

**A BIBLICAL ROLE-PLAYING GAME?  
INTERPRETING AND CONTEXTUALIZING  
A LATE MEDIEVAL LATIN POEM  
(INC. VOS QUI CONcupiscitis)<sup>1</sup>**

LUCIE DOLEŽALOVÁ

The anonymous poem, whose incipit reads *Vos qui concupiscitis statum vestrum scire* (“You who desire to know your state”), is a curious and ambiguous text surviving in at least ten manuscripts from mid-14th to the 16th century.<sup>2</sup> It is written in rhymed goliardic lines and consists of 75–116 four-line strophes. Each strophe is dedicated to one character of the Bible, describing his or her biblical deeds. Positive characters usually alternate with negative ones. The characters are presented in their biblical order of appearance: from Adam, Cain, Abel, Lamech, and Noah to the Virgin Mary, Herod, Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, Judas, the good thief, Paul, and Ananias.<sup>3</sup> Scholars have described the work in various ways: Franz J. Worstbrock writes that it is a poem “welches die gesamte Bibel in der Folge ihrer Bücher auf 75 *figure virtutis ac vicii* abschreitet”,<sup>4</sup> Montague Rhodes James calls it “a series of biblical examples”<sup>5</sup> and Henry Stevenson gives it the title *Historia biblica ab Adam ad Ananiam et Saphiram*;<sup>6</sup> the catalogue entry of London, BL, Royal 8. B. VI describes it as “a history of man by contrasted types of biblical persons from Cain and Abel to Ananias and S. John;”<sup>7</sup> and the catalogue entry for Cambridge, UL, Ee. VI. 29, together with Bloomfield maintain that it is “a series of spiritual directions.”<sup>8</sup>

In an introduction to his unpublished critical edition of the text, Steven J. Killings argues that the poem is actually a biblical play that was performed in Cambridge in 1352

<sup>1</sup> Research leading to this study was supported by a post-doctoral research grant from the Grant Agency of the Czech Republic, “Interpreting and Appropriating Obscurity in Medieval Manuscript Culture” no. P405/10/P112, undertaken at the Faculty of Arts at Charles University in Prague, through the research projects “University Centre for the Study of Ancient and Medieval Intellectual Traditions” and “Phenomenology and Semiotics” (PRVOUK P18) both undertaken at the Faculty of Humanities of the same university, and by a Sciex-CRUS fellowship carried out at the University of Zurich under the supervision of Carmen Cardelle de Hartmann.

<sup>2</sup> For their list, see below. Walther (1959–69: no. 20819) notes nine, Stegmüller (1950–80: no. 9329,3) notes only the lost Innichen ms. Vatican City, BAV, Pal. lat. 20 was found through the *In principio* database. A critical edition is easily at hand in Killings (2002).

<sup>3</sup> In fact, the manuscripts end with different characters, either linked to the death of Christ or stretching up to the Acts of Apostles.

<sup>4</sup> Worstbrock (1996: 49).

<sup>5</sup> His description comes from an unpublished handwritten entry on Cambridge, UB, Ee.VI.29, kindly provided by Cambridge University library.

<sup>6</sup> Stevenson (1886: 3).

<sup>7</sup> *A Catalogue* (1997).

<sup>8</sup> Bloomfield (1979: 565, no. 6542); and *A Catalogue* (1857: 268).

or 1353 when the Corpus Christi College was founded.<sup>9</sup> It is true that there is a record that on that occasion a play was performed, but that play is referred to as *Ludus filiorum Israel* (“Play of the sons of Israel”) and no details are known concerning its contents.<sup>10</sup>

The manuscripts come from two geographical areas: England and Central-Eastern Europe. Interestingly, a study of the textual variants within the text leads to almost the same division, as does the scrutiny of the textual context in which the poem was transmitted during the Middle Ages.

### 1. English copies

- C Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 177  
(XV, Cambridge?)<sup>11</sup>
- E Cambridge, University Library, Ee. VI. 29  
(XIV, owned by Thomas Southwell)<sup>12</sup>
- G Cambridge, University library, Gg. I. 1  
(late XIV, East England, perhaps Seyny monastery)<sup>13</sup>
- H London, British Library, Harley 3138  
(XV, Carmelite convent in London, written by Roger Alban)<sup>14</sup>
- R London, British Library, Royal 8.B.VI  
(early XVI, England)<sup>15</sup>

*H* is different from the rest, both in regard to the text of the poem and its context. Its readings reveal similarities to both the English and the Central European tradition. Killings considers it to be the version closest to the original composition but does not accept its unique variants with the exception of the epilogue, which he considers to be original, even though it survives only in this copy. The context in *H* is intriguing: the poem is appended to the main text of the codex, that is, Bonaventure’s *Pharetra*,<sup>16</sup> and is followed by a treatise on the mass, and a fragment of another religious treatise.

In contrast, the other English manuscripts place the poem primarily into the context of goliardic poetry and satirical verse. *E* is apparently the oldest, written in mid-14th century. It shows some textual affinity with *C*, which was almost certainly the exemplar from which *R* was copied. *G* is the most famous of the manuscripts, for it includes a number

<sup>9</sup> Killings (2002: 8–9).

<sup>10</sup> Several suggestions have been made in this regard, e.g. “... we may conjecture that it was akin to the play of the poltroon knight given by the English bishops at the council of Constance, 1415, and embodied in the various cycles – best represented, however, by Parfre’s *Kyllynge of the Children of Israell* in the Digby manuscript” in Gayley (1907: 126); “... it could belong to that minstrel activity which, according to Alan Nelson, characterized dramatic activity from 1342 to 1456” in Cioni (2008: 128); “... probably the Exodus or departure out of Egypt, with the episode of the Red Sea” in Godwin (1804: 135).

<sup>11</sup> This manuscript is digitized and described in detail within the Parker on the Web database at <https://parkerweb.stanford.edu/parker/> (accessed August 7, 2011). In the 16th century it was owned by Thomas Sheldone.

<sup>12</sup> *A Catalogue* (1856: 267–270, no. 1121).

<sup>13</sup> *A Catalogue* (1856: 1–8, no. 1396); see also Meyer (1886: 236–320); Rothwell (2009); Owen (1929).

<sup>14</sup> *A Catalogue* (1808: 5), a cursory description.

<sup>15</sup> A catalogue entry available online through [www.bl.uk](http://www.bl.uk).

<sup>16</sup> Also known as *Liber salutaris*, it consists mostly of quotations from the Church Fathers. It was printed in 1518 in Paris.

of important literary texts in the vernacular (French). Among the texts that are copied in most of these manuscripts, there are poems attributed to Golias, as well as several poetic dialogues, such as *Disputatio inter vinum et aquam* or *Disputatio inter mundum et religionem* (E, C, R). In addition, there are also Aesop's fables, the *Gesta Romanorum*, excerpts from chronicles, lists of kings and popes, and treatises on contemporary issues, such as the defense of the mendicant orders and the schism dealt with at the council in Constance). In general, it is possible to say that in England, the poem was inserted among contemporary compositions, mostly of literary character.

## 2. Central European copies

- B* Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ms. theol. lat. qu. 348  
(XV: 1447, 1448; Carthusian monastery in Eppenberg, Germany, most written by Petrus Mule, fl. 1450)<sup>17</sup>
- [I]* Innichen (San Candido) III c 10 – lost since 1970  
(XV)<sup>18</sup>
- K* Kremsmünster, Stiftsbibliothek, 16  
(XV – 1433, 1437, Austria?)<sup>19</sup>
- L* Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen-Nürnberg, 423  
(XIV, Cistercian monastery in Heilsbronn, Germany)<sup>20</sup>
- P* Vatican City, Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Palatinus latinus 20  
(XIV and XV, Central Europe?)<sup>21</sup>
- W* Wrocław, Biblioteka Uniwersytecka, I.Q.158  
(mid-XV, Poland?)<sup>22</sup>

The Central European copies place the poem primarily in biblical and moral context. Except for *P*, which is a Vulgate Bible, all the surviving codices are miscellanies containing texts linked to preaching, liturgy, practical theology, and compositions dealing with the virtues and vices. The oldest manuscript (*L*) is a sermon collection.

In three manuscripts, *B*, *P*, and *W*, the *Vos qui concupiscitis* poem is immediately preceded by the *Summarium Biblie*, a biblical mnemonic aid ascribed to Alexander de Villa Dei.<sup>23</sup> The *Summarium* is included also in the oldest surviving manuscript of the English group (*E*) although in this codex the two poems are not copied one after the other.<sup>24</sup> The *Summarium* was a late medieval “bestseller” surviving in over 350 copies. It is a

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Achten (1984: 176–181).

<sup>18</sup> Unpublished catalogue from 1898 available at the library.

<sup>19</sup> A handwritten description from 1922 by Richard Newald available at: [http://dtm.bbaw.de/HSA/Kremsmuenster\\_700370800000.html](http://dtm.bbaw.de/HSA/Kremsmuenster_700370800000.html); a brief description accessible through [www.hmml.org](http://www.hmml.org) (both accessed October 20, 2011).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Fischer (1928: 505–507).

<sup>21</sup> Stevenson (1886: 3).

<sup>22</sup> A handwritten catalogue accessible through the library.

<sup>23</sup> For more details, see Doležalová (2007a); a more detailed treatment of the medieval transmission of the text is currently being prepared for publication.

<sup>24</sup> While the *Vos qui concupiscitis* is copied on fols. 20v–26v, the *Summarium* (entitled here *Luminaria compilacio metricata docens quid communis et utilius continetur in unoquoque capitulo tocius Biblie. Verbum quodlibet unius capituli sententiam tenet*) is included only at the very end of the codex, fols. 104r–131r.

summary of the Bible in hexameters composed in such a way that every chapter of the Bible is represented by a single word. Thus, this biblical “retelling” covers only some 200 verses. Other summaries of this type were frequent in later 14th and throughout the 15th century; a text similar to the *Summarium* (a condensation of the Gospels, also giving one keyword per chapter,<sup>25</sup> was apparently included in the lost manuscript immediately before the *Vos qui concupiscitis*).<sup>26</sup>

In the Middle Ages the *Summarium* and our poem were probably perceived as specimens of the same kind of mnemonic verse. The *Vos qui concupiscitis* is actually entitled *Compendium historiarum Biblie* in *G*, and in *K* it bears the frequent generic title that is attached to a great number of biblical mnemonic aids and retellings (including the *Summarium*), namely, *Biblia pauperum*.<sup>27</sup> Like the *Summarium*, the *Vos qui concupiscitis* is in verse, which facilitates its memorization. Like the *Summarium*, it retains the Biblical order. Although the *Vos qui concupiscitis* is by no means an exhaustive representation of the Bible, it does cover the biblical narrative from Adam to the death of Christ (and sometimes also the characters from the Acts of Apostles), presenting the biblical personages as representations of various virtues and vices. Thus, it indeed can be regarded as a kind of *compendium* or encyclopedia of the Bible, which provides important Christian moral information in an easily accessible form. This content clearly justifies the title *Biblia pauperum*.<sup>28</sup>

\* \* \*

Steve Killings argues that the poem was written in England in the mid-14th century. It is true that the probable oldest surviving manuscript (*E*) is English, but it is almost contemporary with *L*, which was written in Austria. Typical for the English group is the close connection to the Vulgate, with many allusions and direct borrowings from its specific wording. In addition, the English manuscripts include in their margins references to the biblical books and chapters where a particular character appears. The Central-European group, on the other hand, is characterized by its adherence to disyllabic internal rhymes in each stanza. For example, the English version of the strophe on Benjamin reads:

<sup>25</sup> Inc. *Ecce liber sponsata. magi. fuga. surge. reuertens*. In Stegmüller's *Repertorium Biblicum*, no. 9329,2 this is the only manuscript noted; its explicit was: *si diligis. hunc volo [scilicet merere donec veniam] tu me [sequere]*. Since the manuscript is lost, no more can be said at this point.

<sup>26</sup> Dinkova-Bruun (2009).

<sup>27</sup> F. 235v: *Explicit Carmen bonum quod respicit Bybliam totam unde dictum est seu intitulatur Byblia pauperum*, cited in Worstbrock (1996: 49).

<sup>28</sup> This seems to be a much more plausible context than that of a play to be performed by a guild founding the Corpus Christi College in Cambridge. All the known provenances of the manuscripts, including the earliest exemplars, point to monastic environments. Killings compares the poem to plays like *Ordo prophetarum*, which also features a great number of characters and does not include much interaction. Yet, the *Ordo* is united by one underlying theme: all the prophets speak of the coming of Christ, who is indeed born at the end. It is true that in the *Vos qui concupiscitis*, Christ is not represented, while a number of other characters are explicitly linked to him. However, being a precursor of Christ is an inherent part of medieval Christian characterization of for example Iob, Gideon, or Daniel, and thus the connection would appear as a natural associations in the author's mind. In addition, the *Vos qui concupiscitis* does not have any kind of plot or conclusion: it simply lists the biblical characters.

*Inter fratres minimus Benjamin es dictus  
In patris solacium solus es relictus  
Qui pro Ioseph perditio nimis est afflicus  
Quem videns continuo frater est deuictus.*<sup>29</sup>

While the Central European version reads:

*Inter fratres iunior Benjamin uocaris  
cunctis patri carior filius probaris  
Ioseph fratre tradito sed tu transportaris  
in Eegyptum concito Ioseph fratri faris.*<sup>30</sup>

Killings, certain of the English origin of the text, considers the Central-European group a revision of the original made by a scribe concerned with ameliorating the poetic quality of the text. However, in my opinion, the revision might have easily been made the other way around: a scribe concentrating on the referential value of the poem might have changed a smoothly rhymed original version into one that would not be so elegant but would present the biblical characters more appropriately. This strategy of rewriting would not be unique to this text.<sup>31</sup> Thus, although texts indeed traveled more frequently from the West of Europe to the East than in the opposite direction in the Middle Ages, and Killings' suggestion remains the more likely one, I believe that the question of which of the groups is closer to the original composition of the poem has to remain open.

What remains surprising in this context is that it is the "literary" (English) group of manuscripts that contains the more "biblical" version of the poem, and the "biblical" (central European) group that includes the more "literary" one. In both the instances, however, the poem remains either a literary play with the Bible or a biblical mnemonic aid.

\* \* \*

A closer look at the poem, however, shows that it is neither a simple biblical history nor a mere representation of virtues and vices on biblical examples. The reason for this statement is the realization that almost all the strophes include a direct address to the biblical character presented in them. One example will demonstrate this:

*O Lamech miserrime, audi quod fecisti  
Bigamia Veneris primus induxisti  
Et in uulnus proprium duos occidisti  
pro quo profundissime ad penas ruisti.*

---

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Killings (2002: 76).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Killings (2002: 107).

<sup>31</sup> It is seen also in the *Cena Cypriani*, an obscure opuscle probably of Late Antique origin describing a strange feast of various biblical characters that was received in late Middle Ages as a kind of mnemonic aid to the Bible. Biblical references were added to the manuscript margins, and the characters were described in more detail than in the original, making the text more closely related to the Bible. See Doležalová (2007b and 2009).

Oh, you most miserable Lamech, hear what you have done,  
you were the first to engage in sexual bigamy  
and you killed two to your own misfortune  
for which you fell very deep to be punished.<sup>32</sup>

There is no dialogue among the characters, but one by one they are directly called up in this way. In several cases there is a reference to their presence, for example *adest hic* (“is present here”).<sup>33</sup> This feature of the poem is consistent throughout the work. Crucial to the interpretation of the *Vos qui concupiscitis...* is its very first strophe:

*Vos qui concupiscitis statum uestrum scire  
Hec signa tractabitis que dant inuenire  
Omnia que poscitis de uobis audire  
Quid estis uel eritis hic est reperire.*

Killings, sure of the performative character of the poem translates it:

You who desire to know your habit  
will perform these signs which permit (you) to discover  
everything that you desire to hear about yourselves.  
Here it is (possible) to find out what you are or will be.<sup>34</sup>

I offer an alternative translation of these verses:

You who wish to know your state  
will pull these tokens which allow (you) to find  
all that you desire to hear about yourselves  
what you are or will be is to be found here.

Thus the opening strophe of the poem seems to state that what follows will help one become familiar with one’s “state” – all that one desires to know about oneself, that is, what one is and what one will be. The Central European manuscripts include a second strophe which basically contains the same message:

*Hic potes eligere de gestis scripture  
Que dant intelligere opere figure  
Virtutis aut uicii quid sit tibi cure  
Mortis et supplicii, aut uite future.*<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Other examples are:

*Tu es Agar filius Ysmael vocatus  
Sagax sagitarius et ad bellum natus  
Cunctis aduersarius nullus tibi gratus  
tu es pacis nescius semper pugne datus. //*

*Tu Loth plagam Sodome iustus euasisti  
Angelos hospicio dum tu recepisti  
Montis supercilio tamen delinquisti  
Dum per vini poculo incestu ruisti. //*

*Tu Loth uxor uteris vacillantis alis  
Dum post tergum respicis in figuram salis  
Versa es ut poteris detur forma talis  
Ne fiunt proni vetitis et ruant in malis.*

(All cited here according to C; for mss. variants, cf. Killings’s edition.)

<sup>33</sup> For Killings, these clauses support the idea of performance.

<sup>34</sup> Killings (2002: 90).

<sup>35</sup> Here as in Erlangen, UB, 423, f. 131r.

Here you can choose from the events of the Scripture  
by which act the figures allow [you] to understand  
whether you are concerned with virtue, or vice,  
with death and punishment, or future life.

Taken literally, the stanza suggests that the person addressed should somehow select (perhaps pull out from among more objects on which they were written) one of the quatrains and associate oneself with it. This supposition is confirmed by C which has the rubric: *Incipit ludus fortuitorum et debet scribi in rotulo* (f. 119r), and an explicit: *Explicit ludus fortuitorum siue fatorum* (f. 120v).<sup>36</sup>

Killings interprets the explicit as the scribe's hesitation about how to read his (hypothetical) model, where he presumably saw *ludus f'orum* – which was there for *Ludus filiorum* [Israel]. This is a clever suggestion but also a most unlikely possibility: if the scribe was hesitating, he would be hesitating at the beginning of the text (where in this case, he wrote simply *Ludus fortuitorum*) rather than at its end. It is also not probable that there would be *f'orum* in the model copied (it is more common for the ending *-orum* to be abbreviated than for the middle *-ili-* to be missing). Finally, this scenario means that the model would either not include the word *Israel* (so it would have only *Ludus filiorum*), or that the scribe had decided to omit it. It is, however, not easy to see the scribe's possible reasons for omitting *Israel*: *Ludus fortuitorum* (or *fatorum*) *Israel* is possible. Finally, I believe that the title found in this manuscript should be taken seriously, on the basis of which we should conclude that the *Vos qui concupiscipit* is indeed not simply a poem but a *ludus fortuitorum* – a fortune game.

In addition, the rubric says that the work should be written on something round (*debet scribi in rotulo*). Killings suggests that a parchment roll is meant on which the names of the biblical characters should be written and attached to the performers so that they are identified more easily.<sup>37</sup> However, the rubric does not speak of the individual names of characters but clearly refers to the whole *ludus*. Whatever precisely was meant by the word *rotulus*, it must have allowed some kind of turning and a random selection of a particular quatrain from the poem. The person turning the *rotulus* would then take the biblical character described in the stanza as referring to himself or herself.

To my knowledge, no similar fortune-telling game has been previously noted. The Bible was commonly used as a method of prophesying starting from the Late Antiquity, for which practice a random biblical line was chosen and then interpreted as pertaining to one's own life. The same is documented specifically for the Psalms.<sup>38</sup> Yet, associating oneself with a character from the Bible does not seem to have been a common practice.<sup>39</sup>

In addition, although it is true that virtuous characters seem to alternate with the sinful ones in the *Vos qui concupiscitis*, none of the biblical personages' fates is in fact very attractive: the good often die a premature violent death (Abel), or suffer very much in

<sup>36</sup> The same rubric appears in R (f. 2r), which is surely dependent on (and perhaps directly copied from) the Cambridge manuscript. The rubric of the London manuscript was, however, copied incorrectly in the catalogue where it appears as *Ludus fortuitorum et dicitur scribim (?) in rotulo*. The explicit was also misread as: *Explicit ludus for. tuitorum siue ratorum*.

<sup>37</sup> Killings (2002: 21–22).

<sup>38</sup> See, e.g. Morard (2008 and in print).

<sup>39</sup> There is no comparison, though, since there seem to be no similar sources.

this life (the Virgin Mary), while the bad shall suffer longer afterwards (Cain or Lamech). The fact that this particular fortune telling would make hardly anyone happy is perhaps reflected in the epilogue to the poem, which survives only in H. Its last strophe reads:

*Signa postquam traxeris huius exemplaris  
peto, dum tractaueris, nunquam irascaris.  
Modo tu laudaberis, forte post culparis;  
Hinc laudem mereberis si tu patiaris.*

My suggestion for translating the passage is:<sup>40</sup>

After you have handled the signs of this exemplar  
I ask you, while you are handling this, never become angry.  
Now you will be praised, afterwards you might be damned  
Thence you will deserve praise if you are patient.

In the context of the game, the player is addressed here (as well as throughout the poem), and then asked not to get angry about the lot assigned to him or her. The idea that the text could make someone angry indeed suggests that there is some personal interest in the contents of the poem, and it recalls the popular board game “Mensch ärgere dich nicht.”<sup>41</sup>

\* \* \*

Finally, the evidence gathered from the surviving manuscripts of the poem raises the question whether, no matter how it was originally meant, the poem indeed operated as a game, or whether it was rather understood only as a biblical poem. With the exception of the rubric in C, the text gives no indication as to whether it was used for fortune telling or merely read. In fact, both ways of the poem’s transmission, the literary-satirical and the biblical-moral, strongly suggest that it was understood simply as a literary text or a biblical mnemonic aid. At the same time, however, if the text had been indeed written on a *rotulus* and the game actively played, it is unlikely that the poem would be preserved until today. Only when written down in a codex – that is, only if taken from its original environment and re-claimed by the context of literature – could the text survive as a text.

This argument can, of course, be also used in favor of the theory that the poem was originally a performative piece.<sup>42</sup> In fact, the two suggestions are not so different; they

---

<sup>40</sup> Again, in Killings’ translation:

After you have performed the signs of this exemplar,  
please, while you perform, be not upset.

Now you will be praised, perhaps later you are blamed.

Henceforth, you will merit praise if you are patient (Killings 2002: 103).

In his explanation, this is “an admonition toward those who are reading, performing or listening to the poem.” As for the upsetting, he suggests that the descriptions “aren’t to be taken as seriously as they may seem,” and the patience is explained through a quotation from an Italian Renaissance play where the audience is asked to be patient with the performers (Killings 2002: 187–188). In this way, Killings seems to hesitate whether the actors or the audience are addressed here – while the first line definitely refers to the actors, the last one seems to concern rather the audience.

<sup>41</sup> In Czech “Člověče, nezlob se” with the same meaning of “Do not get angry, man.”

<sup>42</sup> There are several texts (for example the *Cena Cypriani* mentioned below) that do not contain any explicit performative aspects and yet scholars agree that they had been performed.



both argue for a possibility of the poem working beyond the simple textual level. They also both imply a kind of impersonation, either by an actor or by an individual playing the game.<sup>43</sup> The degree of personal involvement may seem different in each case but that depends on how seriously the game would be taken. I suggest that it would be more of a simple role-play game, since the players can hardly be expected to seriously identify themselves with the Virgin Mary, David, or Abraham. In any case, using the poem for playing a fortune-telling game makes the exemplified virtues to be followed and vices to be avoided much more vividly present, just like in a performance. What also links the two ideas is that neither of them can be proven at the moment and thus they serve primarily to point out that texts often are more than a mere sequence of letters to be read.

---

### REFERENCES

- A *Catalogue*, 1808. *A Catalogue of the Harleian Manuscripts in the British Museum*, vol. 3. London.
- A *Catalogue*, 1856. *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*, vol. 2. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. Available also online.
- A *Catalogue*, 1857. *A Catalogue of the Manuscripts Preserved in the Library of the University of Cambridge*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- A *Catalogue*, 1997. *A Catalogue of Western Manuscripts of the Old Royal and King's Collection*. London, K. G. Saur. The description is also available online at <http://www.bl.uk/catalogues/manuscripts/DESC0010.ASP> [accessed Oct. 25, 2011].
- Achten, G., 1984. *Die theologischen lateinischen Handschriften in Quarto der Staatsbibliothek Preussischer Kulturbesitz Berlin I.2 Ms. theol lat. qu. 267–378*. Wiesbaden, Otto Harrasowitz.
- Bloomfield, M. W., 1979. *Incipits of Latin Works on the Virtues and Vices, 1100–1500 A.D.* Cambridge, MA, The Mediaeval Academy of America Press.
- Cioni, F., 2008. Stages at the University of Cambridge in Tudor England. In: P. Pugliatti, A. Serpieri (eds.), *English Renaissance Scenes: From Canon to Margins*. Bern, Peter Lang Verlag, 127–154.
- Dinkova-Bruun, G., 2009. Remembering the Gospels in The Later Middle Ages: The Anonymous *Capitula Euangeliorum Versifice Scripta*. *Sacris Erudiri* 48, 235–273.
- Doležalová, L., 2002. The *Cena Cypriani*, or A Game of Endless Possibilities. In: W. Geerlings, C. Schulze (eds.), *Der Kommentar in Antike und Mittelalter*. Leiden, Brill, 119–130.
- Doležalová, L., 2007a. *Biblia quasi in saculo: Summarium Biblie* and other medieval Bible mnemonics. *Medium Aevum Quotidianum* 56, 1–35.
- Doležalová, L., 2007b. *Reception and Its Varieties: Reading, Re-Writing, and Understanding Cena Cypriani in the Middle Ages*. Trier, WVT.
- Doležalová, L., 2009. *Cena maletractati: An Unnoticed Version of Cena Cypriani*. In: M. Goulet (ed.), *Parva pro magnis muneribus. Études de littérature tardo-antique et médiévale offertes à François Dolbeau par ses élèves [Instrumenta patristica et mediaevalia 51]*. Turnhout, Brepols, 195–244.
- Fischer, H., 1928. *Katalog der Handschriften der Universitätsbibliothek Erlangen. Bd. 1: Die lateinischen Pergamenthandschriften*. Erlangen, Universitätsbibliothek.
- Gayley, C. M., 1907. *Plays of our Forefathers and Some of the Traditions Upon Which They Were Founded*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- Godwin, W., 1804. *Life of Geoffrey Chaucer, the Early English Poet I*. London, T. Davison.
- Killings, S. J., 2002. *Vos qui concupiscitis or Ludus filiorum Israel: A Critical Edition*. Toronto, University of Toronto. An unpublished PhD dissertation, available online at: <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk4/etd/NQ78424.PDF> [accessed Oct. 5, 2011].

---

<sup>43</sup> In this way, they recall a similar debate over the *Cena Cypriani*, an enigmatic biblical opuscle, which might have also been performed, and, in my opinion, it might also originally have been a kind of a “party game.” See Doležalová (2002).

- Meyer, P. (ed.), 1886. Manuscrits français de Cambridge (Gg 1.1). *Romania* 15, 236–320.
- Morard, M., 2008. La magie par les Psaumes. In: *La harpe des clercs. Réceptions médiévales du Psautier latin entre usages populaires et commentaires scolaires*. Paris IV-Sorbonne, 710–776. Unpublished PhD thesis in history.
- Morard, M., in print. Usages magiques du Psautier ou le dévoiement des pratiques ordinaires dans la littérature latine médiévale. In: N. Bériou, I. Rossier (eds.), *Le pouvoir des mots au Moyen-Âge*, Bibliothèque d'Histoire Culturelle du Moyen Age. Turnhout, Brepols.
- Owen, A. (ed.), 1929. *Le Traité de Walter de Bibbesworth sur la langue française*. Paris, Presses Universitaires de France.
- Rothwell, W. (ed.), 2009. *Le Tretiz: from MS G (Cambridge University Library Gg.1.1) and MS T (Trinity College, Cambridge 0.2.21) Together with two Anglo-French Poems in Praise of Women (British Library, MS Additional 46919)*. Aberystwyth, Anglo-Norman Online Hub.
- Stegmüller, F. (ed.), 1950–1980. *Repertorium biblicum medii aevi*. Madrid, Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas.
- Stevenson, H. et al., 1886. *Codices Palatini latini bibliothecae Vaticanae descripti praeside I. B. cardinali Pitra*. Rome, ex typographeo Vaticano.
- Walther, H., 1959–1969. *Initia carminum ac versuum Medii Aevi posterioris Latinorum. Alphabetisches Verzeichnis der Versanfänge mittellateinischer Dichtungen*. Göttingen, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Worstbrock, F. J., 1996. Libri pauperum. Zu Entstehung, Struktur und Gebrauch einiger mittelalterlicher Buchformen der Wissensliteratur seit dem 12. Jahrhundert. In: C. Maier et al. (eds.), *Der Codex im Gebrauch*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften 70. Munich, Fink, 41–60.

---

**A BIBLICAL ROLE-PLAYING GAME?  
INTERPRETING AND CONTEXTUALIZING A LATE MEDIEVAL LATIN  
POEM (INC. VOS QUI CONCUPISCITIS)**

Summary

An analysis of an anonymous medieval Latin poem consisting of 75–116 rhymed goliardic strophes which has survived in at least ten manuscripts from 14th–16th century originating primarily from England and Central Europe. While its modern editor, Stephen Killings, is convinced that it is an (otherwise so far unidentified) Cambridge guild play *Ludus filiorum Israel*, the author suggests that the poem was originally a kind of a fortune telling role game, during which the players identified themselves with randomly selected biblical characters featuring in it.

---

**VĚŠTECKÁ HRA S BIBLICKÝMI POSTAVAMI?  
INTERPRETACE A KONTEXTUALIZACE POZDŇĚ STŘEDOVĚKÉ  
LATINSKÉ BÁSNĚ (INC. VOS QUI CONCUPISCITIS)**

Shrnutí

Analýza anonymní středolatiné biblické básně, která sestává ze 75–116 rýmovaných goliardských strof. Dochovala se alespoň v deseti rukopisech ze 14.–16. století pocházejících především z Anglie a ze střední Evropy. Zatímco její editor, Stephen Killings, je přesvědčen, že jde o (jinak dosud neidentifikovanou) cambridgeskou divadelní hru *Ludus filiorum Israel*, autorka navrhuje, že báseň byla původně jakousi věšteckou hrou, při které se hráči ztotožňovali s náhodně zvolenými biblickými postavami.