of Europe that medievals them-
selves could never achieve or comprehend. Literature is not produced *at*
the level of the nation: it is the work of specific locales – such as Flor-
ence, Lisbon, or Norwich – that is then, often much later, declared rep-
resentative of a much greater territorial extent. This is a work of *abstrac-
tion*: affecting to view a nation, all at once, from a single point of eleva-
tion that is superhuman. The techniques and conventions of modern
mapping are so familiar to us that we miss the sense of strangeness
caught by early modern cartography. When John Leland determined to
make a map or *table* for his monarch, Henry VIII, his plan was to walk
the terrain of England and Wales, noting every nook and cranny, rivulet
and stream, and noting distances between them. Leland's grand design
was never realized; he went insane. But his work *was* appreciated: John
Stowe's neat transcriptions of Leland's messy notes may still be seen at
Oxford, and antiquaries such as Camden made good use of them. A gen-
eration later, Christopher Saxton produced 34 county maps of England
and Wales, plus a general map that is a sum of their parts.[3] These map-
pings are transitional in that they both maintain and erase the notion of
itinerary, the simple process of a person walking through a landscape. The

---

[2] I struggle with some of these issues by way of introducing *The Cambridge History of Me-
dieval English Literature* (xi-xxiii).
[3] Conveniently available via EEBO; Somerset is the sixteenth county in Saxton's sequence
(EEBO image 33).

most remarkable subjects of erasure in Saxton are roads, the means that facilitate travel and hence the making of the map itself. The space is thus rendered more abstract and indeed empty: useful preparation for the maps of the New World which would be framed *as if* these new territories were empty, ready for the footfall of civilizing Europeans. At the same time, Saxton's maps are supplemented with talk and observation: that is, with the kind of discursive material that Leland loved to compile. We might consider Saxton's Somerset, the county I know best. Somewhere near Cheddar it becomes talkative: "This Spring," it says, "driueth 12 mils within one quarter of a mile of his head." Just a little to the east of this hardworking spring, at the heart of "Mendip hills," we find "the mineries"; 6 miles ESE of that we find "the cole pits," marked by four small black squares. This is a landscape that has a lot to say for itself; that is keen to confess the kinds of details that Leland, that meticulous traveler, was forever keen to record. And yet we see no roads. In the bottom left corner of the map, however, we *can* see a most vigorous pair of legs, bestriding the terrain. They belong to a giant pair of compasses: the left foot is planted at zero, and the right stretches out to reach seven miles. Just above the feet, at shin level, a banderole proclaims *Christophorus Saxton descripsit*. The head of the compass, judging by the scale at its base, rises 6.5 miles into the air, some 34,320 feet, the height flown by a TransAtlantic plane. Nobody in Saxton's England could fly so high, but the suggestion is that *imaginatively* the map does help us achieve this strange and rather wonderful endeavor.

Comparable sense of the strangeness of scholarly activity faces us each time we enter the main gateway of the British Library and encounter Eduardo Paolozzi's statue of Blake's Newton.[4] Paolozzi's Newton is hard at work, and he is deploying a pair of compasses. Paolozzi's giant cast metal figure, with its mechanical joints, is a brilliant sculptural realization of Blake's print and watercolor work of 1795. Blake envisions the scientific materialist Newton scrunched double over his measuring instrument in an arid, moonlike landscape.[5] The one-eyed and indeed near-naked Newton seems oblivious of his actual surroundings, devoting all his energies to the abstract art of measurement, becoming as one with his metal instrument, his scientific prosthesis. Saxton's striding compasses also recognize the need for abstract measurement in realizing a map of Somerset. Their positioning bottom left of the map harmonizes with the motto featured in the arms of Thomas Seckford, the project's patron, bottom right: *pestis patriae pigricies*, idleness is the plague of the

---

[4] See www.bl.uk/popups/01b.html; www.bl.uk/popups/02b.html.
[5] See www.nimbi.com/william_blake_newton.html.

country. And yet above the compasses, top left, we find a very unscientific giant sea monster frolicking in the Bristol Channel, plus the islands Flat Holm and Steep Holm drawn way out of scale. The map's title is given in a cartouche, revealed by cherubs and surmounted by the arms of Elizabeth I (and these arms, in their quartering, go back to Edward III; we also have Edward III's garter motto). The title is again discursive, rather than strictly denotative: the map here presents the county of Somerset, with its famously fertile fields, to your very eyes: "SOMERSETEN-SEM Comitat (agri fertilitate Celebrem) hec ad oculos ponit Tabula."

In conceptualizing a literary-historical *table*, as it were, of Europe, I find the complex and indeed contradictory aspects of this early modern mapping instructive and encouraging. Saxton reveals the drive to abstraction that typifies modern mapping, yet continually fills his spaces with discursive annotations and signs (of churches and of windmills); thus even the *absence* of denotation proves eloquent – as at Glastonbury, which bears no sign for either church or ruin. He shows no roads, but the very information that he purveys suggests somebody – like a John Leland – traveling that way. My own preference for presenting a literary history for the period 1348-1400, then, is organized not by national blocks – French Writing, Italian Writing, English Writing, and so on – but rather by eight *sequences* of places. One might almost say eight *itineraries*, were that not too prescriptive. The sequences do of course suggest lines of textual travel and cultural interchange, and do sometimes overlap with trade, clerical, and pilgrimage routes: but such movement is possible in many different directions. The beauty of this model is its encouraging us to think of textual production, transmission and exchange as medievals experienced them; it encompasses great distances, but keeps us always close to the ground. And it can slip us out of the anachronistic boxing of national-based histories: thus the "English sequence" begins at Calais, "Italy" begins in Avignon, and "Spain" in Palermo.

Glanville Price, in his admirable *Encyclopedia of the Languages of Europe*, declares that, by way of defining Europe, "it would be preferable to adopt geographical or geological criteria rather than political ones, but in practice, this is not always possible" (p. xi). The claim for Iceland to be a European country "is supported by geological criteria": for although its western part, including Reykjavik, "is on the North American tectonic plate, the greater part is on the Eurasian plate and so . . . in Europe" (Price xi). For our purposes, Iceland can be included within the parameters of Europe since, in the period 1350-1400, it was *imagined* so to be. Ships from Bristol regularly sailed to Iceland; and Icelandic writing, developing in remarkable new ways after 1350, traveled widely across northern oceans at a time when Reykjavik was little more than a farm. Greenland, for Price, lies beyond the European pale: which for us is

largely academic, since the settlement of Greenland terminates with the pandemic of 1348. Cyprus, Price reasons, ought to be considered part of Asia, since it lies "little more than 100 km off the coast of Syria" (xi). And yet, he continues, "Cyprus has conventionally been considered as a European country." Such a convention certainly ruled in the later four-teenth century: in his "Monk's Tale," Chaucer apostrophizes "worthy Pedro, kyng of Cipre," (7.2391) *aka* Pierre de Lusignan, the victor of Alexandria in 1365 who was murdered by his own knights in 1369. We might also note, however, that Cypriot Arabic had been spoken on parts of the island – now, following the 1974 invasion, absorbed into the Turkish sector – since the twelfth century.

For Glanville Price, the southeastern limit of Europe would seem to be formed by the Caucasus mountains: a limit to European imagining similarly invoked by Chaucer's Wife of Bath in speaking of a space "be-twixt this [between here] and the mount of Koukasous" (3.1140). These mountains, Price opines, offer "an obvious dividing line between Europe and Asia" (xi); and yet he worries about Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbai-jan and finds that he must include all three *as* European. Medieval Ar-menian literature, which is especially rich, had developed since the sixth century; the fate of Armenia is especially poignant to contemplate in this period since, with the collapse of the Cilician Armenian kingdom in 1375, the territory divides between Persia and Turkey. The eastern bor-der of Europe Price takes to be the Ural mountains. This represents a boundary further east than the imagining of 1348-1400: for them, the territory beyond Lithuania and Moldavia (extending into the territory of Muscovy and the Khanate of the Golden Horde) stood in counter-distinction to their own western Christian cultures. The Teutonic Knights, from their fortress of Marienburg south of Danzig, were keen to push east against the pagans of Lithuania, or "Lettow" as Chaucer's Knight has it (1.54): a strategy undermined by the Lithuanian tactic of first Christianizing and then uniting their throne with that of Poland in 1386. The determination of these easternmost Europeans to accentuate their joining the mainstream of European culture is perhaps best symbol-ized by the foundation of universities at Prague (1348), Cracow (1364), Vienna (1364), and (for a short time) Pécs (1367). But it is the reign (1346-78) of Charles IV of Prague, Holy Roman Emperor and father-in-law of England's Richard II, that represents the most triumphant sign of this eastward shift of power and prestige. Charles IV, we have noted, was named or re-named after Charlemagne: his court had long traditions of French culture and honored Guillaume de Machaut; it corresponded with Petrarch (who visited the city in 1356) and inspired a brilliant pro-gram of rebuilding that still stands today; it nurtured and occasionally persecuted a vibrant Jewish community that survived until the 1940s; it

was home to German speakers and to Slavs alike. It thus seems fitting that our sequence of places should begin with Paris and end with Prague: for the Universitas Carolina Pragensis, which opened in 1349, was modeled upon the University of Paris. The students were divided into Bavarians and Saxons, Czechs and Poles; these groups were called *nations*.

These Parisian-Pragensian parameters do, however, seal Europe's eastern borders with a neatness that, then as now, conceals complexities. For it was clearly part of Charles IV's greater purpose to proclaim, and to rule, a greater Slavic nation. To this end he sponsored Biblical translations into Czech and founded a Slavonic monastery for Croatian Glagolite monks. These monks, with papal approval, followed a liturgy in Slavonic, written in Glagolitic letters; they later founded Slavonic monasteries in Silesia (1380) and Cracow (1390). When Catholic Slavs began appreciating the Slavic literary vernacular they inevitably experienced greater connectedness with Eastern Slavs. The Slavic Republica Christiana thus extended between Slavia Romana, looking westward, and Slavia Orthodoxa (looking to Byzantium). Lithuania lies on the faultline here: for just one year before marrying the Polish queen Jadwiga, daughter of Louis of Anjou, Grand Duke Jogailo was preparing to marry the daughter of the Grand Duke Dmitry of Don and to choose Orthodoxy. The Teutonic Order was keen to crusade beyond the pale of western Christendom, abetted by Chaucer's far-traveling Knight: "In Lettow had he reysed and in Ruce" (1.54). But Orthodoxy cannot be equated with paganism. It thus remains problematic to characterize Muscovite Rus, with its Christian literary culture, as un-European. The boundaries and protocols of Europeanness thus remain, then as now, perennially negotiable. Now as then, especially given the intensified nationalist postures of the new Russian Prime Minister *and* the catspaw diplomacy of NATO at its eastern borders. Russia seems beyond the European pale; yet Russian oil floods into Germany, Russian capital floods into London, and England's second-best football team is the plaything of a Russian billionaire. Mapping of the vast expanse of territory to the east of Prague, then, and the selection of representative places, represents one of the most urgent and topical challenges of this project.

Glanville Price does not address the southern limit of Europe, perhaps because it seems self-evidently to be the north African coast.[6] I would like to return to this when considering the paired cities of Alexandria and Cairo. But for now, just before considering the eight sequences in some detail, I conclude with one little place that suggests how medie-

---

[6] A rapid survey of all maps summoned by the Google "Europe" (image) sees the north African coastline of Morocco, Algeria, and Tunis routinely featured (perhaps unavoidably: Tunis lies north of Malta), but not the coast of Egypt.

val spatial problematics continue to play out in modern Europe. Medieval Serbia boasted a long and brilliant tradition of literary achievement: whereas the search term "medieval Polish literature" yields nine returns in the British Library catalogue, "medieval Serbian literature" turns up over 1,400. This tradition foundered soon after the battle of Kosovo in 1389 and the fall of Skopje to Ottoman invaders in 1392. It might thus be anticipated that Skopje qualifies as one of the *places* through which such a revisionary European literary history might run. Skopje was the birthplace of Gonxha Agnes Bojaxhiu in 1910; this pressure of medieval history, and devotion, might help explain what drove her to Dublin in 1928 and to Calcutta in 1929 (see Mother Teresa of Calcutta, *Come Be My Light*). Skopje became the capital of a newly independent republic in 1991, known as "Macedonia": a name that provoked the government of Greece into a four-year blockade, with denial of sea access through Thessaloniki. Skopje's airport has recently been renamed in honor of Alexander the Great; its university, founded in 1949, is dedicated to saints Cyril and Methodius. Skopje thus deserves space in this project, but for a project in literary history we must choose the place where all that transpired at Kosovo in 1389 and at Skopje in 1392 was most eloquently remembered: namely, Hilandar, a Serbian monastery on Mount Athos. The defeat at Kosovo inspired brilliant and poignant elegiac writings. Many of these were composed by women for husbands and fathers buried upon Mount Athos – a place that, still, no woman might visit. Their poems were inscribed upon the backs of icons or sewn into tapestries, and *these* were sent to the holy mountain; and there they survived, and still remain.

The synopsis below represents a condensed form of a document that is very much longer; the aim here is to outline the eight itineraries and to expose them to critique. Although this essay was prepared for presentation at the first SAMEMES conference, no suitable Swiss location could be found; Dijon is some 158 miles from Bern, and Savoy 206:

I: Paris to Béarn
Paris – Valenciennes (Hainault) – Reims – Lusignan – Dijon – Savoy –
Toulouse – Béarn

II: Calais to Walsingham
Calais – Canterbury – London, Southwark, Westminster – Oxford –
Berkeley Castle – Chester and Cheshire – York and Yorkshire – Nor-
wich, Lynn, Walsingham

III: Aberdeen to Finistère
Aberdeen – Kirkwall, Orkneys – Iceland – Dublin and Dundalk – Lough
Derg – Lecan and Ballymote – Ceredigion: Llanbadarn Fawr and Strata
Florida – Glasney (Penryn), Cornwall – Finistère (Brittany)

IV: Nuremberg to Danzig
Nuremberg – Cologne – Arras – Bruges – Brussels – The Hague –
Zwolle (with Deventer) – Lübeck – Vadstena – Danzig

V: Avignon to Naples
Avignon – Lombardy (Milan and Pavia) – Venice – Florence – Siena –
Rome – Naples

VI: Palermo to Tunis
Palermo – City of Mallorca – Aragon (Valencia and Barcelona) – Castille
(Burgos and Toledo) – Santiago de Compostella – Lisbon – Canaries –
Córdoba – Granada – Tunis

VII: Cairo to Constantinople
Cairo and Alexandria – Jerusalem – Sivas (Danishmend) – Sis (Cilicia,
Little Armenia) – Cyprus – Rhodes – Athens and Thebes –
Constantinople

VIII: Moscow to Prague
Moscow –Vilnius –Tirnovo – Mount Athos – Zadar – Buda, Óbuda and
Pest – Cracow – Prague

IX: The Nations of Europe, 1414-18
Constance

I: Paris to Béarn
Paris – Valenciennes (Hainault) – Reims – Lusignan – Dijon – Savoy – Toulouse – Béarn

The first section begins with *Paris, fons et origo* of medieval vernacular production and the template for university education. Charles V sponsors a translation policy far different from that in England and Avignon and builds a royal library. Pierre Bersuire and later Philippe de Mézières arrive from Avignon; Christine de Pisan prepares to quarrel with Jean Gerson. Jean Froissart, born at *Valenciennes*, follows Philippa from Hainault to England, where she becomes queen consort of Edward III. Another of her followers marries a multilingual English courtier; the dialect of Geoffrey Chaucer's pillow talk is thus Picard. *Reims*, eighty miles south of Valenciennes, is the coronation place of French kings and likely birthplace of Guillaume de Machaut, c. 1300. Some sixty years later, Machaut finds himself defending his city against English attack; the attackers include Henry of Gormont, author of the Anglo-Norman *Le Livre de Seyntz Medicines*. Orléans and Troyes are places with distinguished literary *pasts*, but I pass over them for *Lusignan*: a chateau in Poitou that spawns a dynasty spanning the Mediterranean; it features prominently in the romance *Melusine*. *Dijon*, chief city of Burgundy, sees Capetian rule end in 1361 and begins developing the style that will blossom fully in the fifteenth century. *Savoy*, on the western flank of the Alps, holds its first parliament in 1388. Its most famous native son, Oton de Grandson, founds the European Valentine cult and is widely revered as poet and soldier; as an ageing *chevalier*, he is miserably killed in 1397 in a judicial combat forced on him by the Council of Savoy. *Toulouse*, capital of Languedoc on the Garonne, is the seat of an ancient and famous university; Catalans study here and *occitan* remains the language of choice for courtly poetry in Catalonia. The first formal organization of troubador poets is set up in Toulouse in 1323; an equivalent organization appears in Barcelona seventy years later. *Béarn* or Pau, located in the Pyrenees, is an aggregation of Basque and Gascon provinces ruled over by Gaston Phoebus (1331-91). Gaston, famed for his *Livre de Chasse*, also composes a devotional treatise; this is reputedly prompted by his intemperate murder of his own son. Froissart reports from his famous 1388 visit to Béarn that the Count – from his Pyrenean vantage point – is excellently well informed about events in Navarre, Aragon, Castille, Portugal, Gascony, and England. Gaston Phoebus dines with Englishmen; the English occupy the castle fortress of nearby Lourdes.

II: Calais to Walsingham
Calais – Canterbury – London, Southwark, Westminster – Oxford – Berkeley Castle – Chester and Cheshire – York and Yorkshire – Norwich, Lynn, Walsingham

This sequence performs a circular sweep through English locations, beginning and ending at places that no longer impinge on national consciousness. Froissart, adapting his account from the chronicler of Liège, Jean le Bel, tells how *Calais* became English in 1347. Machaut in his *Fonteinne amoreuse* and Eustache Deschamps express outrage; Langland has misgivings, but Chaucer's Squire finds Calais a strong base for launching *chevauchées* into Flanders, Artois, and Picardy. *La Manche* or the Channel thus becomes an English highway rather than a defensive moat; *Canterbury*, with its energetic *de casibus* chronicler of great abbots, William Thorne, lies on the road to *London*. Chaucer thrives on the north bank of the Thames and John Gower on the south; Langland catches the street cries of Cheapside and the scandals of *Westminster. London Letter Books* duel with the *Westminster Chronicle* in their account of key events, as in 1381; Hoccleve labors in Westminster but carouses downstream; Usk and Adam Pynkhurst are the truest Londoners. *Oxford*, fifty miles upstream, sees 1,500 scholars living cheek by jowl with urban crafts, as suggested by Chaucer's *Miller's Tale*. Italians cut off from Paris study and teach at Oxford; speculations on virtuous pagans, logic, and mathematics shine, and John Wyclif becomes the leading philosopher. John Trevisa divides his time between Oxford and *Berkeley Castle*; his English *Polychronicon* complements the more dangerous translating of the Wycliffite Bible. Traveling from the southern Marches of Berkeley to the northern Marches of Cheshire, in the hoof prints of Sir Gawain, we come to St Werburgh's abbey, *Chester*, where Ranulph Higden composes the Latin *Polychronicon* that Trevisa would translate. Alliterative poetry flourishes, along with drama and civic pageantry; differing views of Chester are presented from the west in Welsh. *York* may have imported *its* earliest drama up the Ouse from the Netherlands. Its leading prelates are Cambridge men, although John Wyclif is a Yorkshireman. Richard Rolle's writings spark Lollard interpellations; *The Pricke of Conscience*, once attributed to him, inspires a church window at North Street, York. Mount Grace is founded in 1398; one Julian of Norwich manuscript has northern inflections and makes fond reference to St John of Beverley. In cutting across country from York to *Norwich* we scandalously ignore the Midlands; the precise location of the Vernon manuscript has yet to be specified. Norwich boasts an illustrious Franciscan *studium* and *Lynn* the Augustinian *studium generale* for the Cambridge limit; the Carmelite Alan of Lynn teaches in both cities and becomes spiritual confidante of

Margery Kempe. Nicholas of Lynn, who produced a *Kalendarium* for John of Gaunt, is reputed by Richard Hakluyt to have sailed from Norfolk to the Arctic; the peculiar tilt of the Wash favors communications with Scandinavia and Hanseatic ports such as Danzig. *Walsingham*, "England's Nazareth," attests to the geographical decentralization of religious charisma and power; it is worth recalling that Henry VIII, early in his reign, came here as a barefoot pilgrim.

III: Aberdeen to Finistère
Aberdeen – Kirkwall, Orkneys – Iceland – Dublin and Dundalk – Lough Derg – Lecan and Ballymote – Ceredigion: Llanbadarn Fawr and Strata Florida – Glasney (Penryn), Cornwall – Finistère (Brittany)

This next sequence performs an anti-clockwise circuit around the British Isles, avoiding England and the English to explore alternative lines of cultural transmission. It begins in *Aberdeen*: one quarter of William Wallace's body is buried in the walls of St Machar's cathedral here after 1305; John Barbour, author of the *Bruce*, is Archdeacon of Aberdeen. Barbour's chronicling of Scottish legendary origins owes much to Higden and to French *chanson de geste* and romance. The Orkneys begin 268 miles north of Aberdeen by road and ferry; *Kirkwall* is the only medieval town to develop in the Norse colonies of the North Atlantic. The *Orkneyinga Saga,* written by an Icelander c. 1200, continues to be read throughout the fourteenth century; the oldest codex is copied by two priests c. 1390. This period is the great age of copying for Old Norse sagas: but there are crucial new developments after 1350 as continental traditions of Latin rhetoric and grammar, plus metrical romance, reach into *Icelandic* writing. The textual corpus of Old Norse is vast, and its reach phenomenal; some runic inscriptions recovered from the Hanseatic quarter of Bergen, recalling some poems of the *Elder Edda*, date from c. 1380-90. The *Thingmote* left by Norsemen in *Dublin* remains visible by the castle until 1685. English settlers within the Dublin pale read Richard Rolle and the ubiquitous *Pricke of Conscience,* plus *The Land of Cockaygne* and *The Pride of Life,* the earliest morality play in English. Lionel, Duke of Clarence, Chaucer's first master, attempts to reverse nativization of English settlers with the Statutes of Kilkenny, insisting upon English styles of dress, riding, speech and banning intermarriage; he had scant success. Sixty miles south of Dublin, at *Dundalk*, brilliant native son Richard Fitzralph returns to preach his first sermon in 1348 as bishop of Armagh, following a glittering career at Oxford, Paris, and Avignon. His unique "sermon diary" contains 92 carefully dated and titled items. He promotes the cult of St Patrick in Ireland and in Avignon

and facilitates the journey of a penitent Hungarian knight in 1353 to Loch Derg, the watery site of *St Patrick's Purgatory*. Pilgrim visitors follow over the next half-century from France, Italy, England, the Netherlands, and (most famously) Catalonia: great travel narratives are written, and texts on St Patrick's Purgatory are carried *inter alia* to Oxford, London, Paris, Dijon, Cologne, Venice, Rome, Prague, Cracow and Gdańsk. Meanwhile, the business of collecting Irish Gaelic writing, the oldest vernacular writing in Europe, continues at places like *Lecan* and *Ballymote*, two castles in County Sligo. *Llanbadarn Fawr*, across the Irish sea from Dublin, is the hometown of Daffyd ap Gwilym; legend places his burial at *Strata Florida* abbey, seventeen miles inland. As with the Sligo castles, a far-western location suggests removal from English oversight; Daffyd's courtly poetry compares with French and Provençal. Five scribes at Strata Florida, the Cistercian abbey, write *The White Book of Rydderch* late in Daffyd's lifetime; Iolo Goch, who eulogizes Daffyd and his famous form of the *cwydd,* also chooses to live close by the Irish sea. Many roads in Cornwall run north to south, facilitating quick transit between Ireland and Wales, Cornwall, and Brittany for travelers, and for romances such as *Tristan*. Much of the surviving Cornish writing comes from *Glasney*; this college of secular canons, part-excavated in 2003, is linked with one of the famous theaters-in-the-round that staged Cornish drama. Cornish and Breton languages do not significantly part company until c. 1050. The area surrounding Brest in the far west, known as *Finistère*, was always the stronghold of Breton speaking; the language weakens towards Rennes, and Nantes was early Francophone. There is religious and especially Marian poetry in Middle Breton, plus a large corpus of plays in late copies. The Breton *lais* of Marie de France and of Chaucer suggest the region's continuing inspirational power. The English perforce reenter the picture and the territory here because of the Hundred Years' War; the strategic importance of Little Britain is well known to every English reader of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

IV: Nuremberg to Danzig
Nuremberg – Cologne – Arras – Bruges – Brussels – The Hague – Zwolle (with Deventer) – Lübeck – Vadstena – Danzig

This sequence begins at a Germanic heartland of Europe, picks up the Hanseatic trail and then pursues it through the Low Countries and the Baltic to Danzig (now Gdańsk). *Nuremberg*, with Augsburg, is one of the great points of passage to Italy; Charles IV starts his famous descent from here in 1354. The earliest German municipal library or *Ratsbibliothek* is established here c. 1370; the nuns of St Katharina's, having ac-

cepted stricter rules of enclosure, pour out a phenomenal volume of religious texts. The Rhineland city of *Cologne* combines ecclesiastical power as a pilgrimage center (Aachen lies just across the river) with commercial acumen; the Nine Worthies in the Hansesaal that were to inspire Caxton are in place before 1348. Geert Groote, the moving spirit of *devotio moderna*, studies here; so too John Tauler (c. 1300-1361) and Henry Suso. The most grandiose royal pilgrimage of this period, featuring Hungarian Angevins and the Luxemburgs of Prague, stops by in 1357. *Arras*, 230 miles WSW of Cologne, produces tapestries throughout the Hundred Years' War for dukes of Burgundy and kings of England. It also produces and exports lowlife tales known as *fabliaux*, and Jean d'Arras authors the *Roman de Melusine*. 80 miles to the north lies *Bruges, the* center for international financial exchange in the period and host to *nations* from all over Europe. Mendicant orders build their cloisters to surround the commercial district; lavish books of hours are produced, mopping up mobile capital as exercises in added value. The Gruuthuse manuscript from c. 1400 compiles prayers, songs, poems, and poetic allegories for a citizen sodality. At the court of *Den Haag*, 130 miles to the north-east, dominion passes from absentee rulers, based at Hainault, to the House of Bavaria (ruling directly from The Hague). French remains influential, but Middle Dutch flourishes, adding Germanic inflections that reflect a general eastward tilt: *Sprüche, Mären, Reden*, and *epische Kleinformen* flourish, and *Ehrenreden* hymn the knights who ride east to assist the Teutonic Order, during lulls in the Hundred Years' War, in their crusades against "pagan" Lithuanians. Dirk Potter, a Dutch Ovidian in the mold of Chaucer and Gower, is retained by the court of Holland in 1385. *Zwolle*, 95 miles to the north-east, is a Hanseatic city with trade links to Sweden. With *Deventer*, 20 miles to the south, it forms the originating heartland of *devotio moderna* in following the teachings of Geert Groote (1340-84). His disciple Florens Radewyns (c. 1350-1400) founds the Congregation of Windesheim (1386) four miles south of Zwolle; there were twelve monasteries by 1407. Lübeck forms a crucial transition point between Hanseatic northern Europe and the Baltic; it is acclaimed by Charles IV in 1375 as one of the five "Glories" of his Empire (along with Florence, Pisa, Rome, and Venice). *Vadstena* sees the first house of the Order of St Saviour founded by Bridget of Sweden in 1346. Houses are founded across Europe; some of the documents at Vadstena are in her own hand. Following Bridget's death at Rome in 1373 her body is processed back to Vadstena across Europe. *Danzig* is one of her resting places; a mixed community of Bridgettines and Magdalenes (former port-town prostitutes) soon establishes itself. Danzig is ruled by Teutonic Knights; local merchants meet in their rival *Artushof*, or Court of King Arthur. The mystic Dorothea of Montau is a creature of the Teutonic Order, from cra-

dle to grave. The knights flocking to aid the Order include Philippe de
Mézières in the 1350s and Henry of Derby in the 1390s. Finding that
there would be no *reyse* in 1393, Henry extends his journey into a Jerusa-
lem pilgrimage and passes through many of the locales in this project,
including Prague, Venice, Rhodes, Cyprus, Milan, Paris, and Calais.

V: Avignon to Naples
Avignon – Lombardy (Milan and Pavia) – Venice – Florence – Siena –
Rome – Naples

Avignon and Naples frame this sequence neatly: the papal court in Pro-
vence attracts many Italians, while the Angevins of Naples import
French-inspired courtly culture. The papal library moves from Rome to
Avignon in the 1360s. Papal librarians procure good copies of classical
texts from all over Europe; Petrarch aids their efforts. Translation *from*
Latin to the vernacular, as encouraged by Charles V in Paris, does not
take root in Avignon; Pierre Bersuire wisely transfers to Paris in 1350,
with his French translation of Livy. Aragonese humanist Juan Fernández
de Heredia (1310-1396) translates prolifically from Greek histories; his
countryman Pedro de Luna, the future French pope Benedict XIII,
composes his *Libro de las consolaciones de la vida humana*. Petrarch descends
Aeneas-like into Italy in 1353 and settles for eight years at *Milan* and
Pavia. The Visconti despots are Francophone, given to reading French
romances and commissioning Books of Hours; they help destroy Milan-
ese literary tradition by employing Tuscans in their chancellery. Pet-
rarch's *Itinerarium* of 1358, written in three days at Milan, favors virtual
rather than actual travel to the Holy Land. Petrarch is also associated
with *Venice*, the ambitious republic that attempts to form a public library.
Franco-Venetian chronicling in the mode of Martino da Canal continues
to be read, plus romances such as the Franco-Venetian *Song of Roland* that
descends directly from the Anglo-Norman *Chanson de Roland* now in the
Bodleian. Venice controls islands and strongholds across the Mediterra-
nean and is a major point of embarkation for Alexandria and Jaffa. An
Italian pilgrim returning from Jerusalem in 1395 reports hearing at Ne-
groponte, a Venetian Greek island colony, a tale of Sir Gawain rescuing
and marrying the daughter of Morgan le Fay. At *Florence*, after 1348, Boc-
caccio completes the *Decameron* and then turns to Petrarchan Latinity.
But vernacularity continues at Florence with the historiography, storytel-
ling, and *cantari* of Villani, Sacchetti, and Pucci; Dante commentary
thrives. *Siena*, like Florence, suffers catastrophically from the Black
Death; Caterina Benincasa becomes the only uncontested female saint of
the European Trecento. Writings surrounding her include works of the-

ology, extraordinary letters, and *cantari* for evangelization; one of these envisions divine persecution of homosexuality. Caterina's English Augustinian follower, William Flete, writes a long panegyric on her death, plus prophecies of calamities to come in England. Cola di Rienzo is chased out of *Rome* late in 1347. The Roman historiographer Giovanni Cavallini keeps the legend of Rome alive while working as *scriptor* at the Avignon curia until he dies in 1349; further revisions downward must be made after 1378 as Rome becomes *stupor mezzo mundi*. *Naples* maintains strong ties with the Latinate culture of Avignon until Robert the Wise dies in 1343; thereafter it reverts to the Francophone culture inherited from the first Angevins. Its openness to the eastern Mediterranean accounts both for the exoticisms of the *Filocolo* and for Boccaccio's attempted importation of Greek influences to Florence in 1360.

VI: Palermo to Tunis
Palermo – City of Mallorca – Aragon (Valencia and Barcelona) – Castille (Burgos and Toledo) – Santiago de Compostella – Lisbon – Canaries – Córdoba – Granada – Tunis

Sicily initiates a new sequence of literary places that heads west, rather than east; this ends at Tunis, just 200 miles away. Sicily enters the Mediterranean sphere of Aragon in 1282. In the 1930s, academics based at Rome attempt to realign medieval Sicily and Malta as part of an Italian *Heimat*. This spells nonsense for Malta, where the word for Lent, *Quaresima*, is *Randan* (from the Arabic *Ramadan*). The famed poetics of Emperor Frederick II's court owe much to Arabic influences; Roger II was hymned by Arabic court poetry at *Palermo* a century before. *Mallorca*, five hundred miles west, is a multi-racial, multi-confessional island. Anselm Turmeda, born here in 1352, becomes a Franciscan but then converts to Islam and moves to Tunis. Ramon Llull, who dies c. 1316, is the first major poet and prose writer in Catalan. More than half of all books documented at Mallorca before 1400 are Jewish-owned, some of them in Arabic; Abraham Cresques's *Catalan World Atlas* is made c. 1375 for the Aragonese monarchy. Catalan prose, as practiced at *Valencia* and *Barcelona*, flourishes brilliantly and remains remarkably standardized, thanks to the Aragonese royal chancellery. Bernat Metge, who serves in the chancellery, is influenced by Boethius, the *Rose*, and Petrarch (he spent time at Avignon); he introduces Griselde to Catalan prose. Vincent Ferrer (1350-1419), son of a Scottish nobleman, preaches across western Europe and cultivates popular idioms for unlettered publics. Francesc Eiximenis (c.1340-1409) writes his antifeminist *Llibre de les dones*. And yet Provençal still rules in Aragon as the language of courtly poetry. In Castille, the

deaths of Alfonso XI and Juan Ruiz at mid-century betoken decline. Pedro Lopez de Ayala's poetic and political career, lived out between *Burgos* and *Toledo*, expresses the pains of a region caught between French and English armies. Jews write in both Hebrew and Spanish; the Castilian dance of death assumes poetic form. Chaucer visits and discovers astrolabes; Catalina, John of Gaunt's daughter, rules as queen of Castille with the aid of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*. This is prepared from the Portuguese version given to another of Gaunt's queenly daughters, Philippa, who marries João I of Portugal in 1386. Pilgrims of all nations leave gifts and records at *Santiago de Compostella*. Galician-Portuguese loses ground to Castillian as a language of courtly lyric as the *Lisbon* ruling classes become more business-minded, fraternizing with hard-boiled Italians. The *Canary Islands* are "discovered" by an Italian-led expedition from Lisbon in 1341; the first of the native *Guanche* are enslaved as Boccaccio and Petrarch celebrate discovery of antiquity's *Insulae Fortunatae*. The great mosque of *Córdoba* testifies to Roman-based engineering and Islamic and Visigothic architectural forms; Leonor López de Córdoba (1363-1412) writes of defeat and imprisonment in the Castillian civil war in her *Memorias*. The University of *Granada*, supposedly founded by Emperor Charles V in 1531, is actually established as a Madrasah by Sultan Yusuf I in 1349. His son Muhammad V completes the Alhambra; verses by remarkable fourteenth-century poets are inscribed on its walls. The great traveler Ibn Battuta (1304-1377) sails to Granada just after the pandemic; he later dictates his journeys to a man whom he met here. Ibn Khaldun, who in his *Muquaddimah* of 1377 comments laconically on Christian "discovery" of the Canaries, is employed as Grenadan ambassador to Pedro I of Castille. His autobiography tells of his family fleeing from Andalusia to Tunisia in the thirteenth century; he received a classical Arabic education at *Tunis* and returns there in 1378 before spending his last years in Cairo. Anselm Turmeda, the Mallorcan convert to Islam, switches from Catalan to Arabic on settling in Tunis; his anti-Christian *Tuhfa* is translated into Turkish in the 1990s and causes quite a stir in Germany.

VII: Cairo to Constantinople
Cairo and Alexandria – Jerusalem – Sivas (Danishmend) – Sis (Cilicia, Little Armenia) – Cyprus – Rhodes – Athens and Thebes – Constantinople

Alexandria would seem to define the outer limits of Europe, with *Cairo* – eighty miles down the Nile – beyond the pale. But both prove a big draw for medieval Christian pilgrims continuing on from Jerusalem: Egypt had taken in the fleeing Holy Family, after all, and is thus a second "Holy

Land." Many travel narratives testify to Cairo's splendor and sheer size: in 1348 it is twice as big as any European city. The Cairo Genizah has yielded 200,000 texts; the oldest text in Yiddish dates from 1382. Arabic poetry declines under the Mamluks, but prose grows more distinguished as learned immigrants arrive from the Levant, fleeing Mongol pressure. Women preach Sufi sermons and endow madrasas; Ibn Khaldun's arrival in 1382 seals a shift in cultural hegemony from Tunis to Cairo. *Jerusalem* is under Muslim control; direction of Christian pilgrimages is franchised out to the Franciscans. Guidebooks are produced by the monastery of Mount Sion; pilgrims might transfer the basic structure of such a text to their own travel journal. The earliest Muslim writing on Jerusalem topography dates from this period; praise of Jerusalem is a long-lived Arabic genre. *Sivas* is the chief city of Anatolia, the region from which Turks overran Cilician Armenia in 1375. Their chief inspirational literary text is the *Danishmendname,* a Moslem counterpart to heroic Christian epics portraying heroic conflict with the infidel. The adventurous court poet Nesimi is skinned alive by zealots in 1393; hagiographies are soon written. *Sis,* modern day Turkish Kozan, is the capital of Cilician Armenia, a kingdom established in 1080 by Armenians fleeing Seljuk invasion. Immigrants continue arriving from Greater Armenia, including several generations of poets, classicists, and Aristotelians from monasteries such as Tatev. When Sis falls in 1375 the last king of Armenia, Leon V, embarks on an extraordinary journey from a Cairo jail to Barcelona, Béarn, Avignon, Paris and London with his confessor and biographer Jean Dardel. It is from nearby *Cyprus* that Lusignan rulers try bullying Armenians into accepting Roman liturgy and rites. The battle against Greek Orthodoxy goes on in Cyprus, too: the pilgrim Bridget of Sweden denounces Nicosia as "Gomorrah." Philippe de Mézières, the ubiquitous Picard, spends a decade here; Boccaccio dedicates his *Geneaologia* to Hugh IV of Cyprus; Leónidos Macherás writes his *Recital concerning the Sweet Land of Cyprus* in Cypriot Greek. Byzantium fades from *Rhodes* in 1309 and the city is rebuilt in medieval European style. Most knights and Grand Masters of Rhodes are French, but the most literarily distinguished is Juan Fernández de Heredia (c. 1310-96); his extensive Aragonese output includes a *Secretum Secretorum* translation. *Athens* and *Thebes,* forty miles apart, are disputed between Sicilian, Aragonese, French, and Florentine rulers. Catalan Athens turns Florentine in 1388; pilgrim diarist Niccolò da Martoni gives vivid accounts. The Greek court poet of *Constantinople,* Melitiniótis, is well versed in western vernacular genres; his work echoes Dante, Boccaccio, and the *Rose.* The *demes* at Constantinople continue singing the official spring song in *politicos stichos* metre; the great Ur-epic of eastern Christendom, *Diyenís Akrítis,* continues being copied and read. Some Greek romances translate from western sources; others, such as

The Tale of Achilles, are original. Barlaam, the Calabrian of Greek ethnic descent who tantalizes Boccaccio and Petrarch, spends time here; romances such as *Partonopou de Blois* make fanciful flights to Constantinople. Ottoman Turks besiege the city in 1390, 1395, 1397, and 1400; Tamerlane's victory over Bayezid at Ankara in 1402 affords temporary respite.

VIII: Moscow to Prague
Moscow –Vilnius –Tirnovo – Mount Athos – Zadar – Buda, Óbuda and Pest – Cracow – Prague

This sequence begins with the city that will become the "third Rome" after 1453, the capital of eastern Christianity; it swoops south into Greek Orthodox territory before ending with the city rebuilt to image its centrality to all Christendom. Muscovy's defining victory over the Mongols in 1380 is celebrated by the *Zadonshchina*, an epic contrasting past defeats to a new vision of "the glorious city of *Moscow*." Metropolitan Cyprian, a Bulgarian, translates contemplative texts of the kind found at Mount Athos (where he was likely trained) from Greek to Old Church Slavonic. Some eighty monasteries are founded in northeast Russia in the fourteenth century. They remain virtually the sole bearers of literate culture, although pilgrim texts tell of travel to both Jerusalem and Constantinople. Lithuanian *Vilnius*, 500 miles from Moscow, must choose between the Orthodoxy to its east and Catholicism to its west; its Grand Duke Jogailia contemplates marrying a Moscow princess in 1384 but in 1386 chooses Jadwiga of Poland. In matters of culture and religion, Lithuania still cathects to Byzantium; the Bulgarian Cyprian earlier served here as metropolitan before moving to Moscow. Ruthenian, based on Church Slavonic, remains the language of the chancellery; princely chronicles are composed in Ruthenian and recorded in Cyrillic. *Tirnovo*, 800 miles south, is home to both the patriarchate and Bulgarian tsars until falling to the Turks in 1394. The Tirnovo school is of exceptional importance: Euthymius reforms Old Church Slavonic for all Orthodox Slavs, restoring Greek etymological spellings; Tirnovo alumnus Grigorije Tsamblak (c. 1365-1420) writes his *Life of Stefan Decanski* during a short stay in Dečani (Kosovo). *Mount Athos* still today hosts 20 Orthodox monasteries including Hilandar, the great Serbian site that burned half to the ground in 2004. Medieval Serbian literature reaches its apogee with Dušan (1331-55), whose empire stretches along the Mediterranean and deep into Bulgaria. The battle of Kosovo in 1389 and the fall of Skopje in 1392 signal disatrous reverse; Hilandar is not subjected to Turkish rule until 1430, however, and its manuscript holdings remain exceptionally rich. Tradi-

tions of epic poetry and courtly lyric prepare the way for Kosovo: the most moving laments are perhaps those inscribed on icons or shrouds by bereaved women. As independent Serbian statehood comes to an end, after 1389, slain warriors become more celebrated than the ascetics of monkish biographical tradition. *Zadar* is a Croatian city on the Dalmatian coast of the Adriatic that was pulled between Byzantium and Rome and then later, in our period, between Hungary and Venice. The Hungarian invasion of 1099 makes Latin the language of state; Zadar passes from Venetian to Croatian-Hungarian control in 1358, but then back to Venice in 1409. The university is founded in 1396; the *Obsidio Iadrensis* or *Siege of Zadar* dates from the fourteenth century. A prayerbook from this period employs Glagolithic and Bosnian Cyrillic scripts to forge a vernacular from older Church Slavonic forms; another text highlights the feasts of Angevin Hungary's three holy kings. *Buda* becomes Hungarian capital in 1361; *Óbuda* hosts a short-lived university, founded in 1395; *Pest*, on the Danube's east bank, is an ancient Celtic and Roman settlement. The territories of Louis I of Hungary (r. 1342-82) stretch from the Black Sea to the Adriatic; from 1370 he also rules Poland. His daughter Jadwiga (c. 1373-1399), who speaks six languages, marries Jogailla at Cracow in 1385. She finances Lithuanian students at Prague and founds a bishopric in Vilnius. A network of textual and pictorial expression connects Angevin and Luxembourg rulers from Naples to Prague. The *Hungarian Anjou Legendary* tells tales of St Ladislas, some of them shared with the German court poet Henrik Mügeln, writing in Latin in 1352 and in German in 1360. Latin writing, such as the *Chronica Hungarorum*, reflects the internationalism of Hungary's rulers, but vernacular composition is retarded by a sense of strangeness: for Hungarian, a Finno-Ugrian language, bears no obvious relationship to neighboring tongues. At *Cracow*, too, the use of Latin in chronicling, *vitae* and legendaries bespeaks the decisive embrace of western and Roman Catholic style: but the Akademia Krakowska grasps the importance of Polish and spreads its use in schools; the *Florian Psalter* is written for Jadwiga in Polish, Latin and German. The oldest Polish poem, the hymn to the Virgin known as *Bogurodzica*, has no known Latin source and may derive from Old Church Slavonic and Ruthenian; it is sung before the decisive battle of Grunwald as *carmen patrium*. *Prague* escapes lightly from the Black Death; no city shows better today the regenerative vigor of post-pandemic Europe. Staré Město, site of Charles's university, is populated mostly by German speakers; Nové Město, the New Town, attracts rural Czechs and Josefov sustains Jews. Machaut had served Charles's father as secretary and composer; French poetry and music remains a familiar part of court life at Prague. Petrarch corresponds with Charles and his chancellery; Charles visits popes at Avignon twice in the 1360s. He also brings 80 Croatian

Benedictine Glagolite monks to Prague and is keen that scholars should recognize St Jerome's Croatian Church Slavonic as the Ur-language of Czech. Prague's writing environment is thus extraordinarily rich, gathering up many of the strands not just of this sequence but of our entire volume. Some of it tracks westward with Anne from Bohemia in 1381.

IX: The Nations of Europe, 1414-18
Constance

The Council of *Constance* is convened, *inter alia,* to heal the schism that had divided western Christendom since 1378. Its first business is to decide which delegations merit *nation* status: some candidates, such as France, seem self-evidently qualified; others, such as England, do not. Constance offers useful points of retrospect from which to review this project. Musical interactions at Constance have been well studied, but literary exchanges have not: what transpires when *literati* from across Europe come together, for almost four years, and have time on their hands?

Postscript

Following presentation of this outline to the SAMEMES conference at Bern, Christa Jansohn (University of Bamburg) expressed reservations about positioning Nuremberg at the head of a sequence of places that leads next to Cologne and thence to Bruges, Lübeck, and Danzig. The critique is well made: Cologne and Danzig are linked by a well-traveled network of Hanseatic trade; Nuremberg attaches itself to this sequence a little awkwardly in cutting across a swathe of central, south German territory. How else then might Nuremberg be configured? An alternative placement might be found at the head of a sequence leading down across the Alps to Avignon, and hence finally to Naples. When pointed towards this itinerary it might possibly be twinned with Augsburg; Munich, fifty miles southeast of Augsburg, is as yet too small to merit much consideration. Charles IV, we have noted, begins his famous descent into Italy from Nuremberg in 1354. In 1483, Thomas Münzer, a Nuremberg humanist of mercantile extraction, similarly heads south to visit classical and religious sites (and to bring books back to Nuremberg, such as the 1481 Bottonus edition of Boccaccio's *Genealogia Deorum Gentilium*); he later works as cartographer to the *Nuremburg Chronicle*. Much would be at stake in placing Nuremberg at the head of a sequence winding down into Italian territory. It might suggest longer geneaologies of Germanic de-

scent into Italy, journeys more and less benign (Emperor Charles V, 1527; Goethe, 1786). The choice between Hanseatic and Italianate itineraries for Nuremberg thus reflects interconnected aspects of its history: its vital location along trading routes; its susceptibility to those humanist influences that will decisively affect its culture and architecture in the fifteenth century.

The synopsis above has been further critiqued by my colleague in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures at the University of Pennsylvania, Julia Verkholantsev. Julia makes the case for several other locales; *Novgorod* is the most compelling. This ancient city, located 330 miles north-west of Moscow and 120 miles south-east of St Petersburg, enjoys close connections with the Hanseatic League and is not overrun during the Mongol invasion of Rus. Birch bark documents attest to remarkably high levels of literacy at all social levels, down to tradesmen and tradeswomen; there are letters by businessmen and by lovers. The oldest cycle of East Slavic epic songs originates from this region; important chronicles and travelogues are being written in the later fourteenth century. Novgorod is a remarkably cosmopolitan city of different religions and ethnic groups; the oldest known document in any Finnic language was unearthed here in 1957.

Verkholantsev's more general critiques require careful pondering. Firstly, the grouping of diverse east European locales into one sequence reinforces the modern notion of Eastern Europe as a unified political and cultural space (as compared with the diversity of the west); this accentuates segregation from, rather than interconnections with, the west. Secondly, if Rome and Constantinople are assigned separate sections, why should Muscovy and Prague be bracketed together? The Byzantine/ Roman divide in the later fourteenth century is sufficiently strong for the eastern European locales to be discussed in two separate sequences, not one. One argument here militates for eastern European interconnectedness (with the west), the other for distinctness (of religious traditions). The point here is not to move immediately back to the drawing board, but to relish the conversations – with colleagues across university departments, and across Europe – required by this project. Hopefully, this conversation may prolong itself beyond the moment of this essay's printing. For although it runs against the grain of modern institutional assessment of academic work – embodied by England's Research Assessment Exercise, and by various promotion thresholds elsewhere – it is the conceptualizing, rather than the definitive completion, of projects such as this that prove most educative, most collaborative, and most fun. So without proposing infinite Derridean deferral of a Plan for Europe, 1348-1400, I am suggesting the value of extended conversation. Editing is easy: once chapters are assigned, and contributors color in the squares,

there is little left to do. But this stage of a project forces us to notice one another, wherever we happen to live.

References

Ahmad, Aijaz. *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literature*. London: Verso, 1992. 163.

Apter, Emily. "Global *Translatio*: the 'Invention' of Comparative Literature, Istanbul, 1933." *Critical Inquiry* 29 (Winter 2003): 253-81.

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The Riverside Chaucer*. Ed. Larry D. Benson. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1987. 7.2391.

Conklin Akbari, Suzanne. "Introduction." *Idols in the East: European Representations of Islam and the Orient. 1100-1450*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2009.

Encyclopedia of the Languages of Europe. Ed. Glanville Price. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998.

Gumbrecht, Hans Ulrich. *In 1926: Living at the Edge of Time*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Havely, Nick. "Literature in Italian, French and English: uses and muses of the vernacular." *The New Cambridge Medieval History, VI: c. 1300-c. 1415*. Ed. Michael Jones. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 257-72.

Il Ponte: Rivista mensile di politica e letteratura. Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1945-

Rabaté, Jean-Michael. *1913: The Cradle of Modernism*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

Saxton, Christopher. *Atlas of the counties of England and Wales*. London: s.n., 1580.

Shapiro, James. *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*. London: Faber, 2005.

Teresa of Calcutta, Mother. *Come Be My Light: The Private Writings of the Saint of Calcutta*. Ed. Brian Kolodiejchuk. New York: Doubleday, 2007.

Wallace, David. *Premodern Places: Calais to Surinam, Chaucer to Aphra Behn*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2004. 184-7.