

Reprinted from
DE ARTIBUS OPUSCULA XL
ESSAYS IN HONOR OF
ERWIN PANOFSKY

Edited by MILLARD MEISS

New York University Press · 1961

Saint Bridget of Sweden

As Represented in Illuminated Manuscripts

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When faced with the task of choosing an appropriate subject for a paper to be published in honor of Erwin Panofsky most contributors must have felt themselves confronted by an *embarras de richesse*. There are few main problems in the history of Western art, from the age of manuscripts to the age of movies, which have not received the benefit of Pan's learned, pointed, and playful pen. From this point of view, therefore, almost any subject would provide a suitable opportunity for building on foundations already laid by him to whom we all wish to pay homage.

The task becomes at once more difficult if, in addition to this, more specific aims are to be considered. A Swede, for instance, wishing to see the art and culture of his own country play a part in this work, the association with which is itself an honor, would first of all have to ask himself if anything within his own national field of vision would have a meaning in this truly international context. From sight-seeing in the company of Erwin Panofsky during his memorable visit to Sweden in 1952 I recall some monuments and works of art in our country in which he took an enthusiastic interest and pleasure.¹ But considering them as illustrations for this volume, I have to realize that they are not of the international standard appropriate for such a concourse of contributors and readers from two continents. They had better remain, I think, what they are in every case: connecting links on a more intimate level between the great Princeton teacher and his many Swedish friends and admirers.

One monument worth seeing had to be reserved in 1952 for a new *iter Suecanum*, one of the most beautiful of all, the Church and Monastery of St. Bridget at Vadstena. It is not too bold to imagine that the charming little town on the shore of Lake Vättern with its Renaissance castle, its early nineteenth-century theater, and its great medieval past would have appealed particularly to our distinguished guest, and I am only too ready to take him there whenever he likes! Furthermore, St. Bridget's name occurs several times in some of Panofsky's major works, and this is only one among many signs of her international reputation to this very day.² Being no historian of architecture I cannot contribute to the knowledge of her monastery, nor trace its influence on other Brigittine houses abroad—I must leave this to

The author wishes to acknowledge a debt of gratitude to Professor Francis Wormald for several valuable suggestions and for having revised the author's English. Thanks are also due to Professor Millard Meiss and to Mrs. Frank Manuel for much help with final editing.

¹ The course on "The Renaissance Problem in the History of Art" given by Panofsky at a summer seminar in Gripsholm

Castle to art historians from all four Swedish universities is now being published under the title *Renaissance and Resuscitations in Western Art* (Gottesman Lectures, VII = Figura, X), Uppsala, 1960, Text and Plates.

² Cf. *Early Netherlandish Painting*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, Index, p. 542; also *The Life and Art of Albrecht Dürer*, 4th ed., Princeton, 1955, p. 92.

more competent specialists.³ But I think St. Bridget's importance in the history of art is too fitting a subject for this occasion to be put aside. That is why the kind reader is now requested to follow me along a narrower path, that of manuscript illumination, which is fortunately at the same time one of the favorite walks of Panofsky himself as a scholar. What I propose to do is to deal with some known and unknown representations of the Swedish Saint in manuscripts from the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century, omitting the later representations in the printed editions of her writings, as well as the literary portraits, which would demand an article of greater length than the space at my disposal here.⁴

I

Ut etiam ab Aquilone aliquid boni esset ("That something good might also come from the North")—the words spoken by Pope Boniface IX in the *bullæ canonizationis* of St. Bridget—remind us how difficult it had proved for the Swedish prophetess, "born at the very end of the world," to gain the international reputation necessary for her mission.⁵ Yet, when she died, her achievement was matched by few of her compatriots during the whole period of the Middle Ages: her name is found today not only in the book of saints, but also on the tablets of world history.

For a citizen of a small and remote country to be recognized as a person of European merit two conditions seem indispensable: the first is to spend a sufficient number of years abroad, and the second, to possess a rich measure of self-confidence. St. Bridget undoubtedly fulfilled both conditions to a very high degree. She thought of herself as the chosen bride of Christ, empowered by Him to intervene in both ecclesiastical and secular affairs. For a woman elected to reveal the heavenly decrees to mankind it should, in theory at any rate, not have made much difference if the spot on earth which she inhabited were a small monastery in the limitless woods of the North or a great town in the sunny South. But St. Bridget was matter-of-fact enough to realize that in her case it was indeed significant, and so she never hesitated in her choice between the two alternatives. Apart from a journey to the Holy Land, the last twenty-three years of her life were spent in Italy, for from here alone her voice had a chance of being heard all over the world. It was also largely due to her friends in Italy that after her death her *Revelations* received the general recognition they certainly would never have enjoyed had she remained all her life in Sweden.

St. Bridget's own knowledge of Latin was too superficial to allow her to write or dictate in the *lingua franca* of the Church. Therefore the Latin version of her *Revelations* is in form the work of her several confessors and secretaries—Master Matthias, Canon of Linköping Cathedral, Petrus Olavi, Prior of the Cistercian abbey of Alvastra, Master Petrus from Skän-

³ The main work on the architecture of the Brigittine order is B. Berthelson, *Studier i Birgittinerordens byggnadsskick*, Lund, 1946, of which so far only the first volume has appeared. Recent restorations have led to the interesting discovery that the north wing of the nuns' monastery still contains the royal manor given to St. Bridget in 1346 by King Magnus and his queen Blanche de Namur (Iwar Anderson, "Gården Vastenis och klostret i Watzstena," *Fornvännen*, LIII, 1958, pp. 258–271).

⁴ The iconography of St. Bridget in art is the subject of a

book by A. Lindblom, *Den heliga Birgitta, Bildverk i skulptur och måleri från Sveriges medeltid*, Stockholm, 1918. Apart from one miniature in the Morgan Library the representations treated in this paper are not considered by Lindblom, whose attention at that time was mainly directed toward panel paintings and sculptures in Sweden.

⁵ The *bullæ canonizationis* is printed in *Revelationes s. Brigittæ*, ed. C. Durante, Antwerp, 1611, n.p. (at the beginning).

ninge, and the Spanish bishop and refugee Alfonso Pecha de Vadaterra. The latter, whom she met in 1369-70 in Italy, was certainly the most competent Latinist of the four, and to him she entrusted the final editing of her heavenly wisdom before she died.*

Not all the existing copies of the *Liber celestis revelationum* have as yet been collected and collated, but good preparatory work has been done, particularly by K. B. Westman.⁷ He proposes a division of the manuscripts known to him into three main classes, in the oldest of which Book IV has only 130, Book VI only 109, and Book VIII only 58 chapters. It seems likely that he is correct in assuming this to be the version of the text which was edited by Alfonso and presented to the first two papal commissions for the canonization of the Swedish mystic.

As might be expected the oldest manuscripts of this class are all Italian in origin. Some are ordinary textbooks, but no less than four of them are distinguished by calligraphical script, ornaments, and illustrations:

I. Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS IV. G. 2 (Figs. 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22). Lit.: H. Schück, "Några anmärkningar om Birgittas Revelationer," *K. Vitt. Historie och Antiquitets-Akademiens handlingar*, XIII:1, 1901, p. 54, n. 59; A. Daneu Lattanzi, *Il "Liber celestis revelationum" di Santa Brigida in un codice campano della seconda metà del sec. XIV*, Palermo, n.d. (1955).

II. New York, The Pierpont Morgan Library, M. 498 (Figs. 1, 5, 7, 9, 11, 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23-26). Lit.: P. d'Ancona, "Il Liber celestium revelationum sanctae Brigidae illustrato da un miniatore senese della prima metà del sec. XV," *Bibliofilia*, XIV, 1912, pp. 1-5; K. B. Westman, "Två handskrifter af Birgittas Revelationer," *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, XIV, 1913, pp. 21-23; Belle da Costa Greene and Meta P. Harrsen, *The Pierpont Morgan Library. Exhibition of Illuminated Manuscripts held at the New York Public Library*, New York, 1934, p. 45, no. 95; Meta Harrsen and George K. Boyce, *Italian Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, New York, 1953, pp. 25-26, no. 46.

III. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS I. III. 23 (Fig. 3). Lit.: J. Pasini, *Codices manuscripti bibliothecae Regiae Taurensis*, Turin, 1749, II, p. 49, no. CLXVI; F. Carta, C. Cipolla, C. Frati, *Monumenta paleographica sacra. Atlante paleographico-artistico*, Turin, 1898, pl. LXII.

IV. Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, MS (olim Peteropolitanus) Lat. Q. v. 1, 123 (Fig. 4). Lit.: A. de Laborde, "Les principaux manuscrits à peintures conservés dans l'ancienne Bibliothèque Impériale publique de St. Pétersbourg," *Bulletin de la Société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures*, 18th yr., 1937, pp. 41-42, no. 42; S. Sawicka, "Les principaux manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Varsovie," *Bulletin de la Société française de reproductions de manuscrits à peintures*, 19th yr., 1938, pp. 86-96, no. 11, pl. XII.

* These facts are to be found in all the usual biographies, some of which may be cited here: J. Bueus, "De S. Birgitta vidua," in *Acta Sanctorum*, Oct. IV, 368-484, Paris, 1868; F. Hammerich, *Den bellige Birgitta og Kirken i Norden*, Copenhagen, 1863; Comtesse de Flavigny, *Sainte Brigitte de Suède*, Paris, 1892; E. Fogelclou, *Birgitta*, Stockholm, 1919; J. Jørgensen, *Den bellige Birgitta af Vadstena*, Copenhagen, 1941-43, 2 vols.

⁷ *Birgitta-studier*, Uppsala, 1911, I, pp. 44-47, and Excurs. A, pp. 263-272. Also K. B. Westman, "Två handskrifter av Birgit-

tas Revelationer," *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, XIV, 1913, pp. 21-23; S. Kraft, *Textstudier till Birgittas Revelationer*, Uppsala, 1929. I have not been able to use A. Birkenmaier, "La Rédaction primitive des Révélations de Sainte Brigitte, à propos d'un manuscrit de la Bibliothèque de Varsovie," *Congrès des bibliothécaires à Varsovie le 3 déc. 1930*. A Swedish commission, under the direction of Professor J. Svennung of the University of Uppsala, has been created for a new edition of the writings of St. Bridget.

Through an unhappy fate two of these books are no longer available for study. The Turin codex was destroyed in the fire of 1904 and the Warsaw manuscript perished during or after the last World War.⁸ From descriptions and reproductions of both manuscripts published before they were lost we can however see that the illustration cycle is the same in them as in the New York manuscript, which in its initials closely conforms with the Palermo codex.

In its complete state, which today none of the books can document, the cycle contains the following representations:

A. Whole-page pictures (Figs. 1, 3-5)

1. Frontispiece to Book I: St. Bridget receiving her heavenly revelations in the monastery at Alvastra (Fig. 1).

In the bottom zone of the picture St. Bridget is seen to the right sitting beneath a desk and receiving from above two beams of light. To the left a priest assisted by a server celebrates mass in front of an altar. He is elevating the Host out of which emerges a naked human figure carrying a scroll in one hand, while fire descends upon him from heaven. An angel with outstretched arms is seen connecting the two episodes with each other. Under him is a pilgrim's staff and hat, the latter with a label which may well be a diminutive Veronica picture.

The rest of the picture is devoted to a representation of heaven in three registers. First are depicted two groups of patriarchs and saints floating upward on clouds; then the Twelve Apostles seated in two groups of six on thrones, and between them in the center the figures of Abraham carrying souls, David playing the zither, and John the Baptist pointing toward Christ and Mary in the uppermost register; turned to the right and seated in a mandorla, they are surrounded by cherubim. On both sides of the mandorla are small groups of angels, some of them carrying attributes of Christ (banner, globe, scepter, scourge, and scrolls). The beams of light descending on St. Bridget emanate from the hands of Christ and the Virgin.

2. Frontispiece to Book v: St. Bridget on horseback on her way to Vadstena receives the vision of the monk on the ladder questioning Christ (Figs. 3, 4).

Christ and the Virgin are again seated side by side in a mandorla surrounded by cherubim. On both sides stand groups of saints. The Virgin sends a scroll down to St. Bridget from her lap and with her left hand she is pointing to Christ. Another scroll emanates from the mouth of Christ and meets a scroll coming from the head of a Dominican friar perched high up on the ladder which reaches from the lower left corner of the picture up to the mandorla.

Behind the ladder lies the stately town of Vadstena with its citizens looking out from a balcony or proceeding in groups from the city gate. St. Bridget approaches on a white horse and looks up with hands raised to heaven. A group of men follow her on horseback, one probably being her confessor Matthias or Petrus Olavi. The golden background is checkered with large squares.

3. Frontispiece to Book VIII: St. Bridget receiving a book with revelations from heaven passes it on to her two confessors who in turn present it to the kings on earth (Fig. 5).

The picture is divided into two parts. In the upper part St. Bridget is seen kneeling to the left, receiving from the hand of Christ the book of *Revelations*. Beside Christ is the Virgin. Both

⁸ I owe this information to Mr. S. Lorentz, Director of the Warsaw Museum of Art, whom I want to thank sincerely for his assistance.

bend down from a starry segment of heaven, and are flanked by adoring saints, all in half-figure above clouds. The book is received by two kneeling ecclesiastics, an Augustinian canon in black and what appears to be a Cistercian monk in a white frock, i.e., Alfonso de Vadaterra and probably Petrus Olavi of Alvastra. Behind them may be seen a desk and two seats.

In the lower part the two confessors kneel in front of a king (or emperor) seated on a throne and flanked by four pairs of kings and queens. The ecclesiastic in the black habit presents the book to the enthroned king. Under the throne are seated on the ground a lady in black, perhaps St. Bridget's daughter Catherine, and a man with a capuche on his head. To the left are a group of laymen, courtiers and burghers; to the right a group of ecclesiastics, bishops and monks.

B. Historiated initials (Figs. 7-26)

1. Initial *S(tupor)*, Prologue of Master Matthias.

Above: St. Bridget kneels before Christ and the Virgin, descending to her in a mandorla from the sky. Below: the author of the prologue, seated at a desk, speaks to a group of persons seated in front of him (Figs. 7, 8).

2. Initial *E(go)*, Book I of the *Revelations*.

Above: Christ and the Virgin are seated in a mandorla carried by four angels. Below: St. Bridget seated on the ground in front of a desk is writing and looking up to the vision in heaven (Figs. 9, 10).

3. Initial *F(ilius)*, Book II.

Above: Christ in the sky talks to St. Bridget. Below: St. Bridget is kneeling, looking up at Christ, while in front of her the Devil is arguing (Figs. 11, 12).

4. Initial *I(esus)*, Book III.

From a segment in heaven Christ hands St. Bridget a book, which she passes on to a bishop, probably Alfonso de Vadaterra, standing before her (Figs. 13, 14).

5. Initial *A(pparuit)*, Book IV.

Below, St. Bridget is kneeling looking up to a vision above of St. John the Evangelist as a naked youth beside a cauldron with boiling oil (Figs. 15, 16).

6. Initial *U(idi)*, Book V.

St. Bridget kneels in prayer before a vision of Christ and the Virgin seated in a mandorla carried by four angels (Figs. 17, 18).

7. Initial *M(ater)*, Book VI.

To the right St. Bridget kneels and above her in the sky Christ is seated; to the left the Virgin flies toward Him and addresses St. Bridget (Figs. 19, 20).

8. Initial *C(um)*, Book VII.

St. Bridget is kneeling beside a low desk praying to a vision of the Virgin carried in a mandorla by four angels (Figs. 21, 22).

9. Initial *O*, Prologue of Alfonso de Vadaterra to Book VIII, called *Epistola solitarii*.

Above to the left Christ hands a book to St. Bridget, who is seated at a desk. She passes it to a tonsured ecclesiastic standing below, who in his turn gives it to a messenger. To the right this messenger offers it up to a group of kings seated above (Fig. 23).

10. Initial *U(idi)*, Book VIII.

Above: St. Bridget seated at a desk writing receives a book from Christ, who followed by the Virgin approaches her from a segment in the sky. Below: two queens and two kings are seated in a row on a bench against a curtain (Fig. 24).

11. Initial *U(erba)*, *Lectio prima* of *Sermo angelicus*.

St. Bridget sitting at a desk with her hands on an open book is instructed by an angel standing beside her. Above to the right is the head of Christ in the sky from which golden rays descend to the angel (Fig. 25).

12. Initial *B(enedicta)*, *Oratio* I.

Kneeling, facing front, St. Bridget is seen holding up two scrolls, one grasped by Christ, the other by the Virgin (Fig. 26).

The historiated initials and the pictures constitute a cycle the purpose of which is not so much to illustrate the text as to substantiate its divine inspiration. Almost everywhere we see the Swedish mystic looking up toward a heavenly vision of Christ or the Virgin, or most frequently both together. On the whole, the themes are not very much varied, particularly in the initials. The figures of Christ and the Virgin and that of St. Bridget kneeling, sitting, or standing below recur again and again.⁹ She is also presented as author, *femme de lettres*. A writing desk or pulpit is placed in front of her in the whole-page picture preceding Book I (Figs. 1, 2) and in the initials of Books I, VII, and VIII. In that of Book VII it is unusually low, possibly meant to be portable. In that of Book I, where it is high, the humility of the Saint is expressed by her position on the ground.

The different books of the *Revelations*, not always distinctive in their content, did not offer sufficient individuality to inspire artistic invention.¹⁰ The companion figures of St. Bridget represented in some initials are for the most part mentioned in the rubrics. In Book II the Devil is allowed to enter the stage, because the rubric of the first chapter starts with the words "The Son gives the Bride advice against the Devil."¹¹ Similarly Book III, which opens with the rubric "Admonitions and instruction to a bishop, how to order his meals, his garments, and his prayer," shows a bishop standing opposite the Saint and receiving a book from her. "The words of St. John the Evangelist that no deed will remain unrewarded" at the beginning of Book IV explains why in the initial St. Bridget kneels before a vision of the naked St. John and the cauldron. Otherwise the least monotonous compositions are those of Book VIII and its prologue, since here the kings and queens, to whom the Revelations collected in this particular book are addressed, had to be represented.

The whole-page pictures agree in content with the historiated initials, the main difference being that their larger areas allow a richer *mise en scène* with a greater number of participants in heaven as well as on earth.

⁹ The appearance of Christ and His Mother within the same mandorla is a most striking feature and occurs, so far as I know, nowhere else in art in exactly the same way. It is clearly due to the inspiration of St. Bridget's own words and the strong emphasis put by her on the role of the Virgin as coregent in heaven. Cf. Bk. I, chs. 9, 35, 50, 51.

¹⁰ A. Lindblom, "Den heliga Birgittas uppenbarelser illustrerade i medeltidskonsten," *Ord och bild*, xxiv, 1915, p. 514. For

the composition of the different Books cf. H. Schück, "Några anmärkingar om Birgittas revelationer," *Kungl. Vitterhets-Historie-och Antiquitetakademiens Handlingar*, xxxiii, 1901, pp. 198qq.; R. Steffen, *Den heliga Birgittas uppenbarelser i urval och översättning*, Stockholm, 1909, p. xxxiii; Westman, *Birgitta-Studier*, p. 23; and Kraft, *op.cit.*, pp. 55ff.

¹¹ In the Morgan manuscript the Devil is now lacking but there are traces of his having been erased by some pious reader.

In the first picture (Fig. 1) the heavenly court—the *exercitus angelorum* and the *infinita multitudo sanctorum*—is depicted with the same fullness as in a monumental painting. On the whole the compositions with their horizontal zones running in “tiers” one upon the other remind us very much of Trecento frescoes of the Last Judgment, so that it would be tempting to ascribe their invention to a wall painter casually employed as a miniaturist.

St. Bridget herself in every picture plays her role as the pious and noble visionary which she claimed to be. Beams of light descend upon her head.¹² In the last picture (Fig. 5) Christ even rises to offer her directly the Heavenly Book. In the first picture her inspiration is co-ordinated with another scene of communion between heaven and earth: the transformation of the Host in the elevated hands of the priest into a living “soul,” seen coming out of it as a naked youth, while fire descends upon it from above (Fig. 1).

This event is described by St. Bridget in Book VI, Chapter 86, of her *Revelations*.¹³ One Whitsunday the “Bride” saw fire descend upon the altar when the priest raised the Host, and the Host itself was transformed into the Lamb of God having the face of a man; and she heard a voice saying: “As you see fire descending on the altar, so my fire descended upon the Apostles.” In another vision she saw in the hands of the priest a youth *mirae pulchritudinis* saying: “I bless you who believe; to those who do not believe, I will be a judge.”¹⁴ The scroll in the hand of the little figure evidently means that he is speaking.

Perhaps the picture at the same time hints at another episode from the legend of the Saint. At the beginning of her career as a prophetess St. Bridget was staying at the Cistercian monastery of Alvastra, where her husband had just been buried. A pious priest, Dom Gerekin, who himself sometimes had supernatural visions and who, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, used to see the Host quicken in his hands, at first took offense when St. Bridget, a woman, mingled with the brethren of the monastery. An angel then appeared to him, telling him that St. Bridget was the friend of God who had come there to collect at the foot of Mt. Omberg flowers destined to be scattered beyond the sea, to the very end of the world, and to cure mankind.¹⁵ The angel who is seen connecting St. Bridget with the priest, as well as the pilgrim’s equipment awaiting her below the heavenly messenger, makes this interpretation rather likely.

Similarly the second miniature before Book V (Figs. 3, 4) refers to a specific event in the life of the Saint. She was with her confessors on the way to the royal demesne of Vadstena, which had been given her for the establishment of her monastery. Riding on horseback she suddenly fell into an ecstasy and saw a vision of a ladder fixed on earth and reaching from Vadstena up to the summit of heaven. A learned man was standing upon it posing questions

¹² In *Rev.* I, 34, the Devil speaking of St. Bridget says to Christ: “Ego video quasi quoddam ardens descendere de te in eam quod sic alligat cor eius, ut nihil aliud cogitet vel diligit nisi te.”

¹³ As has already been pointed out by Westman in *Kyrkohistorisk årsskrift*, XIV, 1913, p. 22.

¹⁴ Birgitta, *Rev.* VI, 86: “Quidam sacerdos in die penthecostes celebravit primam missam in quodam monasterio. Tunc autem in ipsa elevatione corporis Christi vidit sponsa ignem descendere de coelo per totum altare et in manu sacerdotis vidit panem et in pane Agnum uiuum et in Agno faciem quasi hominis inflammantem et tunc audiuit vocem dicentem sibi: Sicut nunc

vides ignem descendere in altare, sic per simile spiritus meus sanctus descendit in Apostolos meos tali die sicut hodie, inflammans corda eorum. . . . Et iterum sponsa vidit in manu sacerdotis, in ipsa elevatione Eucharistiae iuuenem mirae pulchritudinis qui dixit: Benedico uos credentes, non credentibus ero iudex.”

¹⁵ “Noli mirari, hec est amica Dei et ad hoc venit, ut sub monte isto flores colligat, de quibus omnes etiam ultra mare et fines mundi recipient medicinam” (*Acta et processus canonizationis beate Birgittae*, ed. I. Collijn [Samlingar utgivna av Svenska fornskriftsällskapet, ser. 2], Uppsala, 1, 1924, p. 82).

to Christ with impatient and vehement gestures, as if full of deceit.¹⁶ The *Liber questionum* which then follows is entirely based upon the questions raised by the obstinate theologian and upon the wise answers given him by Christ, interrupted only by commentaries directly addressed to St. Bridget by the Mother of God. This structure of the vision is expressed in the picture by the two colliding scrolls coming from Christ and the theologian and by the scroll or beam of light falling from the lap of the Virgin upon the head of St. Bridget. With a predilection for the monumental, the artist has taken visible delight in the huge ladder and has given the Saint on her white horse, set off in profile against the large-checked background, the dignity of an equestrian monument.

The Palermo manuscript differs from the others in having no whole-page illustrations, and there is a possibility that the earliest editions had nothing but the historiated initials, the three whole-page pictures being added as an afterthought to make the whole cycle more impressive.¹⁷ This would explain why the whole-page picture in front of Book VIII, with its row of sitting kings and queens, duplicates to a certain extent the representation in the following initial. Yet the artist of the Palermo manuscript must have seen the whole-page pictures, since he has transferred from the first of them to the initial of Book I the pilgrim's staff with the hat hanging on it, using this motif to fill the space on the left side of the pulpit (Figs. 1, 10). That the hat has been turned to side view shows, however, that he did not simply copy the motif. It was a part of his own repertoire of forms.

This is only one of the specific details connecting the Palermo and the Morgan manuscripts. The scenes painted in the initials are so close not only in composition but also in execution that the two manuscripts clearly have a common origin. They must indeed be the work of one artist.¹⁸ The small differences can all be explained by the different scale of the two books, the one in Palermo measuring 375 × 260, the other in New York 269 × 186 mm. There is less resemblance in the treatment of the marginal ornaments, but here too the larger size of the Palermo manuscript has to be taken into account. It prevented the illuminator from carrying the decoration in a closed framework all around the columns of the text as we see it done in the Morgan codex. The close stylistic connection between the two manuscripts is nevertheless obvious. Particularly striking is a leaf which looks like three round berries grown together (Figs. 7-26), as well as the absence of any sort of animal or human form.

The Warsaw manuscript had almost exactly the same dimensions as the one in New York; it measured 270 × 178 mm. The reproduction of one of its full-size pictures (all that is left to judge) shows the very miniature in front of Book V which is lacking in the New York codex.¹⁹ Its figure style comes so close to that of the Morgan manuscript that we have to ascribe it to the same master.

¹⁶ This theologian cannot therefore be identified with one of the confessors of St. Bridget, as has been suggested. He is rather an anonymous symbol of the (Dominican) pride of learning.

¹⁷ If so it must have occurred very soon since of the six illuminated manuscripts of the *Revelations* known to us all the rest have (or had) the full-page pictures.

¹⁸ The fact that the name "The Master of St. Bridget" or

"The Brigittine Master" has already been used for the artist who did the woodcuts in the Nuremberg editions of the *Revelations* of 1502 (on him see H. Zimmermann in *Nordisk Tidsskrift för Bok- och Biblioteksväsen*, xiv, 1927, pp. 7-16) makes it better to allow our illuminator to remain anonymous.

¹⁹ First reproduced by S. Jaremitch in *Starye Gody*, Jan. 1914, pp. 41f.

The facts are very much the same in the case of the Turin manuscript which was lost by fire. Here too we have nothing but a reproduction of the whole-page miniature in front of the *Liber questionum*. Compared to the same scene in the Warsaw book it looks definitely inferior in quality, and must be the work of an assistant. Certain details like the fleuroné ornaments of the background or the treatment of the drapery make it, however, likely that this book too was executed in the same atelier as the other three. It may have been of a slightly later date.

A common *terminus ante quem* for all the manuscripts is provided by the fact that St. Bridget is represented without the ordinary form of halo given in the same manuscripts to the saints in heaven. Her head is surrounded only by rays of golden light. This means that the miniatures were painted before 1391, the year of her official canonization. According to Mrs. Angela Daneu Lattanzi the Palermo manuscript is mentioned in the catalogue of the Sicilian monastery, San Martino delle Scale near Palermo, as early as 1384.²⁰ On stylistic grounds it, as well as the Morgan manuscript, could even be some five or ten years earlier.²¹

At this date the complete text of St. Bridget's *Revelations* was just about to be published. As has already been mentioned, the Swedish mystic had entrusted to her last confessor, the Spanish refugee Alfonso de Vadaterra, the duty of taking care of her literary remains, in order to establish an authoritative edition of them.²² After her death this became all the more necessary for her faithful as the *Liber celestis* naturally constituted the main basis for her recognition as a saint. It is thought that Alfonso started his work about 1375 and that his edition was finished early in 1377 when the canonization process was officially initiated by a papal commission.²³ On January 15, 1378, Alfonso writes to the Swedish archbishop Birger Gregersson in Uppsala stating that the *Revelations* had already spread in Spain and at once had had a great success there (as might be expected in the country of Beatus de Liebana and the illuminated copies of his Commentary to the Apocalypse).²⁴ Copies, he goes on to say, were steadily being produced in the Kingdom of Naples and Sicily as well as in Italy, "so that their sound shall go out into all lands and their voice to the ends of the earth" (from Ps. xviii, 5).

Additional manuscripts must have been required when the first papal commission established by Gregory XI was replaced in 1378 by a new one created by Urban VI. The interest in the *Revelations* was at that time at its peak. It was a novelty in the book market in which many outsiders wanted to have their share. A later countryman of Alfonso, Cardinal Turrecremata (Torquemada), who brilliantly defended the *Revelations* at the Council of Basel in 1436, states in the speech he delivered on this occasion that in 1379 many distinguished people all over the world hastened to order copies to be executed at their expense "with exquisite care."²⁵

²⁰ Il "*Liber celestis revelationum*" di Santa Brigida in un codice campano della seconda metà del sec. xiv, Palermo, n.d.(1955).

²¹ The typewritten description of the Morgan manuscript, kindly put at my disposal by Mr. J. Plummer, points out that the costumes and helmets used serve to date the manuscript as early as ca. 1375.

²² Above, p.373.

²³ Westman, *Birgitta-studier*, 1,p.21.

²⁴ Letter quoted *ibid.*,p.21,n.5: "Et gracia Dei cotidie augetur

deuocio omnium ad beatam Brigidam et miracula tam in istis partibus quam in aliis. Libri celestes sunt iam in Yspania diulgati et ibidem recepti cum maxima deuocione et reuerencia. Et in regno Sicilie et in Ytalia et continue et cotidie plures conscribuntur, ita quod speramus, quod in omnem terram exhibit sonus eorum et in fines orbis terre verba eorum." I owe to Francis Wormald the identification of the last sentence as being a quotation from Ps.xviii,5.

²⁵ Printed as prologue in the Lübeck edition of 1492 and in

He mentions first among the subscribers the Bishop of Worms, who acquired a copy for the German emperor, and the Dominican Peter of Aragon, a relative of the French king, who brought one with him to France. The queens of Spain, Cyprus, and Sicily (Naples), of whom the latter two had met St. Bridget in the flesh, were other famous purchasers. The University of Prague, the Knights of the Teutonic Order, the cities of Rome, Genoa, and others are also mentioned.²⁶

There can be little doubt that this sudden demand could be met only by a workshop specializing for the moment in producing luxury editions of the text. It is no less obvious that this workshop must have been the same which produced the four manuscripts in Palermo, New York, Warsaw, and Turin which we have been discussing. Some of them may even have been among the very books mentioned by the Cardinal. Where was this workshop located?

If we should take the words of Turrecremata literally the atelier would have been in Rome: *scribi fecerunt Rome*. As has been pointed out to me by Dr. Undhagen, this is however an unfortunate contraction of the last words in the letter of Magnus Petri, Turrecremata's source, where it is said: *scribi fecerunt me adhuc Rome existente*. Thus the man who followed the events does not say that the books were really done in Rome, he only says that they were done while he still stayed there. A temporary Roman atelier for distributing copies of the *Revelations*, with craftsmen borrowed from another part of Italy, is not beyond the realm of possibility. But all we know about Rome as a center of illumination tends to make it rather unlikely.²⁷

Alfonso himself had written to the Archbishop of Uppsala that copies were made in 1377 in the Kingdom of Sicily; also from the stylistic point of view Naples is the most probable place of origin. The style of the miniatures is, according to Millard Meiss, wholly based on the leading painter of this city, Roberto di Oderisio.²⁸ Paolo d'Ancona, who was the first to publish the Morgan manuscript when it was still in the possession of Messrs. Olschki, thought it at that time to be the work of a Siennese master, but the present *consensus omnium* of art historians and manuscript specialists is that all the books are Neapolitan works.²⁹

later editions. The text in question runs: "Quamobrem plures principes et nobiles Romam venientes et alij suos nuncios mittentes pro libris reuelationum habendis, quos, postquam eos instanter petiuerant, in propriis suis sumptibus cum exquisita diligentia scribi fecerunt." According to the researches of C.-G. Undhagen, Cardinal Turrecremata got his information about the first official edition of the *Revelations* from an excellent source: a letter written half a century earlier by an eyewitness, Magnus Petri, Confessor general of the Brigittine order (d. 1396). See C.-G. Undhagen, "Une source du prologue (Chap. 1) aux Révelations de Sainte Brigitte par le cardinal Jean de Turrecremata," *Eranos*, LVIII, 1960, pp. 214-226.

²⁶ "Dominus episcopus Wormaciensis fecit unum librum scribi Rome quem deportauit ad imperatorem. Frater Petrus de Arragonia, ordinis fratrum minorum, consanguineus regis Francie, secundum, quem detulit in Franciam. Nuncius regine Castelle de Hispania tertium. Nuncius regine Cipri quartum. Nuncius regine Cecilie quintum. Nuncius studij Pragensis sextum. Frater Petrus de Burgundia, ordinis minorum theologus maximus, septimum. Nuncius cruciferorum de Prusia octauum, Romani, Ianuenses, Wratislouienses ac plurime alie

civitates et regnorum nobiles libros istarum sanctarum reuelationum pro se scribi fecerunt Rome."

²⁷ M. Salmi, *Italian Miniatures*, New York, 1954, p. 33, is of the opinion that Rome with the transfer of the Holy See to Avignon "became passively receptive to art instead of contributing actively."

²⁸ See O. Morisani, *Pittura del Trecento in Napoli*, Naples, 1947, pp. 82-88 and figs. 120-126. I wish to thank Millard Meiss for having drawn my attention to these parallels.

²⁹ P. D'Ancona, "Il Liber celestium reuelationum sanctae Brigidae illustrato da un miniatore senese della prima metà del sec. xv," *Bibliofilia*, XIV, 1912, pp. 1-5. In favor of Naples are M. Harrsen and G. Boyce, *Italian Manuscripts in the Pierpont Morgan Library*, New York, 1953, pp. 25-26, no. 46; P. Toesca, *Storia dell'arte italiana*, II: *Il Trecento*, Turin, 1951, p. 830, n. 37; Salmi, *op.cit.*, p. 36 (earlier Salmi had, however, considered the Morgan manuscript to be Florentine; see his paper in *Accademie e Biblioteche d'Italia*, XX, 1952, p. 20); Lattanzi, *op.cit.*, pp. 8-9; S. Sawicka, "Les principaux manuscrits à peintures de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Varsovie" (cited in text), pp. 86ff.

Naples played a considerable part in the life of St. Bridget, especially during her last years, and it was here that immediately after her death her devotees, anticipating the judgment of the Church, had the first devotional pictures of her painted. The *Acta et processus canonizationis beate Birgittæ* mentions no less than four Neapolitan churches having such pictures of the Swedish mystic, the most important of them being that of Sta. Maria de Carmelo, painted upon the order of the wealthy family of Mormile.³⁰ Of all places Naples was the one prepared for executing not only portraits of the Saint, but also the series of miniatures to illustrate her *Revelations*. Under the reign of the house of Anjou Naples is well known to have favored the art of illumination, and under Queen Giovanna several ateliers were still active there.³¹

Alfonso spent the last years of his life in the Monastery of S. Girolamo in Quarto near Genoa.³² The Spanish order of St. Jerome had been founded as a hermit order by a brother of Alfonso's, Pedro Fernandez Pecha, and had been recognized as a branch of the Augustinian order by Pope Gregory XI in Avignon in 1374, perhaps in the presence of Alfonso, who at that time acted as a confidant of the Pope.³³ Some Spanish members of the order, who after the outbreak of the great schism did not wish to submit to the domination of Avignon, commanded by Juan I of Castille, went into exile, and founded in 1382 near Genoa the Monastery of S. Girolamo in Quarto.³⁴ Curiously enough, St. Bridget is known to have stopped at Quarto on her journey to Rome in 1350, in order to pray in front of a miraculous crucifix preserved in a hermitage.³⁵ This tradition might well have been the reason for Alfonso's choosing the place as his domicile for the evening of his life. But the Spanish hermits were few and too old to keep the monastery going, and in order to preserve it Alfonso, before he died, gave it over to a branch of the Benedictine order, the Olivetani of Siena.

Now the Morgan manuscript of the *Revelations* has a colophon at the end saying: *Iste liber reuelacionum beate Brigide est conuentus fratrum sancti Jeronimi de Quarto riperie ordinis Montis Oliveti*.³⁶ Since the manuscript could hardly have been prepared in this monastery, there is every chance that it was brought there by Alfonso himself. That the monastery after his death preserved his Brigittine papers as a precious treasure is shown by a copy, probably of the Morgan manuscript, taken there in 1399 and now preserved in the Vatican (Vat. lat. 3826). At the end of Book VI the scribe has written: *Explicit liber VI scriptus et correctus ex originalibus quondam venerabilis heremite Alfonsij quondam episcopi genensis anno M^oCCC^oIC^o Janue in monasterio nostro sancti Jeronimi*.³⁷ This manuscript, although by no means a careless

³⁰ The other churches were S. Giorgio Maggiore, S. Eligio, and S. Antonio de Vienna *extra muros*. A Genoese nobleman, who had a sister living in Naples, also brought a devotional picture of St. Bridget with him to his home town. See *Acta et processus canonizationis beate Birgittæ*, ed. I. Collijn, II, pp. 166-173, 233.

³¹ See Salmi, *op. cit.*, p. 36.

³² There is unfortunately no biography of Alfonso, whose role in the ecclesiastical history of the 14th century is by no means negligible. Some information can be found in Westman, *Birgitta-studier*, I, pp. 19f., I. Collijn, *Birgittinska gestalter*, Stockholm, 1929, pp. 116-119, and M. Seidlmayer, "Ein Gehilfe der hl. Birgitta von Schweden: Alfons von Jaen," *Historisches Jahrbuch im Auftrage der Görres-Gesellschaft*, L, 1930, pp. 1-18.

³³ José de Sigüenza, *Historia de la Orden de San Jerónimo*, in *Nueva Biblioteca de Autores Españoles*, 81, Madrid, 1907; Gil Gonzales Davila, *Teatro eclesiastico de las Iglesias Metropolitanas y*

Catedrales de los Reynos de las dos Castillas, Madrid, 1645, I, pp. 250-252; C. Eubel, *Hierarchia catholica medii aevi*, Münster, 1913, I, p. 273; M. Heimbucher, *Die Orden und Kongregationen der katholischen Kirche*, Paderborn, 1907-08, I, pp. 481ff. Alfonso was sent as a papal vicar to St. Catherine of Siena in the latter part of 1374 (E. Gardner, *Saint Catherine of Siena*, London, 1907, pp. 128f.).

³⁴ Seidlmayer, *op. cit.*, p. 18.

³⁵ Comtesse de Flavigny, *Sainte Brigitte de Suède*, p. 233; R. P. Burlamacchi (*Vita della Ser. S. Brigida*, pp. 138, 398) paid a visit to the monastery in Quarto because it was thought to be built on the spot where St. Bridget had stayed.

³⁶ Westman, "Två handskrifter af Birgittas Revelationer," pp. 21-23.

³⁷ I owe to the courtesy of Monsignore Albareda, Prefetto of the Vatican Library, microfilm photos of this manuscript.

piece of penmanship, is without illustrations and its initials have nothing to do with those found in the Morgan and Palermo manuscripts. We have no reason to suppose that Alfonso ever transferred the workshop for presentation copies of the *Revelations* to S. Girolamo in Quarto. What he left there were only his own books and papers as a precious memory of the Swedish visionary in whose service he had been active.

II

The canonization of St. Bridget in 1391 by the Roman pope initiated the great development of her order in those countries which remained loyal to St. Peter's Chair. In Florence a nobleman, Antonius de Albertis, founded a Brigittine monastery called Paradiso at the gateway of his city.³⁸ From the end of the fourteenth and the beginning of the fifteenth century we have again a few illuminated manuscripts with representations of St. Bridget, now regularly provided with an ordinary halo.

First may be mentioned a manuscript in Siena (Biblioteca Comunale 1:v: 25-26) in two volumes containing an Italian translation of the *Revelations* and the *Sermo angelicus*, written in 1398 at the command of the Siense clerk Ser Christofano di Gano Guidini, known as a friend of St. Catherine of Siena.³⁹ It contains two miniatures representing St. Bridget in the act of writing her *Revelations* under the inspiration of Christ, who appears as a bust above a cloud (I, f. 11v and II, f. 10), and at the beginning of the *Sermo angelicus* a third representation of St. Bridget receiving a scroll from an angel (II, f. 233v). The illustrator seems to be a Siense follower of Lippo Vanni.

The other two manuscripts are now in Swedish collections. One contains the *Liber celestis imperatoris ad reges* (the collection added as Book VIII to the *Revelations* by Alfonso) and two chapters of Book VI. It formerly belonged to the Phillips Collection in Cheltenham, but was acquired in 1947 by a Swedish bibliophile, the late Captain Thore Virgin at Quarnfors, after whose death it came into the hands of a private collector in Stockholm.⁴⁰ It has at the beginning an initial with the bust of St. Bridget, and as a frontispiece to the Book of the Heavenly Emperor a miniature representing St. Bridget standing in the center against a checkered background and presenting her Revelations in the form of scrolls to two kings kneeling at her left and right sides, while she is turning her face toward the busts of Christ and the Virgin appearing as heavenly inspirers in the upper left corner of the picture (Fig. 27). The kings have deposited their headgear on the ground, and from the form of the hat in front of the king to the left one would like to assume that the artist had some Oriental ruler—perhaps the Emperor of Constantinople—in mind. The king to the right who has a

³⁸ T. Höjer, *Studier i Vadstena klostrets och birgittinordens historia*, Uppsala, 1905, pp. 122-129; also D. Moreni, *Notizie storiche dei contorni di Firenze*, Florence, 1794, v, pp. 127ff.

³⁹ C. Bildt, "Hur S:ta Birgitta skref," *Ord och bild*, v, 1896, pp. 414-416; O. Wieselgren, "En Siena-handskrift av Birgittas Revelationer," *Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen*, xi, 1924, pp. 53-55. The inscription at the end of Vol. I runs (according to Wieselgren): "Questo libro e della compagnia de la uergine Maria di Siena. A qua le fece scrivere Ser Christofano di Gano notaio dell'ospedale de suoi denari e di queglii di Meio

di Giacomo che ando al sepolchro per non tornare. Nel MCCCCLXXXVIII. Pregate Dio per loro." The name of Ser Christofano di Gano is also repeated in the inscription of Vol. II, but not that of Meio di Giacomo.

⁴⁰ Cheltenham, Phillips MS 11921. See *Gyllene böcker (Nationalmusei utställningskatalog no. 193)*, Stockholm, 1952, p. 54, no. 90; J. V. Johansson, *Från Gutenbergbibeln till Gösta Berlings saga*, Stockholm, 1952, pp. 17f. (color reproduction opposite the title page). The manuscript now belongs to Adv. Rolf Wistrand, Stockholm.

golden crown at his side would then be a Western monarch. St. Bridget herself has a crown at her feet, reminding us of the fact that she was regarded as of royal descent, *principessa di Nericia*.

The other manuscript belongs to the Royal Library in Stockholm (cod. A 75) and contains the *Regula sancti Salvatoris* as well as some of the *Revelationes extravagantes*, omitted by Alfonso in his first edition.⁴¹ The title page has a similar centralizing composition (Fig. 29). St. Bridget is sitting almost frontally on a throne, giving with her right hand a book to a group of kneeling Brigittine nuns on the left side and another to some Brigittine monks on the right. Her face is again turned sideward to Christ and the Virgin coming down to her from the left, counterbalanced on the right by an angel carrying a cross and a book. St. Bridget has again a crown at her feet.

The two manuscripts may well come from the same atelier. The marginal borders are extremely similar and would fit best into the school of Florence. A third manuscript of the same school is a Psalter in Madrid (Biblioteca nacional, Vit. 22-10) which unfortunately does not contain any Calendar or Litany.⁴² A curious fact is that the composition shown in the Stockholm miniature recurs almost literally more than a century later in an altarpiece by G. A. Sogliani, now in the depot of the Uffizi Gallery (Fig. 30).⁴³ Since Sogliani can hardly have used the miniature as his model, it is most likely that both go back to some early fifteenth-century painting in the monastery of Paradiso. The composition, which may be called an apotheosis of the Brigittine order was evidently very popular, since it is also found, with some variations, in a German manuscript of the latter half of the fifteenth century in Vienna (Nationalbibliothek cod. 1316), which contains a series of Brigittine hymns, prayers, and legends (Fig. 31).⁴⁴ Here St. Bridget is shown inspired by an angel looking over her shoulder. The pilgrim's equipment placed behind her pulpit resembles that we have already seen in the manuscripts ordered by Alfonso.

Even in the second half of the fifteenth century the writings of St. Bridget enjoyed a certain vogue in some Italian circles, as is documented by a fine copy of the *Liber celestis imperatoris ad reges* in Italian, now in the University Library of Oslo (cod. 1992, 2°). The first initial (f. 2) shows the book being given by Alfonso to a group of kings; in the second initial (f. 25) the Emperor of Heaven presents it to St. Bridget, who kneels in the presence of four standing kings eager to receive it (Fig. 28). The border with inhabited white vine-scrolls and with heads in medallions marking the corners could well be of Florentine workmanship.^{44a}

⁴¹ *Birgitta-utställningen* (Statens Historiska Museum), eds. I. Collijn and A. Lindblom, Uppsala, 1918, p. 139, no. 111; *Gyllene böcker*, p. 54, no. 91.

⁴² J. Dominguez Bordona, *Manuscritos con pinturas*, Madrid, 1933, I, p. 399, no. 951, fig. 340.

⁴³ Sogliani executed the altarpiece in 1523 (see Thieme-Becker, *Künstlerlexikon*, s.v. Sogliani). According to information kindly given me by Dr. Luisa Becherucci, it passed from Paradiso to the Ospedale di Sta. Maria Nuova and from there to the Accademia where it was exposed until recently.

⁴⁴ Fr. Unterkircher, *Inventar der illuminierten Handschriften, Inkunabeln und Frühdrucke der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek* (Muscion, new ser. 2, 11), Vienna, 1957, I, p. 41. The book comes, according to Prof. Unterkircher, from the Adelige-Damen-Stift Hall in Ti-

rol. A charter, copied on fs. 8f., seems to indicate that it was originally connected either with the Brigittine monastery Marienkron near Stralsund or with Cologne.

^{44a} Since this paper was given to the printer two more Italian manuscripts with representations of St. Bridget have come to my notice. One is a copy of the *Revelations* in the Ambrosian Library at Milan (*D. 89 sup.*), which has at the beginning of Book 1 an initial *E(go)* showing in the upper part of the letter Christ surrounded by angels, and in the lower part St. Bridget kneeling beside an altar. The miniature is stylistically akin to the Neapolitan books discussed in this paper, but must be somewhat later, since St. Bridget is provided with an ordinary halo. The second manuscript is a prayer book for the last days of Holy Week written in 1511 for Pope Julius II by a nun of the Benedictine Abbey of

Not long after this manuscript was written the first printed editions of the *Revelations* appeared, and thenceforward hand-written copies were not required. At the same time woodcuts and engravings replaced the miniatures as illustrations in the books and as single leaves for devotional purposes.⁴⁵ Practically all this printing was done in Germany. Italy had ceased to be the leading country in the distribution of the messages of the Swedish mystic.

III

Among the notable persons who had copies of the *Revelations* made for them in 1379 Cardinal Turrecremata mentions one of the famous theologians of the time, Friar Peter of Burgundy.⁴⁶ What Turrecremata tells about this manuscript is supplemented by a note added about 1500 to a manuscript of the *Revelations* which has come from the Brigittine house of Marienboem (or Marienbaum, between Cleve and Wesel) to the Prussian State Library in Berlin (Theol. Lat. Fol. 33) and is now deposited in the University Library of Tübingen.⁴⁷ It states that Peter of Burgundy presented the book to Mary, Duchess of Burgundy, daughter of John the Fearless and wife of Count—after 1417 Duke—Adolph II of Cleve.⁴⁸ She in her turn gave it to the monastery of Marienboem which she founded ca. 1457–58 toward the end of her life.⁴⁹ That the Berlin manuscript can be the very book which Peter of Burgundy procured in Rome, as the author of the note seems to believe, is out of the question. Instead of being written in Italy in the last quarter of the fourteenth century, it is a much later manuscript executed in Northern Europe not earlier than ca. 1460. The contradiction is, however, at once resolved, if we assume that the Berlin manuscript is rather a copy made in Marienboem from the Italian codex given to Mary, Duchess of Cleve, by Peter of Burgundy and by her to the Brigittine monastery.⁵⁰

That this is the case is also confirmed by the pictures and the historiated initials of the Berlin manuscript (Fig. 32). They show that the model was an Italian manuscript of exactly the same type as the one in the Morgan Library. As copies they are extremely crude and none of them would deserve to be reproduced here, were they not peculiarly interesting because

Murate at Florence. It belonged to the Dyson Perrins Collection at Malvern, England (Sir George Warner, *Descriptive Catalogue of Illuminated Manuscripts in the Library of C.W. Dyson Perrins*, London, 1920, No. 94), but was recently sold at Sotheby & Co., London (sale catalogue Dec. 19, 1959, lot 88). On fol. 168 at the beginning of the Fifteen Oes of St. Bridget the Swedish mystic is seen kneeling before a crucifix which bends toward her, speaking to her according to the legend. I owe a photograph of the initial to the courtesy of Mr. A. Hobson, author of the scholarly sale catalogue referred to above.

⁴⁶ See I. Collijn, *Iconographia Birgittina typographica*, Uppsala-Stockholm, 1915–18, fasc. 1–2.

⁴⁷ There is no great Franciscan theologian about 1379 known under the name of Peter of Burgundy. Possibly Pierre ad Boves (aux Bœufs) is meant. He was *theologus universitatis Parisiensis et ecclesiastes excimus* and confessor to Isabelle, Queen of France. See J.H. Sbaralca, *Supplementum et castigatio ad scriptores trium ordinum S. Francisci a Waddingo aliisque descriptos*, new ed., Rome, 1921, pt. II, pp. 331f. I owe this information to my friend

Fil. Dr. O. von Feilitzen.

⁴⁸ I wish to thank Dr. Hornung, Librarian at the Depot of the former Prussian State Library, University Library, Tübingen, for his kindness in allowing me to have microfilms taken from the manuscript, as well as for supplementary information. The note has been published *in extenso* by Schück, "Några anmärkingar om Birgittas revelationer," pp. 53f., n. 58.

⁴⁹ A book of hours (London, Brit. Mus., Egerton 859) possibly made for Mary of Burgundy is published by Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, p. 106, figs. 133, 134.

⁵⁰ Marienboem or Marienbaum was a daughter house of the Dutch monastery Marienwater in 1457 or 1458. The Divine Office was first said there in 1460, but only in 1477 was it really in working order as a "full" Brigittine convent. See C.F.W. von Nettelblatt, *Vorläufige, kurzgefasste Nachricht von einigen Klöstern der H. Schwedischen Birgitta ausserhalb Schweden*, Frankfurt-Ulm, 1764, pp. 68–76, 151–161, and T. Höjer, *Studier i Vadstena klostrets och birgittinordens historia*, Uppsala, 1905, pp. 244f.

⁵¹ See Westman, *Birgitta-studier*, 1, p. 22, n. 2, and p. 264, n. 1.

they betray as plainly as anyone can desire a female hand—that of one of the Brigittine nuns of Marienboem.

It is a matter of discussion whether it is at all possible to talk about a feminine style as opposed to a masculine in the history of art. There are many women who paint or draw in a way which does not visibly differ from that of their male colleagues. Yet I think there is a style or a tendency which deserves to be called typically feminine, and I might cite as good examples of it the paintings of Berthe Morisot (as compared to Manet) or of Marie Laurencin (as compared to Matisse). The history of medieval illumination also contains several cases of manuscripts decorated by typically female hands. They are generally characterized by a certain lack of plastic structure, a design layout which carries one's thoughts to the art of embroidery—and may in fact be influenced by this particular form of handicraft. A miniature which on these grounds I would think to be by a nun is the one already mentioned in the Viennese collection of Brigittine hymns and legends (Fig. 31). It displays all the looseness of a typically feminine design. Even more "thread-like" is the design in the *Revelations* of Marienboem. Here the feminine style appears almost pushed toward caricature. There is no inscription saying that the miniatures and initials in these books were executed by nuns, but I believe that most people would agree with me in thinking that this is the simplest explanation for their peculiar style.

There is no mention in Turrecremata's list that a copy of Alfonso's edition was sent to Sweden, but it goes without saying that the daughter of St. Bridget, Catherine Ulfdotter, who was in Rome at the time of its publication, must have secured a copy for the convent of Vadstena, of which she was the first abbess. That she was aware of what the fine arts meant for spreading the fame of her mother is shown by a postscript added by her to the letter from Alfonso to the Archbishop of Uppsala already mentioned.⁵¹ People here (in Italy) are astonished, she says, to hear that paintings of St. Bridget are virtually unknown in Sweden, whereas the Italian churches are full of them and even the Pope has one in his chamber.

That a very well produced Italian copy of Alfonso's first edition existed in Vadstena in the fifteenth century can be shown with the help of contemporary documents. One, so far unpublished but perhaps the most important of them all, has been brought to my attention by Dr. C.-G. Undhagen, who intends to publish it in the near future.⁵² A daughter convent of Vadstena on the other side of the Baltic Sea had asked in Vadstena if the Latin writings of St. Bridget were by her own hand or not, and the answer given was that the *Regula sancti Salvatoris* as well as the *Liber celestis revelationum* had been transmitted by the most pious and excellent hermit magister Alphonsus, each volume *litteris aureis* (=initials) *et picturis variis decenter ornatum*, as everybody could see who wished to do so, viz. in Vadstena.

Another document mentioning this book is a report on the examination held in Vadstena in 1417 concerning the Swedish saint Brynolf.⁵³ On that occasion the commission was shown the manuscript of the *Revelations* belonging to the library of the convent, and it is described in

⁵¹ First published by G.E. Klemming, *Ur en antecknares samlingar*, Stockholm, 1868-73, p. 104, and rendered by A. Lindblom into modern Swedish in *Den heliga Birgitta*, p. 9.

⁵² I must thank Dr. Undhagen not only for giving me access

to this document but also for reading the present paper in manuscript and offering me his criticism of it.

⁵³ See *Scriptores rerum Suevicarum mediæ ævi*, III: 2, p. 176, and H. Schück, "Den nyfunna Birgittahandskriften," *Samlaren*, VIII, 1887, pp. 17 of.

the minutes of the meeting as being *in pergameno et littera ytalica conscriptum*.⁵⁴ The fact that it was written in "Italian script," as are the manuscripts in New York and Palermo, leaves no doubt that the book belonged to the set of presentation copies produced under the supervision of Alfonso and was thus identical with the one described in the previous document.

Probably the same book was shown by the Confessor-general of the Brigittine order, Magnus Petri, to the Roman cardinals at the canonization of St. Bridget in 1391. In the report of this event it is said to be *ingentem librum deforis auratum eleganterque ornatum*.⁵⁵

This famous Vadstena codex no longer exists, and of the manuscripts of the *Revelations* in Swedish public libraries none contain illustrations or historiated initials. It therefore seemed to be a most interesting new discovery when in the library of Eric'sberg Castle (some 120 kilometers southwest of Stockholm) an illuminated manuscript of the *Revelations*, previously unknown, was shown to me at an excursion with the Friends of the National Museum.⁵⁶ Its size, 410 × 299 mm., is almost exactly the same as the largest of the Italian manuscripts discussed above, that in Palermo. Certainly it would deserve to be called *ingentem librum*, as was the one in Vadstena. That it could not be this very book was, on the other hand, clear at first sight: it could not be dated earlier than the beginning of the fifteenth century and the script, the pen-work initials, and the miniatures were obviously not Italian, but "Northern" in type (Figs. 2, 6, 33, 35-38). On the other hand, it was certainly a copy of an Italian model of the "Alfonsinian" type: it contained exactly the same cycle of illustrations.⁵⁷ Was it, then, a Swedish reproduction of the famous Vadstena de luxe manuscript, just as the Berlin manuscript was a copy of the Italian codex given to Marienboem by Mary of Cleve?

I must confess that this hypothesis at first appeared very tempting. Yet it must be abandoned in the face of serious objections. The style of the figures finds no real parallels in Swedish art, or, for that matter, in the school of Vadstena as we know it through wall paintings and embroideries.⁵⁸ An attempt has been made to change the normal sequence of the books, with the result that there have been several rather awkward misplacements and omissions, probably due to great haste, yet unlikely to occur in a book written in the monastery of St. Bridget herself.⁵⁹ Furthermore the name of the saint is everywhere in the text written

⁵⁴ The description goes on to give many interesting details concerning the binding: *quatuor tenacula argentea deaurata et zonis cericeis [= sericeis] auro contextis affixa et ad modum manusum formata habentem, a cuius quidem libri utroque latere super balneo cerico [= balibeo serico] ab extra inter solem et lunam deauratos et stellas argenteas hinc inde insertas perpendiculariter, ut prima facie apparuit, continebantur hec verba: liber celestis revelationum dei*. It is not quite clear from this description whether the book had a needlework cover (then possibly added in Vadstena) or rather a binding with metal ornaments applied like that of the Hamilton Bible in Berlin (Kupferstichkab.), which incidentally also is a Neapolitan manuscript of the 14th century.

⁵⁵ K.H. Karlsson, "Lars Romares Berättelse om den heliga Birgittas kanonisering," *Sammlaren*, xxii, 1901, pp. 1-250. The passage in question is also quoted in *Acta et processus canonizationis beate Birgittae*, ed. I. Collijn, p. 11. As to the striking binding cf. above n. 54.

⁵⁶ I want to thank Baron C. Bonde, Eric'sberg, for his great

kindness in sending the manuscript to Stockholm for study and for his permission to publish it here for the first time.

⁵⁷ The only difference is that the initial V for the *Lectio I* of the *Sermo angelicus* in the Morgan manuscript is replaced by an initial C with rinceaux for the prologue "Cum beata Brygida."

⁵⁸ B. Söderberg, *De gotländska passionsmålningarna och deras stilfränder*, Lund, 1942; A. Branting and A. Lindblom, *Medeltida vävnader och broderier i Sverige*, Stockholm, 1928-29, I-11; A. Lindblom, *Sveriges konsthistoria*, Stockholm, 1944, pp. 233ff., 293ff.

⁵⁹ The order of the Books is as follows: Prol. of Mag. Matthias, *Libri I, II, III, V* (except the end), *Epistola solitarii*, *Liber VIII*, *Oratio: Dne mi Ihu Xpe*, *Liber IV*, *Orationes Benedicta et Benedictus*, *Libri VI* and *VII* (called *ultimus*), rest of *Liber V*, *Sermo angelicus* with *Lectiones*. That *Liber VIII* and its prologue have been brought forward corresponds with certain manuscripts of the *Revelations* preserved in Prague—see on them S. Kraft, "Handschriften av Revelationes sanctae Birgittae i Prag," *Nordisk tidskrift för bok- och biblioteksväsen*, xiii, 1926, pp. 154-164. I must leave it to experts to follow this clue.

Brigida (or *Brygida*) and not in the Swedish manner *Birgitta*, as one would expect from a Vadstena scribe, even copying an Italian model.⁶⁰ At the end of the text (f. 249) has been added a cursive note from about 1500, beginning *Sequitur hic alter liber id est extravagantes* and obviously meant for readers who were not acquainted with the textual history of the *Revelations*, i.e., not in Vadstena where everybody knew the matter by heart; consequently the manuscript can hardly have been preserved there when the note was added.⁶¹ Nor does the fact that it is now found in the library of Ericssberg Castle guarantee that the book has always been in Swedish possession. Several ancestors of the present owner were bibliophiles and could have acquired the book abroad.⁶²

There are other rather curious observations to be made concerning the relation between text and pictures. The illustrations do not seem to have been contemplated in their present form at the outset. All three full-page miniatures are on separate leaves added to the quires and interrupting the sequence of the text. The same artist was employed to design the initials, but as he did not find in the earlier portions of the book sufficient space left for initials of the size he required, he took rather awkward advantage of the empty space in the preceding column and painted the initial there as a small freestanding picture (Figs. 35, 37, 38). Yet in the later portions we find the initials of the *Epistola solitarii* (Fig. 36) and that of Book IV in their proper place, and consequently the artist must after all have ended by co-operating with the scribe. This too makes it likely that the manuscript was done rather rapidly in an atelier not accustomed to this type of text.

The book consists of paper quires interfoliated outside and inside with parchment leaves.⁶³ The illustrations are all done on paper. When the initial of Book VIII happened to come on a vellum page the artist preferred to design it on a loose piece of paper which he then pasted on to the vellum leaf. Some of the initials have been repainted in a rather coarse way in body colors, particularly a heavy red covering the background and corresponding in tone so exactly to the rubrics above or below that it seems most likely that this meddling "improvement" is due to the rubricator who did it without asking the real artist's permission.

His style can best be studied in the three whole-page pictures in front of Book I, f. 4 (Fig. 2), Book V, between f. 69 and f. 70 (Fig. 33), and Book VIII, f. 94v (Fig. 6). It is a North European variant of the International style about 1410-20, strong enough to produce a very marked stylistic change in rendering the compositions of the Neapolitan prototype. Instead of body colors and gold our artist uses a drawing in brownish ink tinted with washes in different shades of blue, yellow, red, and black. The white of the paper plays a considerable role and is often left empty as a background. The drapery style is still Gothic with no traces

⁶⁰ This is the opinion held by Dr. C.-G. Undhagen, Uppsala.

⁶¹ I owe this observation to Arkivrådet Ernst Nygren, who at my request kindly examined the manuscript from the textual point of view.

⁶² Baron Carl Jöran Bonde (1757-1840), who was the first of this name to reside at Ericssberg, is known to have collected medieval manuscripts in France which were housed in the library of another castle belonging to him. His grandson Carl Jedvard Bonde (1813-95) was also a bibliophile. He is known to have added both rare books and manuscripts to the library. Other possible buyers are his son Carl Carlson Bonde (1850-

1913) and grandson Carl Gotthard Bonde (1877-1937), father of the present owner. On these distinguished members of a family which has played a considerable role in Swedish cultural history, cf. the articles in *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon*, Stockholm, 1925, v.

⁶³ There are generally ten bifoliate sheets of paper and two of parchment in each quire. The parchment leaves evidently serve to fortify and protect the more frail paper leaves. The system is generally regarded as a transition form between the parchment and the paper codex and occurs fairly frequently in German manuscripts of the first half of the 15th century.

of angularity breaking the folds. Yet the volume of the bodies is strongly marked by shading, sometimes also by criss-cross hatching. A very marked device is the rendering of figures in the second row of a group by ball-like forms without indicating the faces; it looks almost as if these figures were turning their backs on the spectator (Figs. 2, 33).

Our knowledge of fifteenth-century paper style (if this term is permitted) is still so inadequate that there is no shame to confessing that it is most difficult to tell where this manuscript was executed. In a general way the illustrations recall South and West German "Volks-handschriften" such as the Daniel von Blumenthal manuscript formerly in Berlin (Preuss. Staatsbibl. germ. quart. 1340),⁶⁴ but the parallel is after all not striking enough. A certain similarity also exists with the newly discovered frescoes in the Augustinerkirche of Constance executed in 1417-18 at the expense of the German Emperor Sigismund after his visit to the Council of Constance.⁶⁵ Since the manuscript itself may have been written about the same time, there is a possibility that it was made at Constance in haste for some prominent member of the Council whom the Swedish delegates may have wanted to win for their case.

Please note that this is nothing but a tentative suggestion! It should be left to future research to fix the circle to which the Ericberg manuscript actually belongs.

IV

In her lifetime St. Bridget cherished one hope more than any other: that the pope would cease being a voluntary prisoner at Avignon and return to Rome, the proper home of St. Peter's successor. Her dream seemed to be accomplished when Urban v moved his seat to Italy in 1367, but was only so much the more grievously frustrated by his return to Avignon in 1370. In a revelation just before his departure the Virgin appeared to St. Bridget saying: "Even as a mother leads her child to what place pleases her while she shows him her breast, so did I lead Pope Urban, by my prayer and by the work of the Holy Spirit, from Avignon to Rome, without any danger to his person. What hath he done to me? Now he turneth to me his back and not his face, and he intends to depart from me; to this an evil spirit leads him with its fraud. For he is weary of his divine labour and lusteth for his bodily ease. Yea, the devil draws him with worldly delectation, for too desirable to him is the land of his birth in mundane fashion. He is drawn, too, by the counsels of his carnal friends who consider his pleasure and will more than the honour and will of God, or the profit and salvation of his soul."⁶⁶

Harsh words which did not sound any the less provocative when the Great Schism broke out and the cardinals of Avignon elected their own anti-pope. The French never pardoned St. Bridget her outspoken criticism of Avignon, not even after the Schism had come to an end. At the Council of Constance, which restored the unity of the Church, the chancellor of the University of Paris, Johannes Gerson, submitted to the delegates a treatise *De probatione spirituum*, in which he took the Swedish mystic as a starting point for criticizing the super-

⁶⁴ H. Wegener, "Die deutschen Handschriften bis 1500," *Beschreibende Verzeichnisse der Miniaturen-Handschriften der preussischen Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin*, Leipzig, 1928, v, pp. 27-30, figs. 24-25.

⁶⁵ Christian Altgraf zu Salms, in *Studien zur Kunst des Ober-*

rheins. Festschrift für Werner Noack, Constance, Freiburg, 1958, pp. 46-64. I wish to thank Prof. H. Wentzel for calling my attention to this monument.

⁶⁶ *Rev.* iv, 138. I quote the translation given in Gardner, *Saint Catherine of Siena*, p. 78.

stitious belief of the time in all sorts of uncontrolled "revelations," particularly those reported by women.⁶⁷ The anti-Brigittine mood in France was certainly not mitigated by the fact that Henry v celebrated his victory at Agincourt by founding a great Brigittine convent at Syon.⁶⁸ Small wonder then that while we find the Swedish order spreading rapidly during the fifteenth century to most European countries, no Brigittine house was ever erected on French soil. Similarly the cult of St. Bridget passed unnoticed in France—her name was never entered in French calendars, her portrait neither painted nor carved in French churches.⁶⁹ It was not that she was ignored. It was because she was downright unpopular.

This is the background against which we must look at the startling appearance of a whole-page miniature representing St. Bridget in a most splendid French book of hours, the masterpiece of the leading artist in the Paris school of illumination during the first decades of the fifteenth century and a manuscript commanded by the greatest French general of those days, *Les Heures de Jean le Meingre, dit Boucicaut*, in the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris.⁷⁰

The manuscript is really a de luxe book of a quality that otherwise was reserved mainly for royal bibliophiles. Immediately after the calendar this prayer book contains a set of twenty-six exquisite pictures of saints, including one page with the portraits of the owner and his wife, kneeling below a vision of Our Lady as *Regina coeli*. Each miniature fills a page on the left and faces a short selection of *memoriae* to the saint in question on the right, the whole constituting a sort of painted litany brought into action by the user's turning of the leaves.⁷¹

In this noble parade of saints especially venerated by the French marshal, St. Bridget appears as the last of the *virgines*, followed only by St. Guilhem-du-Désert, whose place at the very end of the series may well betray an afterthought. That only the Swedish Saint, and not any one of the other St. Bridgets (of Kildare or of Nogent-sur-Oise) is intended, is clearly shown by the prayers on the opposite page. The first one, called *Commemoracio de sancta Brigida* and beginning *Deus qui ecclesiam tuam per beatam Brigidam sacris illuminare dignatus es*, was borrowed from the office in honor of St. Bridget composed by Nicolaus Hermanni, Bishop of Linköping and author of the Brigittine hymn *Rosa rorans bonitatem*; the other, called

⁶⁷ *Johannis Gersonis Opera omnia*, Cologne, 1483, II, fs. cxcixff. See J. Connolly, "John Gerson, Reformer and Mystic," in Université de Louvain, *Recueil de travaux publiés par les membres de conférences d'histoire et de philologie*, ser. 2, Louvain, 1928, fasc. 12, p. 238; also T. Schmid, *Birgitta och hennes uppenbarelser*, Lund, 1940, p. 17. Gerson speaks of the visions not of St. Bridget, but *unius que Brigida nominatur*; evidently he refused to accept as legitimate the canonization pronounced by the Roman pope in 1391. Some French authors still maintain that St. Bridget was not really recognized as a saint until 1419 when the bulls of earlier popes were confirmed by Martin v.

⁶⁸ G. J. Aungier, *The History and Antiquities of Syon Monastery*, London, 1840; T. Höjer, *Studier i Vadstena klosters och birgittinordens historia*, pp. 250–259; M. Deanesly, *The Incendium Amoris of Richard Rolle of Hampole* (Publications of the University of Manchester, Historical Series, xxvi), Manchester, 1915, pp. 91–130.

⁶⁹ The "Sainte Brigide" whose feast was celebrated on Feb. 1 was the Irish saint St. Bridget of Kildare. There was also a French "Sainte Bride" who with her sister Maura died as martyr and had a local cult at Nogent-sur-Oise ("Nogent-des-Vierges"). See Paul Perdrizet, *Le calendrier parisien à la fin du Moyen-Âge* (Publications de la Faculté des Lettres de l'Université de

Strasbourg, fasc. 63), Paris, 1933, p. 90. V. Leroquais (*Les Livres d'heures manuscrits de la Bibliothèque Nationale*, Paris, 1927) does not quote St. Bridget of Vadstena in connection with any French book of hours.

⁷⁰ Of the extensive literature concerning the *Hours of Boucicaut* it may suffice here to give only the most important contributions: F. Guyot de Villeneuve, *Notice sur un manuscrit français du XIV^e siècle: Les Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut*, Paris, 1889; P. Durrieu, "Les Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut du Musée Jacquemart-André," *Revue de l'art chrétien*, LXIII, 1913, pp. 73ff., 145ff., 300ff.; LXIV, 1914, pp. 28ff.; Panofsky, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, I, pp. 53–61, pls. 27–31. The manuscript was shown at the exhibition *Five Centuries of French Art* in the Nationalmuseum of Stockholm (*Fem sekler fransk konst*, Nationalmuseum utställningskataloger, no. 247, Stockholm, 1958) as Cat. no. 2. A complete edition of it is being prepared by Millard Meiss.

⁷¹ The system is interrupted only by the prayers ascribed to St. Thomas of Canterbury in honor of the Seven Joys of the Virgin, following the portrait of the English Saint, on four pages, and ending with the miniature of the portraits of the owners. Those prayers, recited at the last moments of life, were sure to open the gates of Paradise to the dying.

Oratio de beata Brigida and beginning *Domine, deus n(oste)r qui secundum magnam misericordiam tuam beate Brigide tantam dedisti gratiam*, occurs in the office in honor of St. Bridget written by Birger Gregersson, Archbishop of Uppsala.⁷²

In the miniature (Fig. 34) St. Bridget is recognized by the white veil framing her face, a constant feature in all representations of her, whether painted or sculpted, serving to indicate her widowhood. Instead, however, of wearing the usual black monastic habit she has a blue tunic and golden mantle. As blue and gold have been the national colors of Sweden since the fourteenth century, it is quite possible that the artist made this change not only to satisfy his own taste for brilliant tints, but also as an allusion to the noble lineage of St. Bridget, princess of Nericia, as she is often called in contemporary writings.⁷³

St. Bridget stands on a green surface behind a landscape proscenium with one half-grown tree at each side. Her figure is sharply outlined against a red tapestry with golden rinceaux and a green and white checkered border, which closes the background behind her. Into the tapestry are woven two eagles, one on each side of the Saint, with the motto of Boucicaut, *Ce que vous voudres*, written on white scrolls above their open beaks, as if they were proclaiming it. Each eagle carries on its breast a small rectangular badge bearing the heraldic colors of Boucicaut, green and white, and their necks are bound with checkered white and green bands.

Behind the screen there shines a blue sky with golden stars. The upper left corner is entirely filled by a golden sun. Its fan-shaped rays are directed toward the Saint who is lifting her arms and face against them. In the rays an angel, dressed in white and with red wings, comes out of a small golden cloud. It leans down to receive the folded praying hands of St. Bridget, which by a miracle have become detached from the arms and have ascended—on the wings of prayer—toward God.

The ascension of the praying hands is, as far as I can see, a unique idea not only in the iconography of St. Bridget, but in medieval art as a whole. Among the miracles reported to the papal commission and collected in the *Acta et processus canonizationis* there is nothing corresponding to it. It is true that both a Swedish and an Italian witness pretend to have seen St. Bridget in ecstasy floating in the air to the height of a man.⁷⁴ But that her hands had flown by themselves up to heaven seems to be an invention of the Master of the Boucicaut Hours. That it was not imitated by other artists is perhaps something of a boon. The infallible tact of French taste would be required to prevent the maimed arms from merely looking disagreeable.

The praying hands received in heaven is a unique motif, but there could at least be adduced a few related themes in the iconography of medieval art. The detached hands may in some degree be comparable, as *pars pro toto* motif, to the Ascension of Christ in which only the feet

⁷² I owe to Dr. Undhagen the identification of the two texts. See H. Schück, "Rosa rorans. Ett Birgittaofficium af Nicolaus Hermanni," *Lunds universitets årskrift*, xxviii, 1898, p. 52, and *Birgerus Gregorii, Officium Sancte Birgitte*, ed. C.-G. Undhagen (*Samlingar utgivna av Svenska Fornskriftsällskapet*, Ser. 2, Lat. skrifter vi, Uppsala, 1960).

⁷³ See *Acta et processus canonizationis beate Birgitte*, ed. I. Col-

lijn, pp. 74, 77, 472, 504, 576, 607, 614, 616. For the heraldic problem of the Swedish colors blue and gold cf. H. Hildebrand, *Sveriges Medeltid*, Stockholm, 1884-98, II, p. 531, and H. Seitz, "Sveriges Tre Kronor i sitt europeiska sammanhang," *Rig*, xxxiii, 1950, pp. 55f.

⁷⁴ *Acta et processus*, pp. 24, 82, 275, 545.

of the Saviour are made visible.⁷⁵ Another parallel is provided by representations of St. Catherine of Siena offering to Christ her heart, i.e., also a part of her own body.⁷⁶ But the most interesting analogy is found in the *Chanson de Roland*—certainly favorite reading of Boucicaut, who was himself not only a valiant fighter against the infidel, but at the same time not too bad a poet. In Song 176 it is told how Roland dying on the battlefield commends his soul to God by offering him, as if he were to become His vassal, one of his gloves:

His right-hand glove he rendered unto Christ
And from his hand Gabriel accepts the sign.⁷⁷

The scene is represented in a German miniature of the early fourteenth century, an illustrated fragment of Stricker, *Karl der Grosse*, once in Berlin (Preuss. Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Germ. Fol. 623), where we see the glove received in heaven by the hand of God in very much the same way as are the praying hands of St. Bridget in the *Hours of Boucicaut*.⁷⁸ The meaning of the miniature can thus only be that St. Bridget was so strong in prayer that she, like Roland, finally was received in heaven—a visual affirmation of her still disputed canonization.

The almost contemporary biography of Boucicaut, *Le Livre des Faicts du bon Messire Jean Le Maingre dit Boucicaut*, praises him as a truly pious man, for whom it was a personal need to have his prayer book at hand daily, "for every day without fail he says his Hours and many prayers and suffrages to the saints."⁷⁹ The manuscript in the Musée Jacquemart-André answers exactly to this description; no doubt the pious general took an interest in its composition. As has already been shown by the first editor the choice of saints portrayed at the beginning bears witness in several cases to his personal preferences and experiences.⁸⁰ St. Leonard, who rather surprisingly opens the series, is there to remind Boucicaut of his own liberation from dangerous captivity in the hands of the Turks after the Battle of Nicopolis—yet unable to warn him that he was going to end his life as a prisoner of the English. St. Guilhem of the Desert, a most rare saint in the art of the fifteenth century, is shown holding a helmet, thereby greeting Boucicaut as a worthy follower, for both had been valiant knights in heroic battles against the Saracens.⁸¹ St. Michael and St. George are two more typically military saints whose intercession was of fundamental importance for a French general. The murder of St. Thomas of Canterbury seems at first a less appropriate subject in a prayer book produced for a great baron, but certainly it was prized as a reminder of the outrages committed by the English, the implacable foes of France, against whom Boucicaut too had fought in his early youth. If in another miniature he is seen venerating St. Catherine,

⁷⁵ M. Schapiro, "The Image of the Disappearing Christ," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, xxii, 1943, pp. 135-152.

⁷⁶ I owe this remark to Millard Meiss. See his *Painting in Florence and Siena after the Black Death*, Princeton, 1951, pp. 113f. and fig. 112.

⁷⁷ The quotation is taken from the translation by Dorothy L. Sayers, Penguin Classics, London, 1957, pp. 142f.

⁷⁸ A. Boeckler, *Deutsche Buchmalerei der Gotik* (Die blauen Bücher), Königstein an Taunus, 1959, pl. 19.

⁷⁹ *Le Livre des faicts du bon Messire Jean Le Maingre dit Boucicaut, Maréchal de France et Gouverneur de Gennes*, ed. Michaud and Poumoulat (Nouvelle collection des mémoires pour servir à

l'histoire de France), Paris, 1836, p. 318: "Avec ce que le mareschal est tres-charitable, il aime Dieu, et le redoubte sur tout, et est tres-devot: car chacun jour sans nul faillir, dict ses heures et maintes oraisons, et suffrages de saints. Et quelque besoing ou haste que il ait, il oit chacun jour deux messes tres-devotement, les genouils à terre."

⁸⁰ G. de Villeneuve, *op.cit.*, *passim*.

⁸¹ Guillem au Court Nés, Duc d'Aquitaine, was one of Charlemagne's captains. The sarcophagi of Les Aliscamps at Arles were thought to contain victims of the battle against the Saracens in which he had particularly distinguished himself. See *Dictionnaire d'archéologie chrétienne*, vi:2, col. 1907.

it is because he had founded in her honor an order *de la dame blanche à l'écu vert* for the protection of wives and widows left alone at home. St. John the Evangelist and St. John the Baptist were patrons of Boucicaut by virtue of his Christian name. I am less sure that St. Honorat is there because the chaplain and confessor of Boucicaut was Frère Honorat Durand, a Carmelite friar from Aix-en-Provence.⁸² Another possibility might be that he appears here as the apostle of Lérins, the strategically important islands south of Cannes which had been captured by Genoa in 1400 and kept until 1401, when the Italian city, tired of its civil war, gave itself to the King of France, thus receiving Boucicaut as its governor.

Now Boucicaut's administration of Genoa, which lasted to 1409, may also provide the clue to the appearance of St. Bridget, otherwise inexplicable, in a French book of hours. For we have already seen that this city and particularly the adjacent monastery of S. Girolamo in Quarto, where Alfonso de Vadataerra had ended his days, was one of the strongholds of the Brigittine tradition in Italy. A new Brigittine monastery, Sta. Maria de Scala Celi, was founded in Genoa as an offshoot of Paradiso in Florence before 1413, possibly already in the last years of Boucicaut's government.⁸³ It is moreover not difficult to imagine that Boucicaut would have felt a personal sympathy for the Swedish "princess," who before she died had suffered the hardships of a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and other parts of the Orient where he himself in his younger days had fought for the Christian faith. There is even a possibility that the anti-pope of Avignon, Benedict XIII, at that time defended by the French Marshal in Genoa, may himself have in secret approved of Boucicaut's veneration of St. Bridget. As Cardinal Peter de Luna he had in 1378-79 been among those promoting her canonization which at that time came to nothing because of the outbreak of the Great Schism.⁸⁴

The miniature of St. Bridget thus constitutes an argument, and perhaps the decisive one, for dating the *Hours of Boucicaut* within the period that he acted as governor of Genoa, i.e., after 1401 but before 1409. From the stylistic point of view there seems to be no objection against this comparatively early date already favored by some scholars.⁸⁵ Even a closer dating, after 1403 but before 1407, would be possible, if de Villeneuve is right in connecting the golden "knotted stick," worn as a neck chain by one of the Kings in the *Adoration of the Magi*, with the adoption of this emblem by Louis d'Orléans in 1403, four years before he was murdered in the fight against John the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy.⁸⁶

Count Durrieu believed the Boucicaut Master to be identical with Jacques Coene, the Parisian illuminator from Bruges, who between 1399 and 1403 worked in Milan.⁸⁷ This hypothesis has not received general acceptance. But is it a pure coincidence that we find the

⁸² G. de Villeneuve, *op.cit.*, f. 33, believes the face of the holy bishop to be a portrait of Honorat Durand: for what other reason, he says, would the artist have given the Saint *la livrée de Boucicaut*? But this "heraldization" of the saints is a striking feature throughout the manuscripts.

⁸³ T. Höjer, *op.cit.*, pp. 230f.; J. Martin, "L'ordre du St. Sauveur fondé par Ste. Birgitte," *Université catholique*, new ser., LV, 1907, p. 411. The monastery is mentioned as existing in the bull of John XXIII dated 1.V.1413.

⁸⁴ N. Valois, *La France et le Grand Schisme d'Occident*, Paris, 1896, I, pp. 27-31. He had also been a great friend of his country-

man Alfonso de Vadataerra. Incidentally Benedict XIII stayed at Genoa in 1405.

⁸⁵ Panofsky, *op.cit.*, p. 55, favors an early date for the manuscript, but assumes that its miniatures were executed in relays during a course of years.

⁸⁶ Panofsky, *op.cit.*, p. 382, n. 55, remains sceptical about this interpretation of the King's neck chain.

⁸⁷ P. Durrieu, "Jacques Coene, peintre de Bruges, établi à Paris sous le règne de Charles VI," in *Les Arts anciens de Flandre*, Bruges, n.d. (1904), pp. 5-22. *Idem*, "Les Heures du Maréchal de Boucicaut du Musée Jacquemart-André," pp. 73-81, 315-321, 376-392.

Boucicaut Master active in Genoa exactly at the time Jacques Coene must have left Milan on his way back to France? And is it not quite natural to assume that the residence of a famous French *condottiere* in Genoa would have had a special attraction for a French court artist traveling home after a starring part in Lombardy?

Be this as it may, the miniature he painted of St. Bridget, the great Swedish mystic, in the *Hours of Boucicaut* remains a unique French witness to the international diffusion of her cult. Alone among the portraits of saints it escaped the heavy repainting of Boucicaut's emblems and devices, when later the manuscript had come by inheritance into the possession of Aymer de Poitiers. It was left untouched simply because the new owner, as a good Frenchman, did not care for St. Bridget at all. Therefore to this very day it remains from the point of view of preservation one of the most perfect miniatures in the whole book. As not seldom in the history of art, neglect by immediate posterity has proved to be a path to more lasting appreciation.

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Fig. 1 *St. Bridget at Alvastra Monastery Inspired by Heaven*, from the *Liber Celestis Revelationum*. New York, Morgan Library, M.498, f. 4v



Fig. 2 *St. Bridget at Alvastra Monastery Inspired by Heaven*. Eric'sberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 4



Fig. 3 *St. Bridget on Horseback Receiving a Vision*. Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, MS I.III.23 (destroyed)



Fig. 4 *St. Bridget on Horseback Receiving a Vision*. Warsaw, Biblioteka Narodowa, MS Lat.Q.v.I, 123 (lost)

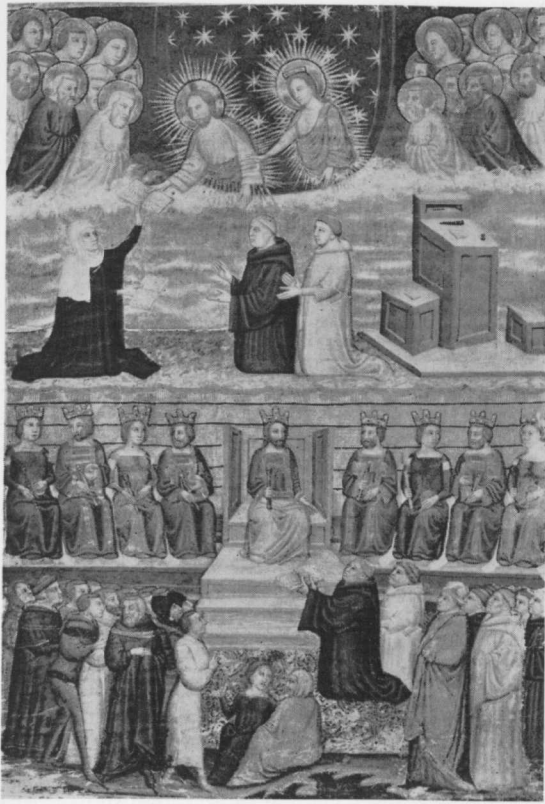


Fig. 5 *The "Liber Celestis" Transferred from the Emperor of Heaven to the Kings on Earth.* New York, Morgan Library, M.498, f.343v



Fig. 6 *The "Liber Celestis" Transferred from the Emperor of Heaven to the Kings on Earth.* Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 94v



Fig. 7 Initial *S*, Prologue of Magister Matthias. New York, Morgan Library, M.498, f. 5



Fig. 9 Initial *E*, Book I. New York, Morgan Library, M.498, f. 8



Fig. 11 Initial *F*, Book II. New York, Morgan Library, M.498, f. 57



Fig. 8 Initial *S*, Prologue of Magister Matthias. Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms. IV. G. 2, f. 2



Fig. 10 Initial *E*, Book I. Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms IV. G.2, f. 3v



Fig. 12 Initial *F*, Book II. Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale, ms IV. G.2, f. 22



Fig. 13 Initial *I*, Book III.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 93



Fig. 16 Initial *A*, Book IV.
Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale,
MS IV.G.2, f. 61



Fig. 17 Initial *U*, Book V.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 211



Fig. 18 Initial *U*, Book V.
Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale,
MS IV.G.2, f. 99v



Fig. 14 Initial *I*, Book III.
Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale,
MS IV.G.2, f. 43v



Fig. 15 Initial *A*, Book IV.
New York, Morgan Library
M.498, f. 126



Fig. 19 Initial *M*, Book VI.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 240

Fig. 20 Initial *M*, Book VI.
Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale,
MS IV.G.2, f. 113



Fig. 24 Initial *U*, Book VIII.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 344

Fig. 21 Initial *C*, Book VII.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 304v



Fig. 25 Initial *U*, *Sermo angelicus*.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 392

Fig. 22 Initial *C*, Book VII.
Palermo, Biblioteca Nazionale,
MS IV.G.2, f. 144



Fig. 26 Initial *B*, *Oratio I*.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 409

Fig. 23 Initial *O*, *Epistola solitarii*.
New York, Morgan Library,
M.498, f. 328



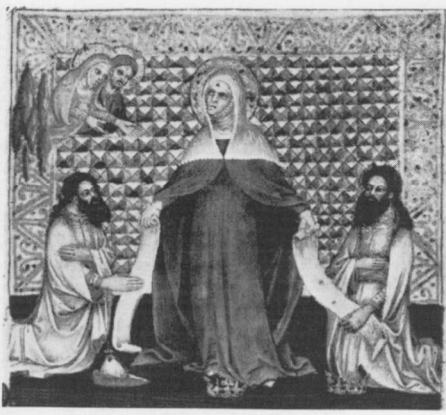


Fig. 27 *St. Bridget Giving Her Revelations to the Mighty on Earth*. Stockholm, Private Collection, *Revelationes*, f. 24



Fig. 30 G. A. Sogliani, *St. Bridget Giving Her Rule and Writings to Her Order*. Florence, Uffizi (N.3203)



Fig. 28 *St. Bridget Receiving Her Revelations from the Emperor of Heaven*. Oslo, University Library, MS 1992, 2^o, f. 25



Fig. 31 *St. Bridget Giving Her Rule and Writings to Her Order*. Vienna, National-Bibliothek, Cod.1316, f. 7v



Fig. 29 *St. Bridget Giving Her Rule to Members of Her Order*. Stockholm, Royal Library, A 75, f. 1v

Fig. 32 *St. Bridget on Horseback Seeing in a Vision the Monk on the Ladder.* Tübingen, Universit.-Bibliothek, formerly Berlin, Preussische Staatsbibliothek, MS Theol. Lat. Fol. 33



Fig. 35 Initial *C*, Book VII. Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 215



Fig. 33 *St. Bridget on Horseback Seeing in a Vision the Monk on the Ladder.* Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, unnumbered leaf between fs. 69 and 70



Fig. 36 Initial *O*, *Epistola solitarii.* Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 85v



Fig. 34 *St. Bridget*, from the Boucicaut Hours. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André, MS 2, f. 42



Fig. 37 Initial *U*, Book VIII. Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 95



Fig. 38 Initial *U*, Book V. Ericsberg Castle, Sweden, *Liber Celestis*, f. 70

