The two artists of the Nowell Codex *Wonders of the East*

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The version of *Wonders of the East* contained in the Nowell Codex has long been seen as a relatively weak, low-grade production. The text has not been well received: even the edition produced specifically to represent the texts of the codex uses another manuscript version as a base text (Fulk 2012). The thirty-one images are frequently called "crude", and even more pejorative adjectives have been deployed, including "absurd" and "ludicrous" (Rypins 1924; Sisam 1953: 78; James 1929: 55, 58). Some studies, including the most recent discussion of the manuscript, find a "chaotic vibrancy" in the strangeness, darkness, and lack of clarity found in the images (Mittman & Kim 2013, Ford 2009: 222). All assume that the lack of technical control points to the scribe of the text having drawn the images despite a lack of expertise in drawing.

What has not been recognised before is that there are at least two hands at work in the images of the text. A number of images show doubled figures, where there is a clear distinction between the work of a controlled and skilful draughtsman and the imitative work of a weaker contemporary. Other images can be attributed with more or less confidence to one artist or the other. One of the most interesting images also seems to show interference from a later 'doodler'.

This paper will demonstrate the existence of these two hands. It will point to some moments in the text where scribe and draughtsmen seem to be in conflict. This will in turn lead to the brief consideration of some implications for our understanding of the construction of the codex and the value invested in its production.

Keywords: manuscript; exemplar; artist; frame; monstrous; Wonders of the East; eleventh century; Beowulf

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1. *Wonders of the East* in the Nowell Codex

The version of *Wonders of the East* in the Nowell Codex (London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellius A. xv, second part) is one witness to an enormously popular medieval text, recounting a sequence of remarkable animals, plants, and peoples in distant lands. It has a complex history, being witnessed in three insular manuscripts and a host of continental copies, between which there are considerable differences.[1] Along with Nowell's version which has just the Old English text are London, British Library, Cotton MS Tiberius B. v, a Canterbury manuscript from the early eleventh century, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley MS 614, dated to the twelfth century. Bodley is entirely in Latin; Tiberius in Latin followed by Old English section by section. There are numerous versions of a similar text across the Continent exclusively in Latin. The text's original epistolary frame was lost or discarded relatively early, which gives the text that survives a sense of briefly cataloguing or listing the marvels it describes rather than forming any sort of narrative.[2]

There are a number of editions of the text of *Wonders*, most of which privilege the fuller Tiberius version (Orchard 1995, Fulk 2012). The Nowell *Wonders* was transcribed by Stanley Rypins along with the other prose texts of the manuscript in 1924.[3] More recently, Elaine Treharne included it along with *Beowulf* and *Judith* from the same manuscript in her Anthology *of Old and Middle English Texts*, and Asa Mittman and Susan Kim produced a beautiful edition, with translation, edition, transcription, and facsimile (Treharne 2009, Mittman & Kim 2013). Facsimiles of the whole manuscript are also readily available: Kemp Malone's edition for the Early English

[1] Temple notes these three manuscripts as evidence for the popularity of the text (1976: 22).

[2] An authoritative account of the interrelationship of these insular versions and of the various continental witnesses, as well as derivative texts such as the *Liber Monstrorum*, is given by Knock (1981: 21–46); she gives a more concise overview of the complex picture in McGurk et al. (1983: 88–95). A preçis, particularly focused on the translation process, is in Knock (1997: 121–126). These update Kenneth Sisam's more straightforward but now outdated textual history (1953: 74–80).

[3] Joe McGowan is currently working to produce an updated version of this edition, based on his work and that of the late Phillip Pulsiano. Professor McGowan has been extremely generous in sharing notes and discussing details of the prose texts and the manuscript with me.

Manuscripts in Facsimile series has been supplanted by Kevin Kiernan's *Electronic 'Beowulf'*, now into a third edition with a fourth on the horizon; Kiernan's images (though not his apparatus) have been superseded by the British Library's 'Digitised Manuscripts' online edition, from which I have taken all of my images (Malone 1963, Kiernan 2011, British Library 2013).[4] Because they are illustrated, there are also facsimiles specifically of the three insular *Wonders*. The English Manuscripts in Facsimile edition of the Tiberius text (which includes full images of Bodley and Nowell) produced by a team led by Patrick McGurk builds on and replaces Montague Rhodes James' 'reproduction' of the three English versions (McGurk et al. 1983, James 1929). Mittman & Kim's (2013) is probably now the standard edition, but they make some questionable and inconsistent editorial choices, and sidestep the difficulties of page numbers in the Nowell Codex by introducing a new foliation which I find very unhelpful. So readings here are my transcriptions from the manuscript, with my own translations. And, as I have discussed elsewhere, I follow Kiernan's foliation system (Thomson 2015).[5]

2. The Nowell Codex images

The quality of the images in Nowell has been much disparaged. James is an extreme but representative example, calling them a "collection of absurdities which I am rescuing from perhaps merited oblivion" (1929: 9). This weakness has resulted in a universal assumption that the scribe of the text (Nowell Codex Scribe A) drew the images, copying them direct from the exemplar, relying on Sisam's analysis that "[u]nless he found them in his original, a scribe so incompetent in drawing would hardly have ventured on illustrations"

[4] Images used here by kind permission of the British Library and are all © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv. I am also grateful to Julian Harrison, Cillian O'Hogan, and Andrea Clarke for enabling my physical examination of the manuscript on 18/03/2015.

[5] Kiernan discusses the complexities of the foliation in full, and gives a succinct explanation of this numbering system (Kiernan 1996: 85–109, 103–104); Orchard provides a concordance to the foliation of *Beowulf* (2003: Appendix 1, 268–273); Mittman & Kim give an overview of foliations of *Wonders* (2013: 38). Where editors do not discuss foliation, they generally follow the 1884 system used by the British Library which, following Kiernan and Orchard, is included in brackets in my referencing.

(1953: 78). Reading the images as weak and impromptu copies of those in a more refined exemplar led Sisam and others to conclude that there was no possibility of deriving any information about the production process or of the exemplars from them. It has also contributed to the general finding that the manuscript containing *Beowulf*, even though it has colour illustrations, was a low-grade and poorly regarded production in its own time, contributing to a general privileging of postulated earlier iterations of the poem and a desire to reject this manuscript's incarnation (e.g. Lapidge 2000, Neidorf 2014).[6]

The more recent critiques are more toned down than earlier commentators: James' "absurd" and Sisam's "ludicrous" have become McGurk's "crude" (an often used adjective in this context, Sisam 1953: 78, McGurk et al. 1983: regularly throughout 88–95, Knock 1981: 60, Ford 2009: 222). Mary Olson has argued for the playfulness and challenge of the Nowell images (2003: 133), with some support from Alun Ford who allows them a "chaotic vibrancy" (2009: 222). More recently, in a number of studies and in their edition, Susan Kim and Asa Mittman focused on its images and the interplay between images and text and found much to value (Kim 1997; Mittman & Kim 2008, 2009, 2010, 2013), but general opinion is clear. Certainly, there are some images that, while they may not merit such disdain, are "hardly refined" (Kim 1997: 51).[7] Lack of colour is not intrinsically a mark of low quality in the period, as shown by the extremely high grade, beautiful and austere, image of Cnut and Emma presenting a cross in the frontispiece of Winchester New Minster's *Liber Vitae* shown in Figure 1.[8] But the odd gesture towards coloured outline on the "unclean woman" of 102 (BL105)v, §27, the lower image in Figure 2, using the same colour as her frame and giving up after outlining her arms and blotching her chin is untidy and

[6] There are of course exceptions to this approach, led by Kiernan (1996), with recent arguments for the value of this manuscript's presentation of *Beowulf* from Bredehoft (2014), Damico (2015).

[7] Although it is worth noting in this context Sally Dormer's (2012) observation that "[d]rawing is an unforgiving technique", and it is thus easier to find ink drawings wanting than illuminated images.

[8] The *Liber Vitae* is contained in London, British Library, Stowe MS 944, 6–61v. The image prefaces the codex proper, and is on 6r. As part of the British Library's Digitised Manuscripts project, a high-resolution image can be viewed at http://www.bl.uk/manuscripts/Viewer.aspx?ref=stowe_ms_944_f006r.

confusing.[9] Only about a half of the frame is coloured, and a small section of it next to the branch held in her left hand diminishes to a line rather than continuing as a solid bar for her to break. The draughtsmanship of this image is also poor, with attempts to show her "eoseles teð" and "eofores teð" ("asses' teeth" and "boar's tusks") barely sustained.[10] What are presumably intended to be her breasts are added in far too low down, presumably to ensure they could be seen, as she is explicitly unclothed in the text and her right arm covers their natural position. In the context of the page she appears even weaker: an impoverished repetition of the more interesting, but still relatively unsuccessful, image of the bearded hunting woman above.[11]

Other images, while perhaps not so poorly executed, are puzzling and seem to have almost no reference to the text. As shown in Figure 3, the example of the *Sigelwara* ('Ethiopian') who ends the text on 103 (BL106)v, §32, has a masklike face, appears to be wearing some form of textured all-in-one robe tunic with legs, and extends his left arm behind him to a much smaller figure who appears to be a naked woman.[12] The seated man on 103 (BL106)r shown

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[9] Given the variance between manuscripts and editions, I seek here to use as full a reference system as possible for the sections and images. Each has a page number and a sectional number referring to where it comes in the text; my sectional numbering is the same as that used in Orchard (1995). A full list of the images, by textual section and page, in the Nowell *Wonders* is included as an Appendix.

[10] As Sisam observes, Nowell is the only version which includes both bestial features – and it may seem a little unfair to expect an artist to be capable of illustrating this overwhelming combination (1953: footnote, 79).

[11] Olson (2003) tends to read repetition in design as part of a rhythm that works to construct meaning; but here it seems merely imitative.

[12] Although note that, Mittman & Kim aside, all earlier readers of the manuscript have seen this as a man; see Olson (2003: 143), who counts only three women in the manuscript where I see four, and the detailed account of the illustrative scheme given by Knock, with this figure described as a "Man on right outside frame" (McGurk et al. 1983: 103). The shapes on its chest seem to me to resemble the simplistic breast archetype used for naked women elsewhere in the text, and the dark shape at its crotch seems more triangular than phallic to me. However, it is no more explicable as a woman than a man and the distinction is merely an academic one here. This puzzling image's use of two figures, one of which is outside the frame, is a little reminiscent of Jacob walking out of his frame in the Old English Hexateuch (London, British Library, Cotton MS Claudius B. iv) on 42v, or the angel coming to help St Peter in the Caligula Troper (London, British Library, Cotton MS Claudius A. xiv) on 22r. The former can be seen in Dodwell & Clemoes (1974); the latter Backhouse (1984: plate 157).

in Figure 4 and the council on 102 (BL105)r, §28 or 29, shown in Figure 5, are similarly baffling, requiring a great deal of work from the reader to fit the text cleanly. All these discrepancies and weaknesses contribute to a sense that the artistry is second-rate or even worse.

However, there are stronger images in the text than the ones just noted. By my judgement, the first ten illustrations at least are well-executed and coloured.[13] Other images later in the manuscript are also far from "crude": I would include in this list of reasonably well-executed work all or part of the images on 100(96) (BL103)v, §19, of the precious tree (the first image in Figure 6), the *Panotus* on 101 (BL104)r, §21, the first *Catinos* on 103 (BL106)r, §28 and 29 (discussed in more detail below and shown in Figure 7), and the traveller carrying away a woman on 103 (BL106)v, §30 (the second image in Figure 8): in my view, fourteen of the thirty-one images do not deserve to be called "absurd" on any criteria. It is not possible, of course, fully to resurrect an eleventh-century aesthetic but along with the controlled use of colour noted above, there is a clear interest in images and text as reflexes of one another.[14] This is evident in, for instance, the Bury Psalter's elegant interactions which have been widely admired (Wormald 1952: 47–49; Gameson 1995: 39).[15] While the Nowell images cannot be placed on the same pedestal, they certainly engage with the same dynamic as in, for instance, the two-headed snake shown in Figure 9. Unlike the Bury Psalter's lovely *cervus*, which drinks from its own name on 54r, this snake hisses aggressively at the generic name *deor* ('beast') of a rival creature, a line from whose description seems to have invaded its own space through the scribe's lack of control.[16]

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[13] I have included here the gold-digging ants cycle on 98(100) (BL101)r and the *olfenda* on the verso, both of which I argue below to be fundamentally effective drawings which have been diminished by the presence of a weaker hand (the late doodler and Draughtsman B respectively).

[14] Farr (2013) gives a useful discussion of progress and challenges in our current understanding of text and image interactions. Barajas (2013) gives an ambitious discussion of some possible roles of the images in *Wonders*, primarily focused on those in Tiberius.

[15] The Bury Psalter is Vatican, Biblioteca Aposotolica, Reg. lat. MS 12. Artist F's work in the Harley Psalter (BL Harley 603) is another celebrated example of "a more intimate relationship between word and image"; see Gameson (1995: 112, n.40, cf. 40).

[16] Gameson (1995: 39) cites the *cervus* image in the context of interaction between image and text. This, and many other delicate drawings from the Bury Psalter, can be seen in Ohlgren (1992).

Their weakness and poor critical reception aside, I will suggest that the images can tell us a great deal about how demanding the making of the manuscript was and the expertise that went into its compilation. *Contra* all previous readings of the text, it seems certain that more than one hand worked on the images, and this has interesting implications for the circumstances in which this manuscript was made and indeed for the process of manuscript production in late Anglo-Saxon England more widely.

3. The two artists of the Nowell *Wonders*

It is well-known that the two scribes of the Nowell Codex take place abruptly, mid-poetic line in *Beowulf* on 172 (BL175)v, shown in Figure 10. In an intriguing analogy, the images on 98(100) (BL101)v, §10, and 103 (BL106)r, §28, shown in Figures 11 and 7 respectively, clearly show the work of two different draughtsmen.[17] They exhibit similar patterns. The first shows two camels (Old English *olfendas*) against a red background.[18] The first is picked out neatly, even elegantly. The second shows clear indications of an attempt to draw an identical animal: it copies details such as the vertical lines inside the first camel's ears and the tooth projecting down from the back of its mouth. But it is drawn altogether more roughly, with less subtlety of line and sense of proportion. The eye looks manic rather than intelligent, and the snout more lumpen than deft. Where it passes behind the first camel, this second draughtsmen did not realize that parts of it should still be visible between its companion's tail and rump, and beneath its belly. It is clearly drawn by a much less skilled and practised hand. It was also clearly an original element of the drawing, as both camels are blank parchment figures against a red background; no background colour has been erased to make space for it at some later date.

The same pattern can be observed in the second of these examples on the penultimate page of *Wonders*. Two animals, called *Catinii* in the text, stand one behind the other, baying up at the writing before them. The first figure is again elegant, with layered curls and muscle curvature showing the strains to its mouth and body. It is not quite absurd to compare the control exerted in its execution with animals from the Bury Psalter, such as those at the foot of

[17] I am deeply indebted to C.L. Fawson, who first suggested two different draughtsmen to me when looking at the image of hens, §3, 96(98) (BL99)r.
[18] Tiberius and Bodley have *ylpendas* ('elephants') in text and images here.

fol. 36. However, the second animal, while mostly lost to manuscript damage, is clearly in no way comparable. There is no variation in the weight and thickness of line used to draw it; the first creature's pert nose becomes a beak; muscle definition becomes random lines more akin to scars.

It is beyond reasonable doubt that there were two draughtsmen at work on these two images: I will here call the more skilled hand Draughtsman A and the less skilled Draughtsman B. Once they have been identified, the possibility is opened up of seeing them throughout the text and attempting to attribute the other images to one hand or another. There are, for instance, three very similar illustrations of trees in the text, all shown in Figure 6. On the basis of its controlled design and elegant terminal buds, the first, on 100(96) (BL103)v, §19, can be confidently attributed to Draughtsman A. By contrast, on the basis of its lack of control and unambitious triangular buds, the second on 102 (BL105)r, §24, is clearly the work of Draughtsman B. The third, on 103 (BL106)v, §31, is less weak than the second, but does not exhibit Draughtsman A's sense of design and (relative) ambition: it is probably the work of Draughtsman B, and may perhaps indicate him developing his skill. It is possible to speculate further on both the other doubled images in the text and on some of the more or less skilled productions, but there is no space to do so here. In the hope that it will support further interrogation of my findings and research into the making of this manuscript and artistic practice in the period generally, a list of the images and their frames, and my cautious attributions to the different hands, is included as an Appendix.

However, in this context it is worth briefly noting that I see yet another hand at work in the images of *Wonders*, and this to be more of a doodler than a draughtsman. On 98(100) (BL101)r, §9, the text's largest image elegantly tells the story of how gold can be stolen from giant ants using three camels as shown in Figure 12. Parts of the execution are clearly by Draughtsman A: the camels, which are closer to his *Catinos* than his camel in the images discussed above; the tree to which the young camel is tethered, which is similar to the first tree of Figure 6; given its sophistication, perhaps the overall design was his. The image is not a masterpiece: the man with his gold is rigid rather than beautiful; the device used to load gold onto the female camel's back is graphically interesting rather than convincing or even particularly clear. The argument here is not that Draughtsman A was a great artist, just that he was a competent one with significantly more control than his colleague.

At least two parts of this picture, however, are entirely extraneous and very poorly executed. A crude ink sketch of one of the massive ants curls around

the scribe's writing on the first line of the page. It seems to be drawn in imitation of the most elegant ant which crouches immediately below it, but misses a front paw because that would cross the word. Beside it is a similarly crude sketch of an animal's head. To my eyes, it looks most like an emu; given its placement it was probably an imitation of the male camel's head, which has been lost to fire damage but was probably similar to the female camel's head on the other side of the image. Unlike Draughtsman B's imitative drawings which fill the frame by doubling animals, these sketches are pre-conceived of as incomplete. And where B is an unsophisticated draughtsman lacking fine control of line and form, this hand is genuinely weak: the roughness of the incomplete ant and camel head exceeds the weakness of Draughtsman B's to at least the same extent as his exceeds that of Draughtsman A. It seems likely, then, that these doodles were made by a later reader who admired the drawings and sought to imitate them: it could perhaps be linked with the partial Middle English gloss on 99(95) (BL102)v in two or three hands, partially shown in Figure 13, but there are so many stages of unidentified interaction with the Nowell Codex that such a specific connection is unsafe at best.[19] This analysis does not undermine Mittman and Kim's finding that, as it stands, the image is destabilising and dramatic, confronting and encompassing the text. But it is clear that any such reading is of the codex as it now stands, not as it was first designed.

It is worth noting that in other documents of the period artists do share work, but that there is usually both a clear hierarchy and clear separation of artists. A well-known instance is the early eleventh-century Harley Psalter, probably produced at Christ Church, Canterbury, in which six different artistic hands have been identified and there may be more (Gameson 1995: 18; Noel 1995: 94–96, 137–140; cf. Heslop 1990: 175). Each worked on a different quire and some at different times: here, the variant hands are most likely connected to a minimisation of time to be taken and control of the burden given to each individual, as well as with the development of an artefact over time. As far as I know, there is no known Anglo-Saxon instance of two artists

[19] In addition to the facsimiles cited above, the glossed page is shown in Roberts (2005: 63). I am grateful to Profs. Winfried Rudolf and Linne Moody and to Dr Estelle Stubbs for discussing the gloss with me. The gloss is not widely discussed, but see Leake (1962), Malone (1963: 37), and Kiernan (1996: n.53, 143), all of whom see two hands.

working in the same quire, let alone the same page – and let alone again the same image.[20]

In Nowell, it seems to be the case that a less capable artist was given space to shadow the work of a stronger hand, and that this secondary artist was then given some illustrations to work on independently. Clearly, this can be placed in parallel to the "younger" and "older" hands of the manuscript as a whole (Scribes A and B respectively), although the relationship of those two is still entirely unclear. We could be witnessing apprenticeship in action, though it would require considerably more evidence to build any certainty in such a conclusion. The variation in quality can also be placed in the known context of artists who travelled to minor houses from the powerful centres: possibly a resident of a smaller scriptorium is learning from an itinerant professional.[21] Pat Conner has argued that scribes working together sought to match their hands in a performance of their spiritual communality (Conner 2013: 46–49). The shared drawing of an image could be read as an extreme version of this kind of performative unity, only partially undermined by failure to successfully match style.

4. Frames and colours

Now it is clear that earlier assumptions about the unthinking reproduction of the images were wrong, it is important to reconsider the processes that went into their making. If the images are the result of teamwork rather than Scribe A incompetently scrawling his exemplar's images as he went along, then the making of the Nowell Codex was a more complex and larger affair than has been previously assumed and the images not necessarily taken direct from an exemplar. I will therefore briefly discuss some other features of these images: first their framing and colouration; and then placement and design, to attempt to clarify this communal process of production. I hope to be able to reinforce

[20] The Winchester Bible is a twelfth-century example of artists working together, with one of the hands sometimes sketching designs for another to add details and colour; see Donovan (1993). I am grateful to Richard Gameson for pointing this out to me.

[21] Temple (1976: 17) notes the itinerant nature of some scribes; Dormer (2012) adds artists to this and suggests that some may have been professional members of the laity, with which Gameson (2012d: 281) agrees; Brownrigg (1978: 240) suggests that major centres may have sent out their artists on an irregular basis, and that many books which seem incomplete "may have been waiting in vain for a travelling artist".

the idea of a collective effort to make the images, and to suggest that the impression of 'absurdity' or 'crudeness' they give is at least partly a result of the project proving to be more creatively challenging than its executors were equipped to handle, rather than due to pure incompetence.

While it is not possible to identify any consistent movement in the type or quality of frame used for images, it is clear that the artist made no attempt at any point to produce an elaborate frame of the type being regularly used at some of the great centres of textual production during this period, and which are sometimes regarded as characterising the 'Winchester' style.[22] It is possible to conclude from this that the framing artist was spectacularly unskilled or ignorant, working entirely inconsistently and with no sensitivity for how his material was presented; or that his copy text had no frames, or simple lines, and he was instructed to add them at too late a stage. However, given the clear attempts to decorate some of the frames in different ways, and the number of instances where an active decision has been taken to leave off one or more framing edges or to cross frame and image, it seems more reasonable to conclude that we have here an active exploration of framing possibilities.[23]

In general, the frames can consistently be seen to be adapting themselves to images and text. Where there is no space for a frame, as with the ant-camel image, it is simply left out. Where a frame can have four solid bars, as with the two-headed man on 98(100) (BL101)v, §11, Figure 14, it does. Where an edge of a frame cannot be a solid bar because the text comes too close to the image, it becomes a single ink line, as with the left hand line in the image of camels (Figure 12) discussed above, or the top edge to the second image of sheep on

[22] Gameson (1995: 193, 195–208) notes that frames of any degree of elaboration were rarely used for drawings (as opposed to paintings or illuminations), and discusses some types of decorated frame. On the basis of its lack of Winchester borders, Temple (1976: 75) places Pierpoint Morgan Library MS 869 into the "Utrecht school", but this rigid distinction is probably not entirely tenable – and certainly not applicable by the mid-eleventh century. Arguing from individual characteristics to identify a school of origin could equally well suggest that the focus on individual animals with plant ornament is a feature of Ringerike style, which is plainly not the case here (see Hicks 1993: 246–248 for a straightforward description of Ringerike.) Friedman (1986: 334) argues that not using ornate frames could have been an intentional act in Tiberius, as the plain borders there "helps to focus our attention on parts of the monstrous anatomy which protrude from pictorial space"; cf. Barajas' discussion of the frames and their implications (2013: 252).

[23] I cannot account for Barajas' finding that the frames in this manuscript are always "a solid boundary separating the reader from the wonder" (2013: 252).

95(97) (BL98)v, §2, Figure 15. Or it is left off altogether, as with both images on 96(98) (BL99)r, §3 and 4, Figure 16. The framer did not lack ambition: he adds decoration to the corners of his very first frame (the first image in Figure 15), some decorative bars to frames,[24] and he was perhaps responsible for the elegance of the frame shaped like an architectural arch on 103 (BL106)r, §28 or 29, Figure 4. But the space occupied by text and images simply did not give him enough room to do more in most instances. In some instances, the framer is given a choice between drawing his frame through the text or through the image: he can be seen to change his mind in Figure 17, where a line is extended for the frame at the foot of the image, but the vertical bar is drawn an inch or so inside that, so that two thirds of the frame's bar is not covered by the man's arm. Given the occasional ambition of the frames, he may have been identical with Draughtsman A, but this does not seem likely given the lack of concern for framing shown by the draughtsman in his execution of images such as this one. Given that some difficulties encountered in framing result from the placement of text, Scribe A is not likely to have been the framer either; it is plausible that this was a third hand brought in to finish the text off, perhaps with frames and colour. It is also possible that Draughtsman A, having completed his images, was then asked to add frames in. This minimises the hands involved in execution, and also explains the lack of preparation for framing in the execution of images. Either way – with a third hand coming in to frame, or an external pair of eyes critiquing the lack of frames – the process of production is complex.

There are a number of instances, including those noted above, where the violation of framed boundaries in the Nowell *Wonders* makes the celebrated intrusion into frames employed by the Anglo-Saxon *Psychomachia*, where, for instance, the excesses of *Luxuria*'s dancing are emphasised by her hands and feet entering the bars of the frame, appear rather tame and feeble.[25] This may

[24] On 96(98) (BL99)v, 101 (BL104)v and 102 (B105)v. Mittman & Kim (2013) note the variation in frames, discussing it in detail pp.137–181, see especially pp.144–147; they list the different frame types as Appendix B, pp.241–244.

[25] Broderick (1982: 40) identifies frame-violation as a particularly Anglo-Saxon trait. Friedman (1986: 324) regards Nowell's frame-violations as comparable with the various manuscripts of Prudentius' *Psychomachia*, but I go further than him: where *Luxuria* and *Superbia*, for instance, merely enter the bar of their frames, most of the Nowell images crash through the whole of their frames and enter the text-space. Susan Kim (1997: 40) is, I think, correct when she identifies the Nowell images as "characterised by their aggressive and persistent movement outside their frames".

represent part of a movement towards the unframed freedom epitomised by the Utrecht Psalter and its insular imitators.[26] It could also be read as part of the same impulse towards violation and eruption that, so it has been argued, the Tiberius illustrations use (again, comparatively tamely) to suggest the wildness and danger of the marvels.[27] A number of Tiberius' images seem to emphasise the scale of figures by showing them straining against framed boundaries, but this is plainly nothing like as extreme as Nowell's giant man on 99(95) (BL102)r, §12 or 13, shown in Figure 17, whose fist explodes out of the withdrawn frame noted above. As with the use of colour, on its own terms and in the context of the eleventh century, the Nowell *Wonders* seems at least adequate and – compared with the admired breaking in *Psychomachia* – radical and exciting in its aesthetic impact. This is not to claim extreme sophistication. One of the most widely discussed and admired images in Tiberius is that of the *Blemmya*, who grips his frame and stares out at the viewer, a level of dimensional play never present in Nowell.

Colours were added after the images and frames were drawn. In places, the colourist misunderstands what Draughtsman A has drawn: he paints the front camel's leg in as background in the image shown in Figure 11; he confuses the clothes of a shepherd and the extended ears of its sheep-like beast on 99(95) (BL102)r, §14, Figure 18. As often in this codex, errors may be revealing: it follows that the colourist was probably not Draughtsman A, but he could have been Draughtsman B, or the scribe, or the framer, or all three. As discussed above, colour is inconsistently applied, in general moving from rich and glowing early images to stripped back, bare images later in the text. It may perhaps be the case that the colours simply ran out, leaving the colourist with the choice of highlighting with red or doing nothing in the last few pages.

Prudentius' *Psychomachia* is in London, British Library, Additional MS 24199, and the images are discussed most thoroughly in Wieland (1997).

[26] The Utrecht Psalter (Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Bibl. Rhenotraiectinae MS I Nr 32) is discussed in a number of places. See for instance Wormald (1952: 21). The style it inspired is usually called the "Utrecht style" and is distinguished from the "Winchester school". Wormald (1952) describes these styles in detail, and Friedman sees the Nowell images as "very like those of the earliest 'Winchester school'" (1986: 322). I see no particular reason to assign them to one 'school' or the other: not least because, if there ever were any clear distinctions they were breaking down by the early eleventh century, and are only readily identifiable in very fine work where style can be easily discerned.

[27] Violation of frames is frequently discussed – see for instance Wormald (1952: 28).

This easy process is a little disrupted by the tree on the final page, but it is just possible that the three trees were coloured at the same time. The impression of a set amount of red/orange pigment being produced for this project is reinforced by the opportunistic colouring of some capital letters early in *Alexander's Letter to Aristot*le, which follows *Wonders* in the manuscript, as shown in Figure 19.[28] A limited amount of colour, produced specifically for this manuscript and used with injudicious excess in the early images, continues to make it seem as though this copy of *Wonders* was produced in a scriptorium with ambitions somewhat in excess of its experience and capacity. All of the difficulties in planning text, image, frames, and colours also make it likely that the exemplar was not being exactly reproduced as the various hands seem to have a clear idea of the general direction of their work without knowing precisely what they are producing. I will therefore move on to briefly consider the planning of the images in the text before a final consideration of exemplars.

5. The planning and control of the images

The image spaces were certainly pre-planned: on occasion, Scribe A assumes space is needed for an illustration which is then not used. In the image of the giant man noted above on 99(95) (BL102)r, §13, Figure 17, for instance, five of the nine lines of text to the left of the first drawing all end with relatively large amounts of space. The scribe is clearly concerned about having enough space for text, as he starts a new section with a marginal capital on the very last line of the page. He could have saved at least a manuscript line by utilizing these gaps, and certainly had no qualms about text abutting and even, occasionally, crossing into an image. But he leaves the space, expecting it to be filled. The draughtsmen did not need the whole space, and the framer chose to bring the left edge of his frame close in to the image, so a gap is left. On occasion, details of the images are so well designed to fill the space coincidentally left by letter shapes that they must have been drawn second: protruding feet on 100(96) (BL103)v, §20, and 101 (BL104)r, §21, Figure 20, for instance, neatly occupy the spaces left by letters without ascenders.

[28] Four initials are coloured: the first large *H*, a marginal *C*, and a mid-line *O* on 104 (BL107)r.1, 8 & 13 respectively, and then, less explicably, a mid-line *O* on (BL108)v.2, ten capitals later.

It is equally clear that the text was not always written before the image. The unframed ant-camel image (Figure 12) discussed above was drawn before the text underneath it was written. There are five ruled lines beneath it. However, Draughtsman A seems here not to have understood that a ruled line of text needs a fairly significant amount of space above it to be used for writing. The feet of his stylized tree (more like a tripod) extend very close to the ruled line. As shown in Figure 21, when he wrote below it, Scribe A had to compress the *d* of *londbunis* which is much smaller and closer to bilinear than his usual, taller and concave-down, allograph. That some images were drawn before the text and some after strongly suggests that Scribe A and the two draughtsmen were working in the same place and at more or less the same time: the draughtsman worked on some pages while the scribe worked on others. It cannot usually be deduced which came first of image and text, but it is useful to have conclusive evidence that both sequences took place at different times. It is suggestive that the ant-camel image is the only one certainly drawn before the scribe worked on the page. Possibly, this was the only time this sequence held. If so, this may have been because the image was an innovation, a possibility I will go on to consider in due course.

It is also worth noting that Scribe A's regard for image space is not consistent. As in the two-headed snake example, his text seems to spill over the ends of pages and into what should be image spaces, certainly at 96(98) (BL99)r and 98(100) (BL101)r as shown in Figure 16 and Figure 12, and to some degree elsewhere. Given that the scribe and draughtsman were working together, at the same time and place, it is possible that the scribe worked on these pages and handed them over, that Draughtsman A complained about the interference with his image space, and that the scribe subsequently worked harder to maintain the boundaries (which, as it turns out, the draughtsmen did not always need after all). Such a sequence of events is clearly merely a speculative reconstruction, but makes sense of the shifts in behaviour indicated by the evidence.

To return to the main thread, given that the image spaces were pre-planned, it would be understandable if there were a relatively consistent plan and layout. The text gestures towards this. Each section starts on a new line and with a marginal capital, and the most frequent layout is to place two wonders on each page, each with an accompanying image, surrounded on

three sides by text, as shown in Figure 22.[29] However, this 'default' design only appears on seven of the seventeen sides of *Wonders*. The variation mostly results from significant variation in both the size of images and the length of the text's sections,[30] with the added complication that some sections describe more than one wonder requiring illustration. As a result, three pages add an extra image between my spaces i and ii; two pages enlarge one of the images to occupy the full width of the page; three have only one illustration and two consecutive pages are completely anomalous, with 97(99) (BL100)v having no images at all and with 98(100) (BL101)r having one large picture which occupies almost all the page, which does mean that the open book resembles the 'default' layout, with an image to the right of the text.[31] Sometimes, text-space is reduced because the images are larger, or laid out portrait rather than landscape. The most striking example of this is on 102 (BL105)v, Figure 2, where the two images of women leave so little space that only one line of text can cross the full width of the page.

6. Variant styles; multiple exemplars

There are a number of indications that at least some of the images did not come directly from an exemplar. First, there are two illustrations for one wonder: the generous men who give visitors women (§30) to take away are shown on recto and verso of 103 (BL106), Figure 8. The first image shows two men saying farewell; the second shows a man, presumably a visitor, carrying a woman away with him. Even with the top of the second image and the right hand side of the first missing, it is clear that they are drawn in strikingly different styles. The first has a divided frame, like that deployed for the bearded woman and her hunting animals (the upper image in Figure 2), shod feet, and elegant draping, recognisably Anglo-Saxon clothes including pointed shoes that seem to curl up at the tip. In style, the figures are close to

[29] I am following Gameson's (2012b: Figure 2.17, 69) presentation of page layout. Of the schemes he identifies, Nowell is closest to his 'C', which he describes as "less complicated" but also "less popular" (2012b: 70).

[30] As noted by Olson (2003: 133), "there is little consistency in the size of the illustrations".

[31] Knock (1983: 96) also notes this repeated break down of the planned sequence in Vitellius.

the third man in the council on the mountain on 102 (BL105)r, and to the priest in his temple on 101 (BL104)v, both shown in Figure 23. The second image of the generous men narrative, showing a visitor carrying the woman he has been given, uses an uncoloured linear design suggestive of decorated clothes rather than the flowing garments of the previous image. Rocks provide a floor for the man to stand on, and both are unshod. What can be seen of the woman's face is drawn in the same style as the preceding image. The first has coloured clothes with blank parchment background; the second a lightly tinted background and no colour for the clothes. In short, as well as unnecessarily providing two images for one section, the two images have quite different illustrative styles, although I would (cautiously) attribute them both to Draughtsman A.

The variation in style persists throughout the text.[32] The council on the mountain, §25, noted above and shown in full in Figure 5, gives three different men. At the right of the stylized table is the figure noted above and shown in Figure 23, whose face is made of straight lines and angles; in the centre and on the left, as shown in Figure 23, are two more figures drawn completely differently. They share the elongated nose, bulging chin, and prominent eyebrows also given to the bearded huntress on 101 (BL105)v, §26 and the shepherd on 99(95) (BL102)r, §14.

Indeed, in this second image, the shepherd's face is utterly at odds with that of the *Hostes* it faces. It is expressionistic and dominated by a single eye; lines continue from its clothing into its neck, suggesting gaunt, stretched flesh.[33] Other details, such as the crook, the hand holding it, and both feet, seem clumsily, rapidly drawn in to supplement this craning head. He seems to be dressed in a simple belted tunic, with lines showing the bulge of his belly. The figure facing it across the frame wears a full-length black robe, with no apparent texturing to the material. The fat sausages which form the shepherd's fingers are a world away from the *Hostes*' elegantly shaped outstretched right hand and the left hand, just about visible where it holds a human leg, has a realistic grasp which could hardly be less like the crook, drawn in around the shepherd's hand with no particular interest in showing how the two are linked. His face is from another school. Gone are the shepherd's distorted,

[32] Though this is not as remarkable as might be thought: as Gameson notes, "variant styles [...] regularly coexist", in 'Anglo-Saxon Scribes and Scriptoria', Gameson, ed., *History of the Book* (2012): 94–120, 111.
[33] James (1929: 55) calls him "[a]n absurd man, with a staff".

expressive features, replaced by a small, neat face on a clean and upright throat. The animal between them shows a third style. It is one of the "wildeor þa hatton lertices" ('wild animals that are called *Lertices*'). Coloured a uniform golden yellow (apart from, as noted above, its ears which the colourist assumed to be part of the shepherd's clothing), with pen markings showing the texture of its wool, the animal feels like a moment from a tapestry; something static and two-dimensional placed into a frame. The attempt at huge talons adds to this sense of flat illustration.[34] Possibly the variations in style could be linked with the variations in quality discussed above, and attributed to different artists: if so, the two hands collaborated on a large number of images.

This composite image comes at the end of a two-page spread, shown in full in Figure 25, which is thoroughly confused in layout. The mistakes, and the rather drastic steps taken to ameliorate them, are further evidence that the image scheme was being freshly created for this copy of the text (cf. McGurk et al. 1983: 96, n.20, 96). As noted above, the clear intention in *Wonders* is to connect text with the relevant image. This was already difficult by the end of the second page, with a full manuscript line at the end of §4 having to be moved to the first line of 96(98) (BL99)v, intruding in the planned image space as partially shown in Figure 9. However, by the start of the double spread of 98(100) (BL100)v and 99(95) (BL100)r, the alignment of text and image space has fallen apart completely and only comes back into line through some artistic innovation. On the first side, two image spaces illustrate §10 and §11, neatly beside the text for §11 and §12, respectively. The next page contains the rest of §12, the whole of §13 and §14, and the start of §15. Next to §13, which describes the cannibalistic *Hostes*, is an illustration of a long-haired naked man holding a piece of foliage of some sort (the giant man of Figure 18). This may be an attempt to illustrate §12, given the statement that the people are "monu swa leona heafdu" ('maned like lions' heads'); possibly the foliage is a response to the text's obscure "hy habbað micelne muð swa fon" ('they have a great mouth like a fan'): illustrating the fan rather than the mouth. On the other hand, the man has seven lines beneath his prominent breasts, which could be a response to the "sidan mid breostum seofon / fota lange" ('sides with breasts seven / feet long') attributed to the *Hostes* in §13

[34] This is one of not many examples that I can find to support Friedman's (1986: 324) estimation of the illustrations as "like curious statues on display". The image is actually very similar, apart from the length of ears, to the *Lertex* in Tiberius, on 82r.

which is beside the image. It is perhaps possible that the manuscript line break after the number may have inspired the seven lines of "breast". The same set of line recurs in the long eared *Panotus*, §21, on 101 (BL104)r, so it may just be an archetype for nakedness, possibly showing ribs, available to the draughtsman. Or the image may in fact be a creative attempt to bring in features of both of these alarming giant men.[35]

As noted above, the *Hostes* is certainly shown in the second picture on the page: a dark figure with a bestial head, holding a human leg to demonstrate its cannibalism.[36] Here, it has been integrated into the image for §14, the sheep-like *Lertex*. Perhaps in order to balance the humanoid figure towering over the animal which is after all the subject of the text, the expressive shepherd discussed above, which has no textual basis, is included. It is quite likely that this second, dark-clothed *Hostes* was based on that in an exemplar, because the detail of its blackness is omitted from the Nowell text and so the colourist cannot have worked out how to colour it without an exemplar or a fortunate coincidence. The draughtsmen of the Nowell *Wonders*, in order to rebalance the confused image scheme, seem to have integrated the illustrations for §12 and §13, and those for §13 and §14; then to have recognised the aesthetic imbalance this created in §14 and added an additional figure. That the extra-textual shepherd is drawn from a different archetype than the *Hostes* suggests that it was either from a different exemplar altogether, or from the artist's mind; either conclusion places it alongside the similarly conceived figures which appear elsewhere in the text as not from the same exemplar as the *Hostes* and related figures. And that such confusion in the alignment of text and image occurs on this double page is interesting. It comes immediately after the large ant-camel image which is, as noted above, the only image in *Wonders* certainly drawn before the text was written, has no analogue in the other versions of the text, and may well be original to Nowell.

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[35] Compare Tiberius 81v, where the separate images are side by side and very similar. The image has confused most readers; see for instance McGurk et al. (1983: n.20, 96).

[36] A human leg is also used to emblematise the cannibalism of the *Donestre*, §20, on 100(96) (BL103)v.

7. Suggestions

Far from "ludicrous" or even "crude", the images in *Wonders* are, at worst, interesting and informative. Their modern reception has suffered by comparison with the more polished and colourful versions of the text in Tiberius and Bodley; when considered in isolation, on their own merit, or in comparison with some other significant artistic achievements of the period, there is a great deal to admire even without going as far as Olson or Mittman and Kim in a modern re-envisioning of Anglo-Saxon manuscript art as engaged with instability and uncertainty. There was clearly more than one hand at work on the text, and that matters. It demonstrates the communal nature of the project that made the Nowell Codex, and the investment of time, energy, and resources that it required. The planning of images can reasonably be described as sophisticated, but in some senses in excess of the capacity of the scribe and draughtsmen.

The mistakes the team made in executing the design seem generally to indicate some areas of significance for understanding of the codex as a whole. First, that there is a second artist working with less skill and operating sometimes literally behind the main artist provides an intriguing (though not precise) parallel with the two scribes and is suggestive of a relatively large scriptorium where there were enough resources to produce a secular text in the vernacular with full-colour illustrations and, moreover, to use it to some extent as a training ground; or, perhaps, a secular house which carefully planned and assembled the human and material resources for this project. Second, Scribe A, who writes a relatively new hand with confidence, exhibits a degree of inexperience in shaping his text around the planned image spaces and seems to vary his behaviour based, perhaps, on feedback, which may indicate uncertainty or naïvety. Third, there are some indications that this copy of *Wonders* was making innovations with its source materials and that these innovations caused the challenges in its production. We are given a strong impression of a piece of work conceived with ambition and executed to the best of its producers' abilities. In turn, this is suggestive of possible experimentation, an over-ambitious commissioner, or a project designed as a learning experience. The evidence for two artists working together in the Nowell Codex *Wonders of the East* has implications for our reading of *Beowulf*

in its manuscript context, and for future research into the processes of commissioning and producing manuscripts in the Anglo-Saxon period.[37]

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[37] As I hope to explore in *Communal Creativity in the Making of the 'Beowulf' Manuscript: Towards a History of Reception for the Nowell Codex, British Library Cotton MS Vitellius A. xv (Second Part)*, Library of the Written Word – The Manuscript World (Brill, in preparation).

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Appendix: Images and colours used in *Wonders of the East*

#	Page	Sect	Contents of image	Frame	Colours used	Probable artist
1	95(97) (BL98)v	1	Single ram standing on rocks looking to right away from text.	Four solid bars, floreate decorations in each corner.	Blue, yellow, black, (parchment)	A
2	95(97) (BL98)v	2	Two rams standing on rocks looking left and down to text.	Three solid bars, line across top	Yellow, orange, (parchment)	A
3	96(98) (BL99)r	3	Two hens, one (cockerel?) with left wing outstretched.	Three black lines, open to text on left.	Yellow, orange, black	A
4	96(98) (BL99)r	4	Two-headed eight-legged animal with lolling tongues and wide eyes looking left at text.	Solid bars at top and bottom, open to text at left; right side lost to damage: probably originally three sided.	Yellow, black, (parchment)	A & B
5	96(98) (BL99)v	5	Two-headed patterned snake across page with 'hiss' lines towards text.	Unframed.	Red, yellow, blue, black, (parchment)	A
6	96(98) (BL99)r	6	Two animals as if from above, vertical in frame: on left a patterned snake; on right a reptilian creature with horns and a bushy tail.	Four solid bars, decoration to three edges.	Yellow, black, red, blue	A

7	97(99) (BL100)r	7	Dog-headed man dressed in Anglo-Saxon robes with ?leggings and shoes.	Four solid bars.	Red, blue, brown, yellow, black	A
8	98(100) (BL101)r	9	Baby camel tied to a tree; man in Anglo-Saxon dress with female camel loaded with gold pieces in a harness on rocks; across a river, large ants around pieces of gold; male camel chained around the neck being bitten by two ants.	Unframed.	Black, red, yellow, light blue, (parchment)	A (and later additions)
9	98(100) (BL101)v	10	Two camels facing left towards text on rocks.	Bars at top and bottom; possible bar to right but lost to damage; waving black line as fourth bar separating from text.	Red, yellow, orange, (parchment)	A & B
10	98(100) (BL101)v	11	Man with two faces (one facing left, the other right) holding a horn in right hand and foliate sceptre in left.	Four solid bars.	Light blue, black, orange, yellow, (parchment)	A
11	99(95) (BL102)r	?12 (or 13)	?Naked man with long hair facing left towards text and holding upside-down foliate sceptre in right hand next to text.	Four solid bars.	Red, yellow, (parchment)	B & A

12	99(95) (BL102)r	13 & 14	Sheep-like *Lertex* with long ears and talons on feet, facing old shepherd with crook on left of frame; beast-headed figure dressed in black on right of frame holding a leg in left hand and with right hand outstretched.	Three thickly drawn black lines, probable fourth on right lost to damage.	Black, yellow, light blue, (parchment)	A
13	99(95) (BL102)v	15	Headless man with moustachioed face in his chest, in Anglo-Saxon dress and leggings standing on rocks.	Four solid bars.	Red, yellow, (parchment)	A
14	99(95) (BL102)v	16	Two striped snakes, entwined, across the width of the page, with bearded chins.	Unframed, though boxed in with a thin line on the right of the page.	Light blue, yellow (parchment)	A
15	99(95) (BL102)v	17	A man's torso with arms outstretched and a bracelet on each wrist, possibly singing and facing the text, on a dokey's body, standing on rocks.	Bar on the left side, another half way up on the right and a short one from that into the body. Possibly a bar at the bottom lost to damage.	Black, yellow, orange, red, (parchment)	B

16	100(96) (BL103)r	18	Two circles each with hubs, a set of spokes set in a Greek cross, and a thin set of spokes set in an X.	Four solid bars.	Orange, red, black, (parchment)	A?
17	100(96) (BL103)v	19	A tree with three trunks rising out of entwined roots with a canopy of leaves and three flowers.	Unframed, with thin line at bottom.	Blue, yellow, orange, red, a washed out red, (parchment)	A
18	100(96) (BL103)v	20	On left, a humanoid figure with a reptilian head, naked with exposed phallus, holding a leg; on right, a woman with long hair and dress with flowing skirts apparently held up to expose legs, one foot cut off at the ankle.	Four solid bars, thinner on the right and at the top where it gives way to writing.	Red, (parchment)	B?
19	101 (BL104)r	21	A man, possibly naked and drawn in the same style as §11, facing away from the text, with large, trumpet-like ears and holding a small bow or possibly harp, with foliage in the bottom right corner.	Three solid bars, probable fourth on the right lost to damage.	Red, (parchment)	B & A
20	101 (BL104)v	22	Man in Anglo-Saxon dress with leggings and long hair, top half of face lost to damage.	Three solid bars, probable fourth at top lost to damage.	Red, blue, orange, yellow, (parchment)	A

21	101 (BL104)v	23	An elaborate building with main central tower and two flanking towers, image of a sun on low wall at centre bottom, with head and shoulders of a robed man above it.	Three solid bars, with bottom bar formed of three bars making the building's foundation.	Red, yellow, orange, blue, (parchment)	A
22	102 (BL105)r	24	A tree with three trunks rising out of entwined roots, two prongs emerging with buds on the ends, top lost to damage.	No frame visible.	Blue, red, yellow, (parchment)	B
23	102 (BL105)r	25	A ?table stretching across the page formed of five large circles, possibly shields, piled together, with three layers of pedestal emerging to the left, with three men sat behind it, heads and shoulders visible, two apparently in conversation.	No frame, though bar across bottom could be partial frame or part of image.	Blue, orange, yellow, red, black, (parchment)	B & A

24	102 (BL105)v	26	A woman with long hair and beard, facing away from the text and holding an hourglass shaped club in her left hand; right hand third of the image is separated with a straight line and has a dog-like animal at right angles to the woman and apparently on rocks.	Solid bars, one with decoration, around three sides, open to right away from text.	Orange, brown, (parchment)	B
25	102 (BL105)v	27	A naked woman, facing away from the text, with long hair and perhaps a tail, with the lower curve of breasts visible beneath her right arm, and left arm holding a sceptre.	Four solid bars, one on right becoming a thin line at the top.	Orange, (parchment)	B
26	103 (BL106)r	28 or 29	A man facing away from the text and sitting on a cushion inside a decorated arch, with left hand (possibly holding something) lost to damage.	Decorated arch within which figure sits forms frame.	Yellow, red, (parchment)	B
27	103 (BL106)r	28 & 29	Two cat like animals baying towards the text.	No frame.	(Parchment)	A & B

28	103 (BL106)r	30	Image space divided in half by a straight line, with a man in the left side in Anglo-Saxon dress carrying a crook and seemingly waving to the other man, who is mostly lost to damage but what remains looks near identical to the first.	Three solid bars, possibly fourth on right lost to damage.	Orange, yellow, brown, blue, (parchment)	A
29	103 (BL106)v	30	Man carrying a woman with long red hair, both clothed, standing on rocks. Both faces lost to damage.	Three solid bars, possibly fourth at top lost to damage.	Red, yellow, (parchment)	A
30	103 (BL106)v	31	A tree with four trunks rising out of a bed of earth with a canopy of leaves and two buds.	No frame, but line at bottom.	Red, yellow, blue	B
31	103 (BL106)v	32	Man with mask-like face and perhaps a circular hat, holding a foliate sceptre towards text in his right hand, with trailing left hand reaching to small figure, possibly a naked woman.	Four solid bars around main figure.	Orange, (parchment)	B

Figure 1. Frontispiece to Liber Vitae, London, British Library, Stowe MS 944, 6r. © The British Library Board, Stowe 944.

Figure 2. Two women of 102 (BL105)v, §26 & 27. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 3. *Sigelwara* who ends the text on 103 (BL106)v, §32. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 4. Seated man on 103 (BL106)r, §28 or 29. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 5. The council on 102 (BL105)r, §25. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 6. The three trees 100(96) (BL103)v, §19; 102 (BL105)r, §24; 103 (BL106)v, §31. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 7. *Catinii* drawn by two different hands on 103 (BL106)r §28. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A.xv

Figure 8. The two illustrations of generous men on 103 (BL106)r & v, §30. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

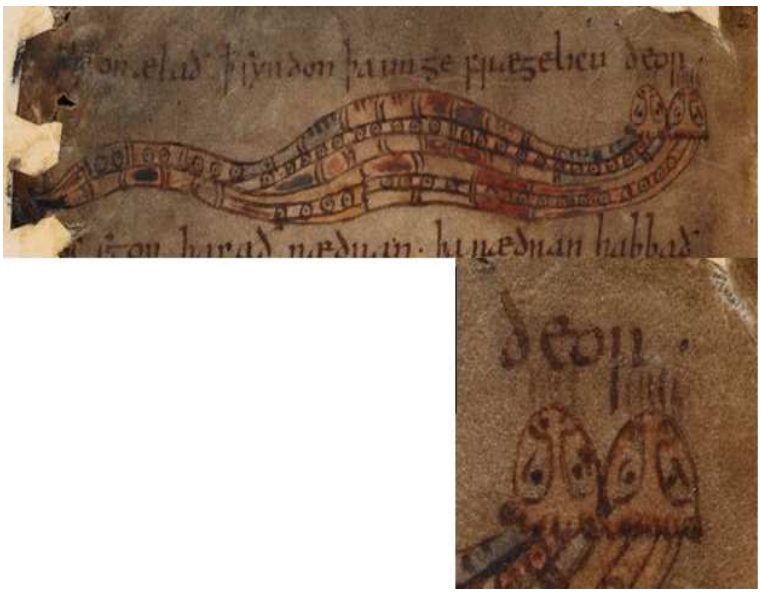

Figure 9. The two-headed snake and detail on 96(98) (BL99)v, §5. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

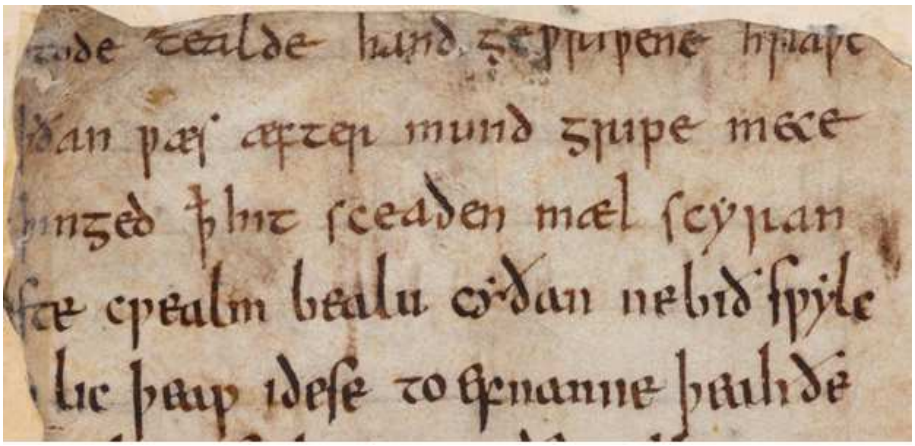

Figure 10. Scribal handover on 172 (BL175)v.1–5. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 11. Two camels drawn by different hands on 98(100) (BL101)v, §10. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 12. Large illustration of stealing gold from ants with camels and detail of doodles on 98(100) (BL101)r, §9. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

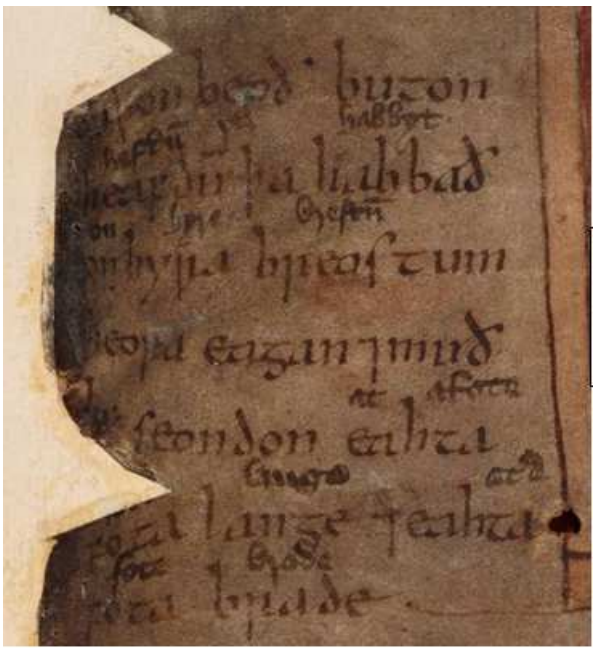

Figure 13. Part of the Middle English gloss on 99(95) (BL102)v.1–7. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 14. The two-headed man on 98(100) (BL101)v, §11. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 15. Two images of sheep on 95(97) (BL98)v, §1 and §2. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 16. Hens and eight-legged wilddeor on 96(98) (BL99)r, §3 and 4. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 17. Giant with withdrawn frame 99(95) (BL102)r, §12 or 13. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 18. *Lertex* with shepherd and *Hostes* on 99(95) (BL102)r, §13 and 14. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

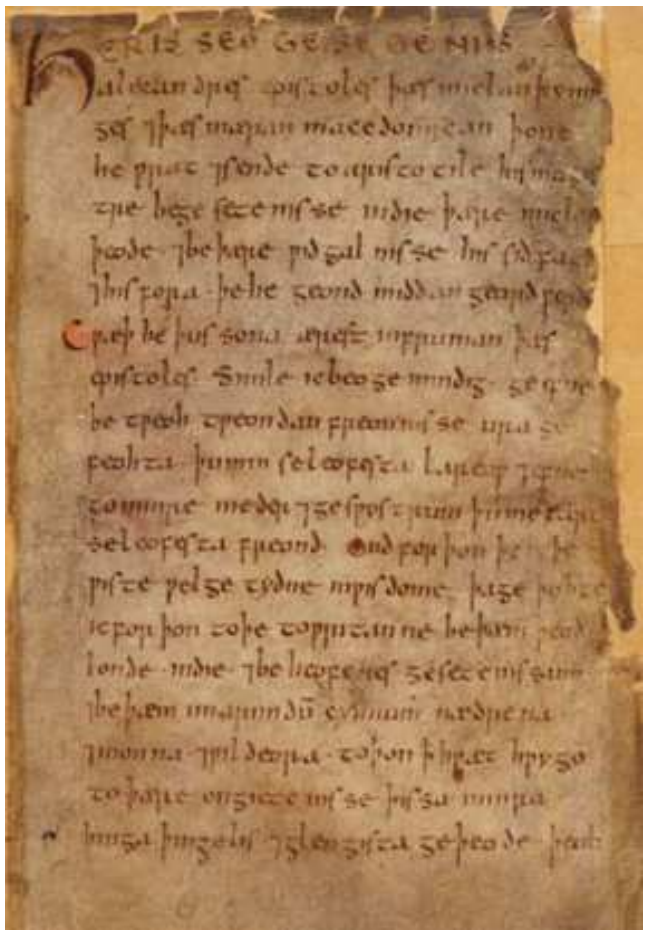

Figure 19. Opening of *Alexander's Letter*, 104 (BL107)r. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 20. Protruding feet of figures on 100(96) (BL103)v, §20, and 101 (BL104)r, §21. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 21. Letters shaped around a detail from 98(100) (BL101)r, §9. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

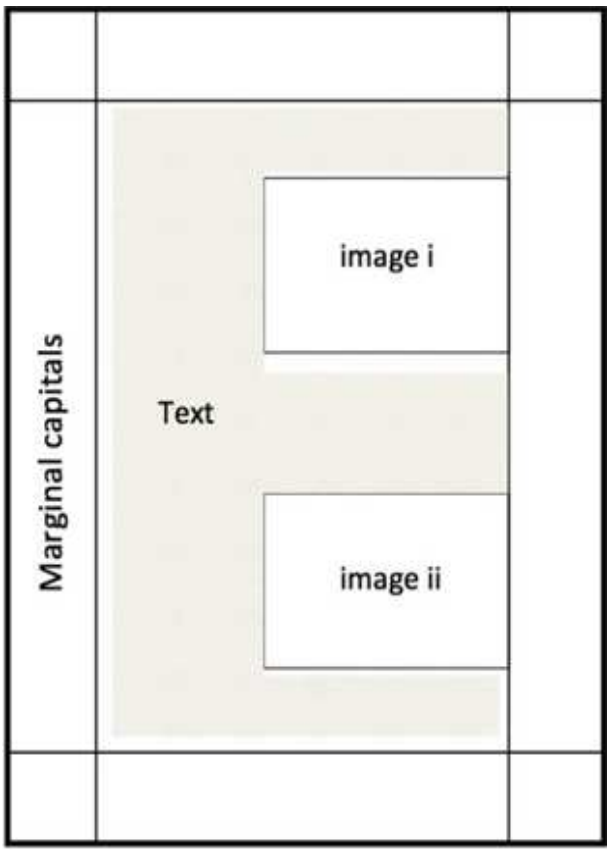

Figure 22. Regular plan for page layout.

Figure 23. Examples of one face type, shown on 101 (BL104)v (priest in his temple, §22) and 102 (BL105)r (third figure in the council, §25). © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 24. Examples of another face type, shown on 102 (BL105)r (first two figures in the council, §25) and bearded huntress 101 (BL105)v, §26. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

Figure 25. Two page spread, 98(100) (BL101)v – 99 (95) (BL102)r, §10-14. © The British Library Board, Cotton Vitellius A. xv.

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