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The Carbunculus (Red Garnet) and the Double Nature of Christ in the Early Medieval West *

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Introduction

Despite their appearing on countless religious as well as secular late-antique and early medieval pieced of jewellery, the symbolism of red garnets has never been fully explored.[i] This is surprising, because in jewellery-making metals and gems were not only chosen because of their intrinsic preciousness – potentially enhancing the status of the donor, recipient, or wearer – but also because of their supposed meaning.[ii] The association of purple, dark-red, and dark-orange garnets with Christian objects might have had to do with their colour, evocative of the blood of the martyrs and of the violent death Christ underwent on the cross. In Christian religious texts dating to the early Middle Ages, the Latin and Greek words meaning "red garnet" gained new nuances. This may have been related to the contemporary controversy over sacred images or Byzantine iconoclasm, which engaged the East and the West between the eighth and the ninth centuries. In this paper, besides analysing the material aspects of important, early medieval bejewelled crosses, I will retrace the crafting of "textual images" involving red garnets in order to shed light on their perception and symbolism in the early Middle Ages – seemingly related to Christ's incarnation and double nature (**FIG. 1**).[iii]

Red garnets in early medieval jewellery

In Antiquity and in the Middle Ages red garnets or almandines were widely used in profane and sacred jewellery. While in the Roman period they were usually sourced from Sri Lanka and India, after the Arab conquest of the Middle East they were sought for in Scandinavia, Bohemia, the Iberian Peninsula, and the Pyrenees, as recent scientific investigations undertaken on a large number of Merovingian objects have brought to light.[iv] In a brief chapter of the *Naturalis Historia*, which reveals not only Pliny the Elder's refined aesthetic taste, but also his extraordinary attentiveness to the physical characteristics of natural elements, he enumerates those of garnets. After noting the difficulty in distinguishing "the several varieties of this stone", he underlines the "opportunity … they afford to artistic skill of compelling them to reflect the colours of substances placed beneath", and that they sometimes present "small blisters within, which shine like silver".[v] In fact, depending on their cut and background, garnets appear either opaque and dull, or reflective and translucent. When cut thin, they become translucent – this effect being often enhanced by adding a gold foil background, better if

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engraved or stamped with a grid pattern that reflects the transmitted light (**FIG. 2**). Often larger garnets were cut and polished as cabochon, that is giving the gemstone a rounded upper surface and a flat back, though sometimes cabochons have a flat top. The cabochon cut was considered particularly effective in improving the vitreous luster of larger garnets. Their reflective quality, their mysterious shades and changing colours may have contributed to the supposition they had magical or prophylactic powers. Their colour, ranging from light orange to purple, may have been associated with royal status, while evoking blood, life, and strength. As a consequence, garnets became very popular on secular as well as religious objects, especially during the early Middle Ages over a vast area including the Mediterranean as well as northern Europe.[vi]

The word garnet derives from the Middle English *gernet*, which means "dark red", from the Latin *granatum*, that is pomegranate, a fruit with pink to dark red seeds which look like gems. Red garnets are also called almandines, a corruption of the Latin *alabandicus*, from the town of Alabanda in Asia Minor. Cabochon-cut almandines were referred to as carbuncles, from the Latin *carbunculus* which means "burning charcoal," a literal translation from the Greek *ἄνθραξ*.[vii] The term *carbunculus* recurs in the writings of the Church Fathers. Ambrose and Augustine noted the exotic provenance of the gemstone (India) and its good smell, but Augustine added also that the carbuncle, the brightness of which is not obscured by the darkness of the night, is like the truth that is not obscured by any falsity;[viii] Jerome compared its colour to a burning charcoal[ix] and underlined its capacity to symbolise the luminosity and clarity of Christian doctrine;[x] John Cassian commented on its decorative function in the number of the gemstones that adorned Lucifer when still a cherub.[xi] Isidore of Seville († 636) remarked that the carbuncle, native to India, has the primacy among the variety of flaming ("ardentium") gemstones, that becomes inflamed like burning charcoal, whose gleaming is not obscured by darkness, and in the darkness it seems to send out flames towards the eyes.[xii] Bede († 735) noted that the *carbunculus*, "as its name demonstrates," is a stone with the colour of the fire with which it is possible to clarify the nocturnal darkness.[xiii]

St Cuthbert's cross

In his prose life of Cuthbert († 687), the most venerated saint in Anglo-Saxon Britain, Bede recounts the emotions of those who saw his body, finally translated to

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Lindisfarne and found incorrupt eleven years after his death.[xiv] Apparently, the item closest to the saint's breast was a pectoral cross suspended by a golden cord.[xv] Since Bede evokes the awe of those who inspected the body of Cuthbert as if he had been an eye-witness, one wonders if he took notice of the red garnets that encrusted the saint's cross.[xvi] The changing appearance of the red garnets on Cuthbert's pectoral cross was appreciated by those who examined the cross (Durham Cathedral, Collections) for the production of the volume on the relics of Cuthbert in 1956: as there is no gold foil beneath them, and because the *cloisons* are indeed small, the gemstones appeared "so dark a red, having an almost blackish look in certain lights."[xvii]

Measuring 60 x 60 mm, St Cuthbert's cross has a cross pattée shape. It is hollow, with an elaborate upper part built on a base made of a single, flat gold foil (**FIG. 3**). The upper part is very thick (8 mm) and has almost an "architectural" structure, characterised as it is by mouldings, beaded wires, and a dog-tooth rim running along the expanded arms of the cross, which are inlaid with garnet cloisonnée (**FIG. 4**). The garnets, straight-edged, are very small, albeit thick, and the empty cloisons of those missing do not reveal a patterned gold foil background.[xviii] At the crossing of the arms, in the corners, four semicircular garnets emphasise the raised centrepiece. This is made of an elaborate filigree mount encircling a cylindrical, flat-topped, dark red garnet resting on a convex base of cowrie shell. Although it cannot be established if St Cuthbert's cross was made for him in particular, one can argue that the object's material preciousness, its unusual "architectural" prominence, and exceptional craftsmanship were attentively devised. On similarly fine sixth-century brooches found in Gotland a more inexpensive and less exotic disc of white glass surrounded axial garnets.[xix] The choice of cowrie shell points to the high status of the patron or the recipient the cross. With other *exotica* that characterised the most refined Anglo-Saxon and Migration Period jewellery, such shells arrived through a luxury trade that connected the Far East to northern Italy, the Rhineland, Scandinavia, and England.[xx] In England, cowrie shells have been usually found, along other grave goods, in burials dating between the fifth and the seventh centuries, the majority concentrated in the former kingdoms of Kent and Northumbria.[xxi]

While intensely coloured garnets appear occasionally combined with lustrous shell pieces or pearls in high-status lay jewellery, this association on the cross of

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Cuthbert deserves closer consideration. Since Classical Antiquity pearls had been exotic and expensive objects of eastern trade. In late Antiquity pearls had been given as presents to girls from their grooms-to-be, bearing reference to future nuptials and to the female reproductive organs symbolised by the sea shell. The Romans' appreciation for pearls is transmitted by Pliny, who wrote that since their quality is made of "their whiteness, large size, roundness, polish, and weight … which are not easily to be found united in the same; so much so, indeed, that no two pearls are ever found perfectly alike … it was from this circumstance, no doubt, that our Roman luxury first gave them the name of *unio*, or the unique gem".[xxii] The belief in the preciousness and uniqueness of each pearl was widespread. It is not surprising then that early Christian writers adopted a stainless pearl with its natural container, the oyster, also called mother-of-pearl, to symbolise the uniqueness of God-Christ incarnated in the womb of Mary.[xxiii] With this meaning, pearls and mother-of-pearls were employed or reproduced in Byzantine and early medieval visual arts and architectural decoration.[xxiv] Although in the arts of past ages it is sometimes difficult to distinguish "intended symbolism from artistic convention,"[xxv] it is tempting to see the white opalescent shell encasing and supporting the central garnet in St Cuthbert's cross as not simply an exotic decorative feature: here it might well refer to the symbology of the incarnation in Mary's womb, the garnet then standing for the blood and flesh of Christ.

Not only would the shape of St Cuthbert's cross have given it the power to guard from evil, but it may also have been empowered by a relic, likely to have been enclosed in a very small cavity under the cowrie shell.[xxvi] This hypothesis can be supported by the evidence that occasionally pectoral crosses hosted minuscule relics.[xxvii] A pectoral cross which was part of many sacred and profane jewels dating between the seventh and the eighth centuries of the so-called Staffordshire Hoard, the treasure found buried near Lichfield, in central England, may also have held a relic (Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, inv. no. K303, 66.1 x 50.3 x 4.3 mm) (**FIG. 5**).[xxviii] This pectoral cross pattée in gold was deliberately folded and broken, probably for two reasons: to neutralise its Christian symbolism, and at the same time to verify the purity of gold. Adorned with vegetal motifs made with twisted-wire filigree, the cross presents at its centre an eye-catching, flat-top, cabochon-cut dark red garnet. This would seem to convey the same reference to Christ's incarnation and physical death as it does on St

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Cuthbert's cross. Modern instruments have revealed that the gemstone's back is curved. Therefore, it is cut like a plano concave lens, an optical device used to expand light beams and increase light projection. Its careful cut notwithstanding, the garnet appears almost black because it has no reflective gold background. Observation of the gemstone under a microscope with sufficient illumination has revealed filaments underneath it which might be either fungal remains, or traces of a tiny piece of cloth, or of hairs, possibly indicating the presence of a relic.[xxix]

St Cuthbert's cross, arguably dated between the fifth and the seventh centuries, has been convincingly identified as an example of seventh-century Northumbrian art. Among the objects with which it has been compared is the "cloisonnée" page of the *Book of Durrow* (650–700 ca., Dublin, Trinity College Library, MS A. I. 57).[xxx] Despite the craftsmanship of the jewel being evidently more refined and distinctive, it has been compared with other pectoral crosses dated to the seventh century, such as those from Wilton in Norfolk (London, The British Museum, inv. no. 1859,0512.1), Ixworth in Suffolk (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, AN1909.453), and Holderness in Yorkshire (Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, AN1999.206). Actually, the only common feature they share is a centrepiece evoking Christ's presence. In the Holderness cross the centrepiece is a red garnet, roughly circular in shape and deeply incised with a circle. In the Wilton cross this position is occupied by the reverse of a *solidus* of the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius (dated between 613–632), mounted upside down perhaps to appear upright to the wearer, showing on a stepped base a simplified reproduction of the monumental gemmed cross that Theodosius II (408–450) erected on the hill of Golgotha in Jerusalem.[xxxi] On St Cuthbert's cross, in the same central position, Christ is made visible through the dark red garnet. The employment of garnets as centrepieces is attested in southern Europe and in the Mediterranean also on crosses of lesser status. The so-called Cross of Gisulf , found in a Longobard grave dated to the seventh century, has also been brought into the discussion of the Ixworth and St Cuthbert's crosses (Cividale, Museo Archeologico del Friuli, inv. no. 168, 110 x 110 mm)[xxxii] (**FIG. 6**). Cut from a gold foil, the cross exhibits a large, circular, cabochon-cut red garnet, and around it, symmetrically displayed, four triangular flat top lapis-lazuli stones and four square cabochon aquamarines in bezel settings. Gisulf's cross is outstanding among other Longobard stamped burial crosses both because of the presence of gemstones, but

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also for the emphasis placed on the Holy Face, which appears eight times, four of them around the centrepiece. Crosses on gold foils, found in sixth- and seventh-century burials in southern Germany and in Italy, were either stitched to a veil that covered the face of the deceased, or on clothing covering the chest, ideally to protect their soul from evil with the prophylactic *signum crucis*.[xxxiii] Their protective function was often enhanced by a stamped decoration, including interlace to entangle the evil and bearded or beardless human faces, either interpreted as anonymous human “masks”, or as Christ’s Holy Face.[xxxiv] It is difficult to establish whether these gold foil crosses, produced by or at least for populations recently converted to Christianity, reflected contemporary theological controversies about the natures of Christ which divided the early Church. It remains the case that they evoke Christ’s physical presence: his incarnation alluded to with the blood-red garnets; his human nature defined by the physical death he underwent by crucifixion, circumscribed by the shape of cross; his divine nature resplendent in the imminent triumph over physical death. The cult of the Cross was promoted also in Anglo-Saxon Britain. The poem known as *The Dream of the Rood* seems involved in this process.[xxxv] Its earliest written witness has been found inscribed in runic characters on the eighth-century stone cross at Ruthwell (Dumfriesshire), which predates the lone manuscript source at Vercelli (Biblioteca Capitolare, ms. CXVII) dating to the late tenth century.[xxxvi] In *The Dream of the Rood*, the narrator has a dream of a gemmed cross stained with blood. Although it is highly probable that these verses were inspired by the perception of contemporary bejewelled crosses (St Cuthbert’s cross has been mentioned in comparison[xxxvii]), the author does not seem to describe a physical object, but rather a mental vision of the Cross as the most effective salvific sign.[xxxviii]

The Lateran cross

Measuring ca. 255 x 240 x 30 mm, made in pure gold, decorated with pearls, gemstones, cabochon and cloisonné garnets, and variably dated between the sixth and the ninth centuries, the so-called Lateran cross is one of the earliest known reliquaries in the shape of the cross (**FIG. 7**). It was believed to contain two precious relics attesting the incarnation of Christ: his navel and foreskin. The *Liber Pontificalis* reports that Sergius I (687–701) discovered in a dark corner of St Peter’s sacristy a silver casket

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containing a cross "decorated with various and precious gemstones" and enclosing a relic of the Holy Cross. The bejewelled cross was moved to the Lateran where, for the salvation of humanity it was offered to the kisses and veneration of the faithful on the day of the *Exaltatio sanctae Crucis* on the 14th of September. It is disputed if this cross, described by the *Liber Pontificalis,* is to be identified with the Lateran cross.[xxxix] As this cross holding the relics of the incarnation was stolen from the Museo Sacro of the Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana in 1945 in mysterious circumstances, only old photographs, one of which is in colour, reproduce its shape and decoration. The centrepiece appears to have been a thick, pear-shaped, intensely dark red or purple garnet.[xl] Below this gemstone, set on a plaque that could be lifted, there was a small wooden cross with a gold outline, into which arguably were embedded the navel and the prepuce of the infant Christ.[xli] The centrepiece, with its dark hues that could be brightened up only by direct light, and its shape resembling the profile of a head, conjures up the image of the Holy face – whose features, according to various texts dating from the mid sixth century onwards, were ungraspable by human understanding.[xlii] No other relics could demonstrate the humanity of Christ better than his navel and foreskin, as through the navel He had been nourished in his mother's womb, and his foreskin attested to his humility in submitting to the Mosaic rite of circumcision like any other man.[xliii] It can be understood why Pope Paschal I (817–824) decided to give the cross that contained them a new silver casket. This, and other most sacred relics were kept in the *arca cipressina*, a wooden chest that Pope Leo III (795–816) donated to the oratory of San Lorenzo by the Lateran, later called the Sancta Sanctorum or Holy of the Holies.

The incarnation and the double nature of Christ were the main arguments of those in favour of the production and veneration of sacred images during the iconoclastic controversy in Byzantium between the eighth and the ninth centuries. Through the incarnation God had adopted a human frame. Through Christ, in which the divine and human natures were united, God had made himself visible, and therefore representable. This view was entirely shared and supported by Paschal, who put an end to the controversy over sacred images with Byzantium adopting once and for all a clear iconophile position, which he expressed not only in official correspondence entertained with the emperors of Constantinople, but also through effective visual statements.[xliv]

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In order to give to the Lateran cross and its precious relics of the incarnation an appropriate container, Paschal ordered a cruciform silver-gilt repoussé casket decorated with post-Resurrection scenes. The combined message of the bejewelled Lateran cross-reliquary of the incarnation and of its container evoking the Resurrection, proclaim the importance of the incarnation for the establishment of the universal Church, whose head is the pope. For the relics of the True Cross, Paschal I ordered two caskets: a gilt-silver cruciform casket which was decorated on its upper side in cloisonné enamel with scenes epitomising the Infancy of the Incarnated God and extolling the role Mary played in it, and a rectangular silver-gilt casket to protect the enamelled cross showing on the lid Christ between Peter and Paul in repoussé.[xlv]

Autpertus' carbuncle

Together with other relics from the Lateran, apparently since the late seventh century under Pope Sergius I, each year, the bejewelled cross was carried in procession during the feast of the *Exaltatio Crucis*.[xlvi] Confirming what was transmitted by medieval written sources about the ritual anointing of this cross, of the enamelled *staurotheke* of Paschal I, and of the *acheiropoieta* image in the Sancta Sanctorum, the Lateran Cross was found covered by a layer of encrusted balm when Leo III's chest was opened in 1905.[xlvii] It should be noted that a good smell was associated with Christ already by St Paul (2 Cor. 2, 15), and the *carbunculus* was recognised by Ambrose of Milan as a stone with a good odour.[xlviii] The association of Christ with a good smell was remarked in a period not far from Paschal I, by Ambrosius Autpertus († 784) in a homily for the feast of the Purification of Mary and the Presentation at the Temple of the infant Christ on the 2nd of February.[xlix] More mentioned by art historians than studied, Autpertus was a Gaulic author, monk, and abbot, active in the monastery of San Vincenzo al Volturno, in central Italy, who indelibly shaped a new image of Mary in relation to the incarnation. Hence is generally believed to have inspired an innovative Marian theology and iconography in the medieval West. Autpertus' writings have also been convincingly connected to the "iconophile" evergetism of Paschal I.[l]

In his most famous exegetical work, the commentary on the Revelation, Autpertus writes that the pure carbuncle (cabochon-cut garnet) is apparently black and dull, but when hit by a ray of light it reveals its dark red or violet-purple colour.

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Because of its resemblance with a piece of charcoal, that is dull, material, tangible, but at the same time when touched by fire gleams in the darkness, Autpertus thought the carbuncle fitting to symbolise the Incarnated God and his double nature. Christ, in being without sin, enlightens with the light of his divinity the darkness of our mortality; at the same time, in being human and tangible, though luminous and inscrutable, He appears as the chosen mediator between God and humankind.[li] The patristic sources on the carbuncle mentioned earlier, do not explain entirely Autpertus' new metaphor involving this gemstone. More pregnant to Autpertus' image seems a passage by Apponius, a fifth-sixth century author, possibly active in Rome. He wrote that Christ is a creature able to mediate between the strength of divinity and the fragility of the flesh: as a lit piece of charcoal can ignite a fire, Christ can vivify the souls of the faithful, making them similar to Him, letting them join his beauty.[lii]

Now, one wonders what inspired Autpertus to see the carbuncle as a burning charcoal that could embody a metaphor for the double nature of Christ. In Rome, which he visited, he might have become acquainted with Byzantine devotional practices and liturgical texts. The most famous Marian hymn in the Byzantine liturgical tradition, the *Akathistos*, arguably dated to the fifth or the sixth century, visualised the physical connection between Mary and Her Son with metaphors associated with light and fire. Mary is the one who kindles "the immaterial light" and "the many-beamed lantern", the "lampstand of the light that never wanes".[liii] Metaphors inspired by fire, alluding to an unknowable God, featured in the writings of one of the most authoritative – though elusive – Greek *auctoritates*, Pseudo-Dionysius. [liv] Although the ninth-century Carolingian translations of the *Corpus Dionysiacum* into Latin gave the false impression that it was not known earlier in the West, actually, it was known and quoted at the papal court in important synodal documents in the eighth century.[lv] Moreover, it was incorporated in the writings of Byzantine iconophile authors. [lvi] The latter, circulated at the papal court, where the need for translating them into Latin was felt only in the second half of the ninth century.[lvii] Very close to Autpertus' metaphor of the carbuncle are two statements dating to the first half of the eighth century by renowned iconophile authors: Bishop Andrew of Crete and the monk John of Damascus. The biblical image of the burning coal with which an angel purified the mouth of Isaiah (Is 6, 6–7) was used by Andrew of Crete in order to appeal to the five senses and

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emotionally engage the faithful in the apprehension of the incarnation.[lviii] With regards to the Eucharist, John of Damascus wrote that it can be visualised with the image of the "divine burning charcoal/carbuncle", a symbol of unity between materiality and divinity that purifies from sins.[lix]

A preliminary analysis has revealed that the metaphors, epithets and the theological imagery Autpertus developed around Christ and Mary have eastern origins but still deserve a contextualization in the western response to Byzantine iconoclasm. These metaphors, epithets and theological imagery could be regarded as distinctive "conceptual spolia" derived from Byzantium. Thus, the path that led Autpertus to choose the red garnet as a metaphor for the double nature of Christ seems to have had more than an intellectual ground, founded in western and Byzantine exegesis and in the contemporary theological debate. His idea that the gemstone carbuncle can visualise the double nature of Christ seems to have been sparkled from a *sensorial* perception of the gemstone.[lx] Enthralled by the intrinsic material qualities of red garnets, he built on their long association with pectoral crosses and sacred objects. As seen, in the early Medieval period, in the Mediterranean as well as in northern Europe, on religious jewellery the red garnet signified Christ, his redeeming sacrifice, and the mysterious process of the incarnation especially when associated with pearls. But it might have acquired a deeper significance during the period of Byzantine iconoclasm, when wearing a cross was a clear statement of faith in the incarnation, the central argument in the iconophile justification of sacred images. Therefore one can assume that Autpertus, inspired by bejewelled crosses, drawing on what appears as a long-attested symbolism that associated Christ with the carbuncle, relying on patristic as well as more recent literary sources, managed to craft an unprecedented metaphor through which to visualise Christ's incarnation, his double nature, his luminous appearance, and his unintelligible essence. In sum, Autpertus created a new textual icon: an image of the Incarnated God gleaming in the dark like a splendid cabochon-cut red garnet.

Conclusion

The association drawn between the *carbunculus* and the Incarnate God was long-lasting. In the later Middle Ages *carbunculus* and the related verb *coruscare* were still part of the verbal repertoire used to describe the perception of the Holy Face of

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Christ shining in the darkness. This is for example attested by the description given by Christianus II archbishop of Mainz († 1253) of a monumental gilt Crucifix which was exhibited only on special occasions of the liturgical calendar. On its bright golden face, the Crucifix had two gems set in the eyes "called carbuncles, as big as two egg yolks, which sparkled [*coruscabant*] in the darkness".[lxi] One can imagine how striking these large and polished gems would have looked in the dim light of the cathedral, giving the impression of live eyes, and recalling that once God had taken human form.

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Summary

The *Carbunculus* and the Double Nature of Christ in the Early Medieval West

This paper aims to discuss the employment of garnets on early medieval gold crosses. Despite appearing on a large number of pectoral crosses from the Mediterranean as well as from northern Europe, the symbolism of garnets has never been fully explored. No study has related their employment to the major controversies that took place between the late seventh and the first half of the ninth centuries over the natures of Christ and the symbolism related to his incarnation. During these centuries, the Greek and Latin words meaning ”garnet” gained new nuances in religious texts: this literary development will be followed, to shed light on the early medieval understanding and perception of garnets on early medieval crosses.

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Endnotes

[*] ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: ERASED IN THIS VERSION

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[i] To name only a few: the Merovingian paten in the Gourdon Treasure, c. 500 (Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, 55.471, Chab. 2540); the sixth-seventh century pierced gold disk from Limons (Puy-de-Dôme) with the Holy Face encircled by the *Chrismon* and the *Alpha-Omega* (Paris, Cabinet des Médailles); the Enger reliquary from St Dionysius in Enger (Nord Rhein-Westphalia), c. 800 (Berlin, Kunstgewerbemuseum); the Cross of the Angels commissioned by Alfonso II, 808 (Oviedo, San Salvador), etc.

[ii] Martina Bagnoli, ”The Stuff of Heaven. Materials and Craftsmanship in Medieval Reliquaries”, in M. Bagnoli et al. (eds.), *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in the Middle Ages*, exh. cat., Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 17 Oct. 2010 – 17 Jan. 2011, Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, 13 Feb. 2011 – 15 May 2011, London, The British Museum, 23 June 2011 – 9 Oct. 2011, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 137–147, esp. p. 138: “Medieval craftsmen exploited the rich symbolism associated with specific materials in making reliquaries to signal the sacred. … Gems as well partook of a rich symbolic tradition. … Gems were thus considered to be alive and to contain the power associated with the cosmic events that led to their creation. From this power they drew their magical, medical, and for Christian authors, spiritual qualities”. See also Cynthia Hahn, *Strange Beauty. Issues in the Making and Meaning of Reliquaries, 400–circa 1204*, University Park, PA, The Penn State University Press, 2012, p. 41, who analizes jasper and sapphire.

[iii] On the sensorial perception of the incarnation through the Eucharist in later Middle Ages, see the recent article by K.B. Aavitsland, ”Incarnation. Paradoxes of Perception and Mediation in Medieval Liturgical Art”, in H.H. Lohfert Jorgensen et al (eds.), *The Saturated Sensorum. Principles of Perception and Mediation in Middle Ages*, Aarhus, Aarhus Univ. Press, 2014, 72–90.

[iv] François Farges, ”Mineralogy of the Louvres Merovingian garnet cloisonné jewelry: Origins of the gems of the first kings of France”, *American Mineralogist*, Vol 83, 1998, pp. 323–330; Patrick Périn, Thomas Calligaro, Françoise Vallet, Jean-Paul Poirot, Dominique Bagault, ”Provenancing Merovingian garnets by PIXE and µ-Raman spectrometry”, in J. Henning (ed.), *Post-Roman Towns, Trade and Settlement in Europe and Byzantium. Vol. 1. The Heirs of the Roman West. Millennium-Studien, 5/1*, Berlin, New York, De Gruyter, 2007, pp. 69–76, esp. p. 72.

[v] Gaius Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historia*, XXXVII, 7, 25, eds. L. von Jan, K.F.T. Mayhoff, Stuttgart, Teubner, 1878, pp. 159–160.

[vi] Gerda Friess, *Edelsteine im Mittelalter. Wandel und Kontinuität in ihrer Bedeutung durch zwölf Jahrhunderte (in Aberglauben, Medizin, Theologie und Goldschmiedekunst)*, Hildesheim, Gerstenberg, 1980, p. 36, writes that the red stones such as the sardonyx or the carnelian were reminders of the blood of the martyrs, of the incarnation – without quoting any source.

[vii] Robert Max Garrett, *Precious Stones in Old English Literature*. *Münchner Beitrage zur Romanischen und Englischen Philologie 47*, Leipzig, Böhme, 1909, pp. 11–12, for some of the early Christian references to the gemstone.

[viii] Ambrosius, *De paradiso*, 3, 15, and 3, 23, CSEL 32/1, ed. C. Schenkl, Vienna, 1896, p. 274, l. 4, and p. 279, ll. 22–23; id., *Explanatio psalmorum XII*, I, 36, 1–2, CSEL 64, ed. M. Petschenig, Vienna, 1919, p. 32, ll. 6–7; Augustinus, *De Genesi contra Manicheos*, II, 10, 14, CSEL 91, ed. D. Weber, Vienna, 1998, p. 135, l. 9; id., *De Genesi ad litteram*, VIII, 7, CSEL 28/1, ed. ed. J. Zycha, Vienna, 1894, p. 240, l. 19; id., *De doctrina christiana*, 2, 16, 24, CCSL 32, ed. J. Martin, Turnhout, Brepols, 1962, p. 50, ll. 39–40; Hieronymus, *Hebraicae quaestiones in libro Geneseos*, 2, 12, CCSL 72, eds. de Lagarde et al., 4, ll. 11–2.

[ix] Hieronymus, *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri I-XI*, III, VI, 6, CCSL 73, ed. M. Adriaen, Turnhout, 1963, p. 89, ll. 17–29; id., *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri XII-XVIII*, XV, LIV, 11–14, CCSL 73A, eds. M. Adriaen, G. Morin, Turnhout, 1963, p. 612, ll. 146–149.

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[x] Hieronymus, *Epistulae. Pars I: Epistulae I–LXX*, XVIII, 2, 18, *Ad Damasum papam. De Seraphim et calculo*, CCSL 54, ed. I. Hilberg, Vienna, 1910, pp. 98–100, esp. p. 100, ll. 1–4.

[xi] Iohannes Cassianus, *Conlationes*, VIII, 8, 2, CSEL 13, ed M. Petschenig, Vienna, 1886, p. 224, ll. 9–10; *ibidem*, XXIII, 17, 7, p. 667, ll. 14–15; Cyprianus Gallus, *Heptateuchos*, vv. 59 and 1099, CSEL 23, ed. R. Peiper, Vienna, 1891, pp. 3 and 95.

[xii] Isidorus Hispalensis, *Etymologiae*, XVI, 14, 1, *De ignitis*, PL 82, col. 578C. Friess, 1980, pp. 134–137, mentions Isidore about the carbuncle “feurig wie die Kohle”, but she does not follow the exegetical tradition about the stone.

[xiii] Beda, *In principium Genesis*, I, 2, 12, CCSL 118A, ed. C.W. Jones, Turnhout, 1967, p. 50, ll. 1568–1570; he actually uses “inlustrare,” perhaps in a figurative way to mean elucidate, enlighten the mind, recalling Augustine’s and Jerome’s Christian interpretation of the gemstone, cf. Augustinus, *De Genesi contra Manicheos*, II, 10, 14, CSEL 91, ed. D. Weber, Vienna, 1998, p. 135, l. 9; Hieronymus, *Epistulae. Pars I: Epistulae I–LXX*, XVIII, 2, 18, *Ad Damasum papam. De Seraphim et calculo*, CCSL 54, p. 100, ll. 1–4.

[xiv] Beda, *Vita Cuthberti*, XLII, ed. B. Colgrave, *Two Lives of Saint Cuthbert: A Life by an Anonymous Monk of Lindisfarne and Bede’s Prose Life*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1940, pp. 290–295; cf. Rupert L. S. Bruce-Mitford, “The Pectoral Cross”, in C. F. Battiscombe (ed.), *The Relics of Saint Cuthbert*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1956, pp. 308–325, esp. p. 316.

[xv] James Raine, *St. Cuthbert. With an Account of the State in which His Remains Were Found Upon the Opening of His Tomb in Durham Cathedral*, Durham, Geo Andrews, London, J.B. Nichols, 1828, p. 211; Thomas Downing Kendrick, “St. Cuthbert's Pectoral Cross, and the Wilton and Ixworth Crosses”, *The Antiquaries Journal*, Vol 17, 1937, pp. 283–293, esp. p. 283; Bruce-Mitford, 1956, 316.

[xvi] Jülich, 1986–1987, pp. 124–126, examines the meaning and the symbolism of gemstones employed on gemmed crosses on the basis of Christian writers, indirectly quoting Bede, Autpertus, and Hrabanus Maurus, but unfortunately does not take into account the *carbunculus*.

[xvii] Bruce-Mitford, 1956, p. 313.

[xviii] Bruce-Mitford, 1956, pp. 313, 542–44.

[xix] For example, see those in London, The British Museum, inv. nos. M&ME 1921,1101.218, 220, 221, AN.

[xx] Bruce-Mitford, 1956, pp. 309–11.

[xxi] J.W. Huggett, ”Imported grave goods and the early Anglo-Saxon economy”, *Medieval Archaeology*, Vol 32, 1988, pp. 63–96, esp. p. 72; D.S. Reese, ”The Trade of Indo-Pacific Shells into the Mediterranean Basin and Europe,” Oxford Journal of Archaeology, 10/2 (1991), pp. 159–96.

[xxii] Gaius Plinius Secundus, *Naturalis Historia*, IX, 34, 56, eds. L. von Jan, K.F.T. Mayhoff, Stuttgart, Teubner, 1878, pp. 138–139, esp. ll. 15–16; cf. Avinoam Shalem, ”Jewels and Journeys: The Case of the Medieval Gemstone Called al-Yatima”, *Muqarnas*, Vol 14, 1997, pp. 42–56, esp. P. 42.

[xxiii] Ps.-Athanasius, *Quaestiones aliae*, 19, PG 28, col. 792A; cf. Nicholas Constas, *Proclus of Constantinople and the Cult of the Virgin in Late Antiquity. Homilies 1–5, Texts and Translations. Supplements to Vigiliae Christianae 56*, Leiden, Boston, Brill, 2003, p. 279, n. 19. Proclus of Constantinople, *In sanctissimae Deiparae Annuntiationem*, 4, PG 85, col. 436A; Romanos the Melodist, IX, 12, 4–8, ed. Grosdidier de Matons, 1965, v. 2, 32; trans. Arentzen, 2014, 94: [Mary talking to Joseph] “Where were you, wise [man]? How could you not guard my virginity? For someone with wings came and gave me for betrothal pearls for my ears; he hung his words like earrings on me; look, see how he has beautified me, and adorned me with this”; cf. Constas, 2003, pp. 290–293.

[xxiv] Shalem, 1997, pp. 45–50; Henry Maguire, *Nectar and Illusion. Nature in Byzantine Art and Literature. Onassis Series in Hellenic Culture*, Oxford, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 78–81.

[xxv] Henry Maguire, “Body, Clothing, Metaphor: The Virgin in Early Byzantine Art”, in L. Brubaker, M.B. Cunningham (eds.), *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium. Texts and Images*, Farnham, Burlington, Ashgate, 2011, pp. 39–51, esp. pp. 48–49, with regards to the sixth-century mosaic and incrustations of mother-of-pearl in the apse of the Eufrasian basilica at Poreč.

[xxvi] Bruce-Mitford, 1956, p. 311; Kendrick, 1937, p. 284, instead rejected the hypothesis the cross was a reliquary as the relic would have been “invisible and inaccessible”.

[xxvii] Holger A. Klein, entry “Necklace with Pendants”, in M. Bagnoli et al. (eds.), *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in the Middle Ages*, exh. cat., Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 17 Oct. 2010 – 17 Jan. 2011, Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, 13 Feb. 2011 – 15 May 2011, London,

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The British Museum, 23 June 2011 – 9 Oct. 2011, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 24–25; Sannazaro, Giostra, 2010, p. 208.

[xxviii] Kevin Leahy, Roger Bland, *The Staffordshire Hoard*, London, The British Museum Press, 2009.

[xxix] I owe to the archaeologist Chris Fern and the conservator Pieta Graeves, working on the Staffordshire Hoard at the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, this and other observations on the cross.

[xxx] While Kendrick, 1937, pp. 287–288, believed the cross dating to the fifth century and related it to crafts of the Roman period, Bruce-Mitford, 1956, p. 323, has connected it with seventh-century Northumbria.

[xxxi] Bruce-Mitford, 1956, p. 323.

[xxxii] Theo Jülich, "Gemmenkreuze. Die Farbigkeit ihres Edelsteinbesatzes bis zum 12. Jahrhundert", *Aachener Kunstblätter*, Vol 54/55, 1986–1987, pp. 99–258, esp. p. 131.

[xxxiii] For further bibliography, see Caterina Giostra, "Le croci in lamina d'oro: origine, significato e funzione", in Marco Sannazaro, Caterina Giostra (eds.), *Petala aurea. Lamine di ambito bizantino o longobardo dalla Collezione Rovati*, exh. cat., Monza, Museo Civico, 15 Dec. 2010 – 16 Jan. 2011, Milan, Johan & Levi, 2010, pp. 129–140.

[xxxiv] Adriano Peroni, *Oreficerie e metalli lavorati tardoantichi e altomedievali del territorio di Pavia. Catalogo*, Spoleto, Centro Italiano di Studi sull'Alto Medioevo, 1967, pp. 34–35 on the human "masks" reproduced on the crosses, probably derived from the celtic decorative motif of the "têtes coupées"; p. 128, entry no. 89, the cross of Campo Camino (Pavia, Museo Civico); entry no. 90, p. 130, cross of Cergnago (Bologna, Museo Civico); entry no. 96, p. 140, cross of Borgomasino (Pavia, Museo Civico). See also Sannazaro, Giostra (eds.), 2010, entries nos. 14, 18–20, on the crosses in the Collezione Rovati, Monza.

[xxxv] Cf. Hahn, 2012, pp. 87–89.

[xxxvi] Douglas Mac Lean, "The Date of the Ruthwell Cross", in Brendan Cassidy (ed.), *The Ruthwell Cross. Papers from the Colloquium sponsored by* the *Index of Christian Art, Princeton University 8 December 1989. Index of Christian Art Occasional papers 1*, Princeton, NJ, Index of Christian Art, 1992, pp. 49–70; David Howlett, "Inscriptions and Design of the Ruthwell Cross", Brendan Cassidy (ed.), *The Ruthwell Cross*, pp. 71–93; Paul Meyvaert, "Necessity Mother of Invention: a Fresh Look at the Rune Verses on the Ruthwell Cross", *Anglo-Saxon England*, Vol 41, 2012, pp. 407–416.

[xxxvii] Elizabeth Coatsworth, "The Pectoral Cross and Portable Altar from the Tomb of St Cuthbert", in G. Bonner et al. (eds.), *St Cuthbert, his Cult and his Community*, Woodbridge, Boydell Press, 1989, pp. 287–301, esp. p. 296.

[xxxviii] *Dream of the Rood*, ll. 22–23, ed. M. Swanton, *The Dream of the Rood. Manchester Old and Middle English Texts*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, New York, Barnes and Noble, 1970, pp. 89–91, and pp. 109–111; trans. J.A. Glenn (http://www.english.ox.ac.uk/oecoursepack/rood/ consulted on 25 Nov 2015): "I saw that doom-beacon / turn trappings and hews: sometimes with water wet, / drenched with blood's going; sometimes with jewels decked". A thorough examination of the poem and the Ruthwell cross in their historical context has been undertaken by Éamonn Ó Carragáin, *Ritual and the Rood: Liturgical Images and the Old English Poems of the Dream of the Rood Tradition. The British Library Studies in Medieval Culture*, London, Toronto, Buffalo, The British Library and University of Toronto Press Incorporated, 2005. On the mind as container of visions in the *Dream of the Rood* and in Old English poetry, see Britt Mize, "The Mental Container and the Cross of Christ: Revelation and Community in The Dream of the Rood", *Studies in Philology*, Vol 107, No 2, 2010, pp. 131–178, esp. pp. 139–143.

[xxxix] *Liber Pontificalis*, I, LXXXVI. Sergius I, ed. L. Duchesne, Paris, Ernest Thorin, 1886, vol. 1, p. 374. Cf. Guido Cornini, "'Non est in toto sanctior orbe locus.' Collecting Relics in Early Medieval Rome", in M. Bagnoli et al. (eds.), *Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in the Middle Ages*, exh. cat., Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art, 17 Oct. 2010 – 17 Jan. 2011, Baltimore, The Walters Art Museum, 13 Feb. 2011 – 15 May 2011, London, The British Museum, 23 June 2011 – 9 Oct. 2011, New Haven, CT, Yale University Press, 2010, pp. 69–78, esp. p. 71. The earliest secure description of the Lateran cross dates to shortly before 1100 and says it was decorated with amethysts, emeralds and prase stones, see the *Descriptio lateranensis Ecclesiae*, 13, *De ecclesia Sancti Laurentii in Palatio*, in Roberto Valentini, Giuseppe Zucchetti, *Codice topografico della città di Roma. Fonti per la storia d'Italia 90*, Rome, R. Istituto Storico Italiano per il Medio Evo, 1946, vol. 3, p. 356. Philippe Lauer, *Le trésor du Sancta Sanctorum. Monuments et Mémoires 15*, Paris, Ernest Leroux, 1906, pp. 49–60, fig. 10, believed the Lateran cross to be a product of late eight-century Gaul which had been presented by Charlemagne to Pope Hadrian I; Hartmann Grisar, "Die angebliche Christusreliquie im mittelalterlichen

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Lateran (Praeputium Domini)", *Römische Quartalschrift für christliche Altertumskunde und Kirchengeschichte*, Vol 20, 1906, pp. 109–122; id., *Die römische Kapelle Sancta Sanctorum und ihr Schatz. Meine Entdeckungen und Studien in der Palastkapelle der mittelalterlichen Päpste*, Freiburg im Breisgau, Herder, 1908, pp. 82–97, figs. 40–42, believed the cross to date to the fifth or sixth century; A. Frolow, *La relique de la Vraie Croix. Recherches sur le développement d'un culte. Archives de l'Orient chrétien 7*, Paris, 1961, pp. 227–228, entry no. 123, dated it to the ninth century (?); cf. Jülich, 1986–1987, p. 139; Cornini, 2010, p. 71; Hahn, 2012, p. 80.

[xl] After Grisar, 1908, pp. 83–84 and 88, also Jülich, 1986–1987, p. 139, says that the centrepiece was an amethyst. Friess, 1980, p. 135 notes that the best ("die besten") red garnets are those that resemble amethysts in colour, therefore have a violet-purple nuance.

[xli] On the legends developed around these relics and on the vexed question of their authenticity, cf. Grisar, 1906; id., 1908, pp. 92–97.

[xlii] The literature on the Holy Face is abundant, see Averil Cameron, "The History of the Image of Edessa: The Telling of Story", in *Okeanos: Essays Presented to Ihor Ševčenko on his Sixtieth Birthday by his Colleagues and Students*, Cambridge MA, Harvard University, Ukrainian Research Institute, Harvard University, 1984, pp. 80–94; ead., "The Mandylion and Byzantine Iconoclasm", in H.L. Kessler and G. Wolf (eds.), *The Holy Face and the Paradox of Representation. Villa Spelman Colloquia 6*, Bologna, 1998, pp. 33–54; Gerhard Wolf et al. (eds.), *Mandylion. Intorno al Sacro Volto da Bisanzio a Genova*, exh. cat., Genoa, Museo Diocesano, Milan, Skira, 2004; Gerhard Wolf et al. (eds.), *Intorno al Sacro Volto. Genova, Bisanzio e il Mediterraneo (secoli XI-XIV). Collana del Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz, Max-Planck-Institut 11*, Venice, Marsilio, 2007; Michele Bacci, *The Many Faces of Christ. Portraying the Holy in the East and West, 300 to 1300*, London, Reaktion Books, 2014.

[xliii] In 1900 the Holy Office prohibited to mention, let alone venerate the foreskin of Christ. On the vexed question of the authenticity of these relics, see Grisar, 1906; id., 1908, 92–7. Cecchelli, 1951–52, 25, defined the idea of a relic of the circumcision incredible and disrespectful. On the veneration of the foreskin of Christ, Robert Palazzo, "The Veneration of the Sacred Foreskin(s) of Baby Jesus – A Documented Analysis", in J.P. Helfers (ed.), *Multicultural Europe and Cultural Exchange in the Middle Ages and Renaissance. Arizona Studies in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance 12*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2005, pp. 155–176.

[xliv] Erik Thunø, *Image and Relic. Mediating the Sacred in Early Medieval Rome. Analecta Romana Instituti Danici, Supplementum 32*, Rome, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2002, pp. 135–140; id., "Materializing the Invisible in Early Medieval Art. The Mosaic of Santa Maria in Domnica in Rome", in G. de Nie et al. (eds.), *Seeing the Invisible in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Utrecht Studies in Medieval Literacy 14*, Turnhout, Brepols, 2005, pp. 265–289; Anja Englen, "La difesa delle immagini intrapresa dalla chiesa di Roma nel IX secolo", in ead. (ed.), *Caelius I. Santa Maria in Domnica, San Tommaso in Formis e il Clivus Scauri. Palinsesti Romani I*, Rome, L'Erma di Bretschneider, 2003, pp. 257–284.

[xlv] The programmes of the two pairs of objects – the Lateran cross-reliquary and its container, the enamelled cross and its container – although self-standing, complement each other, see Thunø, 2002, pp. 17–23; p. 18 and pl. IV on the gold cross with the red garnets; pp. 25–78 on the the famous enamelled cross that hosted relics of the Cross; pp. 79–117 on the cruciform casket which contained the enamelled cross; pp. 125–127 on how the objects complement each other. With the exception of the lost gemmed cross, the two caskets and the enamelled cross are held at the Musei Vaticani.

[xlvi] Cf. Benedictus Canonicus, *Ordo Romanus XI*, 74, in J. Mabillon, M. Germain, *Museum italicum seu collectio veterum scriptorum ex bibliothecis italicis. Musei italici tomus II complectens antiquos libros rituales sanctae Romanae Ecclesiae* Paris, Martin, Boudot, Martin, 1689, t. 2, p. 152; Cencius Camerarius, *Ordo Romanus XII*, XLVI, 74–75, in Mabillon, 1689, t. 2, pp. 209–210; cf. Grisar, 1906, p. 109. See also Cornini, 2010, p. 71, nn. 41–42; Hahn, 2012, pp. 84–87.

[xlvii] *Descriptio lateranensis Ecclesiae*, 13, *De ecclesia Sancti Laurentii in Palatio*, in Valentini, Zucchetti, 1946, vol. 3, p. 356; cf. Grisar, 1906, p. 110; id, 1908, pp. 83, 91–92; Cornini, 2010, p. 76, n. 41. The residual presence of balms have been confirmed by restorer Barbara Pinto Folicaldi, April 2016.

[xlviii] Ambrosius, *De paradiso*, 3, 14–15, and 23, CSEL 32/1, ed. C. Schenkl, Vienna, 1896, p. 279; id., *Explanatio psalmorum XII*, I, 36, 1, CSEL 64, ed. M. Petschenig, Vienna, 1919, M. Zelzer, Vienna, 1999, p. 32, ll. 1–2; cf. Grisar, 1908, p. 92.

[xlix] Ambrosius Autpertus, *Sermo in Purificatione sanctae Mariae*, 13, CCCM 27B, ed. R. Weber, Turnhout, Brepols, 1979, p. 997, ll. 11–13. He attended the candle-lit night procession on the eve of the feast in Rome.

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[l] Thunø, 2002, pp. 28–29, 31, 38, 45, 154, and id., 2006.

[li] Ambrosius Autpertus, *Expositio in Apocalypsin*, II, 2, 17b, CCCM 27, ed. R. Weber, Turnhout, Brepols, 1975, pp. 133–134, ll. 3–27: "Calculus, lapis est pretiosus, qui alio quoque vocabulo usitatius carbunculus vocatur. Utrumque autem nomen in divina Scriptura, et pro lapide pretioso et pro carbone saepius ponitur. Lapis igitur iste ideo calculus vel carbunculus appellatur, quia nimirum a carbone similitudinem ducere videtur. Sicut enim carbo succensus, qua magnitudine subsistit, ea in tenebris positus refulget, ita et hic lapis a multis facere perhibetur. Quis itaque per hunc, nisi 'mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Iesu' [*I Tim*. 2, 5] designatur? Bene autem per lapidem calculum, qui et secundum hanc Revelationem candidus esse, et naturae suae adtestatione in tenebris lucere perhibetur, incarnata Veritas exprimitur, quia videlicet et iuxta humanitatis nostrae naturam sine ulla peccati obfuscatione mundus inter homines apparuit, et divinitatis suae luce tenebras nostrae mortalitatis inlustravit. Proponitur itaque lapis hic figuraliter de hoste humani generis triumphantibus, ad similitudinem illius margaritae, quam negotiator inveniens venditis omnibus conparavit. Alia denique translatio pro calculo margaritum posuit, et notandum quod in omnibus his locutionibus se Dominus in praemium uincentibus dare repromittit, fratrem scilicet et conparticipem in regno et paterna hereditate futurum. Vnde et per Iohannem dicitur: Quotquot receperunt eum dedit eis potestatem filios Dei fieri, his qui credunt in nomine eius, qui non ex sanguinibus, neque ex uoluntate carnis, neque ex uoluntate uiri, sed ex Deo nati sunt". This passage was brought to my attention by Thunø, 2005, pp. 268–269, who uses it to interpret the apse mosaic of S. Maria in Domnica, commissioned by pope Paschal I.

[lii] Apponius, *Explanatio in Canticum Canticorum*, IX, VI, 8, CCSL 19, ed. B. de Vregille, L. Neyrand, Turnhout, Brepols, 1986, p. 226, ll. 319–340.

[liii] *Akathistos*, XXI, 3, 7, 10; trans. L. M. Peltomaa, *The Image of the Virgin Mary in the Akathistos Hymn. The Medieval Mediterranean 35*, Leiden, Brill, 2001, p. 17.

[liv] Pseudo-Dionysius, *De divinis nominibus*, I, 6, PG 3, coll. 596B–C, ed. B. R. Suchla, *Corpus Dionysiacum*. *Patristische Texte und Studien 33*, 1 Berlin, De Gruyter, 1990, p. 119, l. 8; id., *De coelesti hierarchia*, XV, 2, PG 3, coll. 329A-C, ed. Suchla, *Corpus Dionysiacum*, pp. 51–53. Cf. F. Dell'Acqua, *Il fuoco, le vetrate delle origini e la mistica medievale*. In *Il fuoco nell'alto medioevo*. LX Settimana di Studio (Spoleto, 12–18 Aprile 2012), Spoleto, Centro di Studi sull'Altomedioevo, 2013, pp. 557–597, esp. pp. 570 and 586.

[lv] Alexander Alexakis, *Codex Parisinus Graecus 1115 and its Archetype. Dumbarton Oaks Studies 34*, Washington, DC, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, 1996, pp. 118, 135, 276, 325–326.

[lvi] Mary B. Cunningham, "The Impact of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite on Byzantine Theologians of the Eighth Century: The Concept of 'Image'", in J. A. Mihoc, L. Aldea (eds.), *A Celebration of Living Theology: A Festschrift in Honour of Andrew Louth*, London, New York, Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2014, pp. 41–58.

[lvii] Matilde Cupiccia, "Anastasio bibliotecario traduttore delle omelie di Reichenau (Aug. LXXX)?", *Filologia mediolatina*, Vol 10 (2003), pp. 41–102.

[lviii] Andreas Cretensis, *In sanctissimae Deiparae Dominae Nostrae Annuntiationem*, PG 97, col. 896B; transl. M.B. Cunningham, *Wider than Heaven. Eighth-Century Homilies on the Mother of God. Popular Patristics Series 35*, Crestwood, NY, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2008, p. 207: "Hail, the seraphic tongs for the mystical coal! [cf. Is 6,7]". Andreas Cretensis, *In dormitionem sanctissimae Deiparae Dominae nostrae*, I, 4, PG 97, col. 1080A (the PG presents the first homily written by Andrew on the Dormition as the second in the trilogy); trans. B.E. Daley, *On the Dormition of Mary. Early Patristic Homilies. Popular Patristics Series 18*, Crestwood, NY, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1998, p. 107. Andreas Cretensis, *In dormitionem sanctissimae Deiparae Dominae nostrae*, II, 15, PG 97, col. 1069A; trans. Daley, 1998, p. 133. Cf. Niki Tsironis, "Emotion and the Senses in Marian Homilies of the Middle Byzantine Period", in L. Brubaker, M.B. Cunningham (eds.), *The Cult of the Mother of God in Byzantium. Texts and Images*, Farnham, Burlington, Ashgate, 2011, pp. 179–196, esp. p. 185.

[lix] Iohannes Damascenus, *De fide orthodoxa*, IV, 13, PG 94, coll. 1149–1150, ed. B. Kotter, *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos 2. Expositio fidei*, PTS 12, Berlin, De Gruyter, 1973, p. 196, ll. 126–7.

[lx] Dell'Acqua, 2013, p. 594.

[lxi] Christianus Archiepiscopus, *Liber de calamitate ecclesiae moguntinae*, MGH, *Scriptorum*, XXV, p. 240; cf. Julius von Schlosser, *Quellenbuch. Repertorio di fonti per la storia dell'arte del Medioevo occidentale (secoli IV-XV). Fonti per la Storia dell'Arte 2*, ed. J. Végh, Florence, Le Lettere, 1992, pp. 294–298, in part. p. 297; Dell'Acqua, 2013, p. 591.

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Figures' captions

Fig. 1. Holy Face encircled by the Chrismon and the Alpha-Omega, pierced gold disk and garnets, diam. 63 mm, sixth-seventh centuries, from Limons (Puy-de-Dôme, Auvergne), Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, inv. no. 56.323. Photo: ©Genevra Kornbluth.

Fig. 2. Sword mount, detail of garnet of gold foil, from the Staffordshire Hoard, gold, garnets, seventh-eighth century, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, inv. no. K969. Photo: ©Birmingham Museums Trust.

Fig. 3. St Cuthbert's cross, gold, cowrie shell, garnets, 60 x 60 mm, seventh century, Durham, Durham Cathedral Collections. Photo: Author.

Fig. 4. St Cuthbert's cross, detail, Durham, Durham Cathedral Collections. Photo: Author.

Fig. 5. Cross from the Staffordshire Hoard, gold, garnet, seventh-eighth century, 66.1 x 50.3 x 4.3 mm, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Galleries, inv. no. K303. Photo: ©Birmingham Museums Trust.

Fig. 6. Cross of Gisulf, gold, garnet, lapislazuli, glass, 110 x 110 mm, Cividale, Museo Archeologico del Friuli, inv. no. 168. Photo: ©Archivio MAN Cividale.

Fig. 7. Lateran cross, gold, garnets, amethysts, 255 x 240 x 30 mm, seventh century?, formerly in Rome, Sancta Sanctorum. **Photo: ©Musei Vaticani.**

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Fig. 1. Holy Face encircled by the Chrismon and the Alpha-Omega, pierced gold disk and garnets, diam. 63 mm, sixth-seventh centuries, from Limons (Puy-de-Dôme, Auvergne), Paris, Cabinet des Médailles, inv. no. 56.323. Photo: ©Genevra Kornbluth.

80x80mm (300 x 300 DPI)

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Fig. 2. Sword mount, detail of garnet of gold foil, from the Staffordshire Hoard, gold, garnets, seventh-eighth century, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, inv. no. K969. Photo: ©Birmingham Museums Trust.

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Fig. 3. St Cuthbert's cross, gold, cowrie shell, garnets, 60 x 60 mm, seventh century, Durham, Durham Cathedral Collections. Photo: Author.

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Fig. 4. St Cuthbert's cross, detail, Durham, Durham Cathedral Collections. Photo: Author.

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Fig. 5. Cross from the Staffordshire Hoard, gold, garnet, seventh-eighth century, 66.1 x 50.3 x 4.3 mm, Birmingham, Birmingham Museum and Art Galleries, inv. no. K303. Photo: ©Birmingham Museums Trust.

458x610mm (300 x 300 DPI)

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Fig. 6. Cross of Gisulf, gold, garnet, lapislazuli, glass, 110 x 110 mm, Cividale, Museo Archeologico del Friuli, inv. no. 168. Photo: ©Archivio MAN Cividale.

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Fig. 7. Lateran cross, gold, garnets, amethysts, 255 x 240 x 30 mm, seventh century?, formerly in Rome, Sancta Sanctorum. Photo: from Thunø, 2002.
[I HAVE BEEN WAITING SINCE MONTHS FOR THE ORIGINAL PHOTO FROM THE ©Musei Vaticani; THE OBJECT WENT LOST IN 1942]

198x256mm (300 x 300 DPI)